

Integration of Indian Knowledge System in Indian Education

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Abstract:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) embodies India's extensive intellectual, scientific, cultural, and philosophical legacy, cultivated over thousands of years through experiential learning and native wisdom. It includes a variety of fields such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, linguistics, the arts, governance, ethics, and environmental sustainability. Incorporating IKS into mainstream education is crucial for reclaiming India's intellectual heritage, nurturing national pride, and establishing a holistic and contextual learning model that meets modern demands. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers a timely framework to integrate IKS into the contemporary educational landscape of India. In the present article, the understanding of the Indian Knowledge System and its incorporation in Indian Education have been discussed.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System, Indian Education, NEP 2020, Mainstream Education

1. Introduction:

The people of India often believe that all the knowledge they gain today originates from the West. Given that Western civilization is more recent than Indian civilization, this suggests an unreasonable notion that all knowledge is also recent. People can also create knowledge. Every individual employs discrimination, reasoning, and rational thinking to process newly acquired information. Thus, during this procedure, a vast reservoir of knowledge was gathered in the Indian subcontinent and expressed through traditions and practices (Mahadevan et al, 2025). The tradition of knowledge in India has been preserved and passed down orally through the Guru-Sisya Parampara. In more recent times, print media and earlier palm leaf manuscripts have been utilized to formally document and archive this oral wisdom. However, the educational system changes that occurred in India around 200 years ago altered this method of knowledge transmission. It likely took around 50 years for the Indian populace to fully move away from traditional practices. Even after gaining independence, Indians have continued to follow the British educational system, largely neglecting the ancient wisdom of India. Educational policies implemented by the British disregarded ancient Indian knowledge, claiming it lacked rigor and scientific merit.

Understanding the Indian Knowledge System:

To uncover the true essence of Bharat, delving into Indian wisdom is essential. Since the launch of NEP 2020 in Indian education, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) has become a central topic of conversation. For the past two hundred years, Western viewpoints have predominantly shaped our educational system. Knowledge originating from India is often either dismissed or overlooked in mainstream education. The Indian perspective is largely absent from societal discourse. The current focus of education has shifted towards merely "living" with an abundance of resources, while the aim of Indian education is to achieve a "meaningful life." This realignment will prove to be a daunting task until the Indian Knowledge System is fully integrated into the nation's educational framework. The Indian knowledge system is a broad term that encompasses nearly everything about India. Literature, cultural and social practices, historical evidence, and other such knowledge available in all Indian languages, dialects, and geographical regions will fall under IKS. Knowledge is continuously evolving in any society. Knowledge that is available in India from prehistoric times to the current day will all fall under IKS. Knowledge creation is continuous in IKS. IKS is not a history study! IKS is not limited to Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, and the Bhagavat Geeta or Hindu studies! IKS provides a unique perspective and is holistic, rigorous, and innovative in its approach. Bhartiya dristi is very unique in nature. It is a multidisciplinary, holistic approach grounded in reality. A hoary tradition of rigorous enquiry and innovative approach makes Bhartiya Dristi unique (Indian Knowledge Systems Division, 2025).

How to Make the Indian Knowledge System Part of Indian Education?

IKS, as an extensive and unified reservoir of knowledge, has remained neglected for numerous decades and has become disconnected from societal memories. While certain aspects of IKS persisted in the teaching and learning of various subjects and other traditions, this form of isolation rendered it unreachable. Merely reviving or reinforcing IKS in education will establish a learning sphere that poses greater risks than mere preservation. It is, thus, sought to incorporate the IKS content into the modern knowledge in a cohesive manner. This integration requires considerable effort and transparency.

Kautilya's categorization of educational institutions clearly shows that every modern knowledge field is connected to the ancient Indian wisdom tradition (Varakhedi, 2022).

1. Trayii - the trio of core Sciences encompassing Hard and Soft sciences forms the foundation of science education - Vijnana-vidya.
2. Vaarta simply refers to commerce, encompassing the creation and distribution of wealth via trading and various methods.
3. Danda Neeti - Research in governance, community, national security, etc., integrates into the framework of Human or social sciences.
4. Anveekshiki - the study encompassing all fields of knowledge includes Mathematics, logic, language, art, and more. This is typical for everyone.

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ethics, and environmental sustainability. Incorporating IKS into mainstream education is crucial for reclaiming India's intellectual heritage, nurturing national pride, and establishing a holistic and contextual learning model that meets modern demands. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers a timely framework to integrate IKS into the contemporary educational landscape of India.

To incorporate IKS into Indian education, the initial step is to integrate it into the curriculum. At all educational levels—primary, secondary, and tertiary the syllabus should showcase the achievements of Indian philosophers, scientists, and educators. Disciplines such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedic mathematics, Sanskrit, Indian logic (Nyaya), and regional arts can be included through cross-disciplinary courses. For example, environmental studies could highlight traditional water conservation methods used by ancient Indian communities, while philosophy classes could investigate Upanishadic ideas regarding knowledge and self-discovery. This strategy not only enhances cultural awareness but also encourages critical thinking and innovation rooted in Indian traditions.

Teacher training and capacity building: Firstly, it is essential to focus on teacher training and capacity building. Educators need to be informed and equipped to understand, value, and effectively teach Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). Organizations such as the Indian Knowledge System Division (AICTE) and IKS Centers at universities should create orientation sessions, workshops, and resource materials to support teachers in merging traditional knowledge with contemporary teaching methods. Teacher training programs (like B.Ed. and M.Ed.) ought to incorporate topics related to IKS, highlighting the significance of indigenous teaching approaches such as storytelling, dialogue, experiential learning, and education based on values.

Study and recording of information: An additional key approach is the study and recording of information. Numerous conventional practices and texts still lie untouched or difficult to access. Academic institutions ought to encourage interdisciplinary research that authentically verifies and situates traditional knowledge frameworks. The digitization of texts, translation initiatives, and community-centered documentation of oral histories can help safeguard and make this knowledge more accessible. Partnerships among universities, research councils, and local communities can promote the sharing of knowledge and innovation grounded in indigenous wisdom.

Language and multilingualism: Language and multilingualism are crucial factors as well. Supporting regional languages in addition to English and Hindi can help students engage with traditional texts and philosophies in their authentic form. The NEP 2020 advocates for education in the mother tongue, which aligns seamlessly with the incorporation of IKS, enabling learners to connect intimately with local knowledge systems, folklore, and cultural heritage.

Public awareness and encouraging community involvement: Raising public awareness and encouraging community involvement are essential. Parents, students, and communities need to recognize the role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in shaping identity and fostering sustainable practices. Educational resources, including media, textbooks, and cultural initiatives, can be utilized to promote indigenous knowledge and customs.

Conclusion:

Incorporating the Indian Knowledge System into conventional education goes beyond merely reviving historical practices; it aims to establish a well-rounded, inclusive, and comprehensive educational framework that blends tradition with contemporary approaches. By integrating IKS into curriculum development, educator training, research, and community collaboration, India can cultivate learners who are anchored in their cultural heritage while also prepared to face global challenges with insight and assurance.

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