
INCORPORATING TRADITIONAL INDIAN KNOWLEDGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION: NEEDS, CHALLENGES, AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

India's ancient knowledge practices run by a holistic path to learning, stranded in spirituality, science and morality. From the Indus Valley civilization to the Gupta era, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) developed other disciplines like Ayurveda, astronomy, and governance etc. Integration of IKS helps to create ethical, environmentally aware, and culturally attached individuals who can contribute significantly for the society in which they live. National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 gives importance on value-based and multidisciplinary learning and tries to integrate IKS into higher education for a transformative break through. This work explores to sponsor cultural identity, holistic education, sustainability, and moral institution. On the other hand, difficulties such as colonial predisposition, language barriers, and short of educational infrastructure hamper the development. To surmount these, reformation in curriculum and educators training must be prioritized. IKS in higher education is not only a restoration of tradition but a step towards sustainability and inclusiveness for future-ready learning.

Key words: Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), National Education Policy (NEP), Interdisciplinary learning, Indigenous Knowledge, Digitization of information

Introduction

India's ancient wisdom traditions present a profound unified vision of survival, harmonizing human life to the natural world and the tracking down of knowledge. India's ancient wisdom is a loaded blending of philosophy, science, art, and ethics improved more than thousands of years. Whilst the Indus Valley Civilization reflects the foresight of early urban planning, the subsequent Vedic Period produced Indian thoughts or philosophy. Afterward the Mauryan Empire brought advances in governance, economy, and administration through texts like Arthashastra. The Gupta Era showed us a golden age in which science, mathematics, literature, medicine, and art flourished. This growing ancient knowledge system, today known as Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), is holistic and obviously interdisciplinary. With the leadership of institutions like the UGC, IKS Division, and teacher training initiatives, this movement is strengthened but this is not just about reviving the past but also adapting it significantly for the present and future. diverse disciplines of Higher Education can not only get disciplinary insights from IKS, it also provides insight on the topic of value system and spiritual aspects of life. Realizing the potential of this timeless knowledge bank it is necessary to carry IKS into Indian classrooms. It is projected that by implementing IKS with regular disciplinary studies, students may find out more than just what's in textbooks and developed in all aspect. The NEP 2020 highlights the demand to integrate IKS into all level of education for value-based and contextual learning. This integration

is not only a subject of cultural revival but also a step on the road to building a sustainable, inclusive, and rooted education system.

Literature Review:

The accessible literature on “Incorporating Traditional Indian Knowledge in Higher Education: Needs, Challenges, and Prospects” is inadequate in both scope and depth. Due to the insufficiency of inclusive studies, the author relied on a various chain of sources to gather the necessary information and insights.

Dr. A. Chandratreya (2024) exemplified the significance of reacquainting ancient wisdom into higher education to nurture critical thinking, creativity, and leadership.

R. Sharma and E. Maheshwari (2024) investigated the existing scenario of IKS integration, and analyze the recent teacher training initiatives in light of NEP 2020.

A. K. Ojha and P. K. Dhar (2024) explained the requirement of ancient wisdom and established holistic education through integrating the Bhartiya Knowledge System.

G. Kamalakar and H. Vageeshan (2024) construed the execution of IKS in education through a research on government reforms and development.

A. K. Suman and S. K. Shanu (2021) contributed the ongoing discourse on education reform and the recovery of indigenous wisdom, emphasizing the essential role played by the NEP.

P. Moitra and J. Madan (2025) did an tentative study of shareholder’s view point on integrating Ayurveda and IKS into higher education.

B. Mohanapriya and M. Suriya, (2025) discussed about the principles and practices of Indian Knowledge Systems.

F. M. Fernandes and O. S. Nirgude vented the power of Gurukul Wisdom and AI for elevated learning quality.

Method: Materials and methods:

This article is analytical in nature. The information has been collected from secondary sources of knowledge, like books, articles, journals, internet etc.

The Need for Integration

The paradigm of modern education system of India, mainly constructed by colonial western influences, has far away from our native paths of knowing. Due to the reign by various foreign powers our imposed education model is often separated from the cultural, environmental, and philosophical contexts of Indian society. After the Independence several educational commissions and committees like Radhakrishnan Commission (1948–49), Mudaliar Commission (1952–53), Kothari Commission (1964–66), National Policy on Education (1986 & POA 1992), NCF-2000 & 2005 have mentioned and emphasized the importance of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in shaping the nation's education policy. But the strongest focus so far on IKS has been given by NEP 2020. The need for integrating India’s ancient wisdom into higher education arises from several crucial considerations:

1. Holistic Approach to Learning:

Ancient Indian schooling pays attention to the development of three ‘H’s i.e., head, heart, and hands. It was not restricted to the congregation of information only but also paying attention on

self-realization, ethical conduct, and social accountability. Systems like the Gurukula fostered individualism and moral disposition, jointly with intellectual harshness.

2. Interdisciplinary Insights:

The Indian Knowledge System does not function within remote disciplines. Ayurveda, for example, blends biology, chemistry, and ethics. Likewise, Vedic mathematics integrates rational computation with innate understanding. So, modern higher education must be profited from these interdisciplinary insights.

3. Cultural Confidence and Identity:

Energizing IKS can help students to bond with their roots and extend pride in their rich heritage. This cultural anchoring might improve a stronger sense of national identity and rational wisdom.

4. Sustainability and Indigenous Innovation:

Ancient Indian practices in agriculture, water conservation, urban planning, and medicine exhibit native models of sustainability. Reviving these methods could provide eco-friendly solutions to present-day global challenges.

5. Alignment with NEP 2020 Vision:

The National Education Policy 2020 advocates for an education system which is deep-rooted in Indian culture. It encourages the integration of IKS to promote originality, critical thinking, and a sense of belongingness.

Challenges in Integration

Even though the fact that relevance of IKS is extensively recognized, but its integration into the existing higher education system is not without challenges. Critical analysis gives the following challenges:

1. Lack of Documentation and Accessibility:

A large amount of India's traditional knowledge is spotted across Sanskrit texts, oral traditions, and region-specific practices. Many of these are not translated, and also many of them lost over time. This makes integration a complicated task.

2. Perception Biasness and Colonial Mindset:

We have a deep-seated colonial indoctrination that ancient Indian knowledge is intuitive or mythological. To overcome this chauvinism needs awareness and academic rigor.

3. Curriculum and Pedagogy Voids:

Existing curriculum including teaching methodologies are not intended to lodge native knowledge systems. There is an urgent requirement for curriculum improvement and pedagogical training for educators.

4. Incomplete Investigation and Academic Resources:

There are a very few universities, colleges, dedicated departments, funding, and trained personnel for IKS. Also research in this field remains underfunded and scattered.

5. Language Barriers:

Sanskrit and other ancient languages in which much of the IKS is encoded pose a barrier to understanding. There is a pressing need for authentic translations and interpretations.

6. Various So-Called Secular Political Ideologies:

Some political party oppose the initiatives of integration of IKS, blaming on the content closely related to Hindu philosophy, thereby discouragement secular values. These ideologies pulled

backwards from the implementation of IKS, though their questions on inclusivity and neutrality is much more political rather than the genuine educational considerations.

The Way Forward: Strategies for Meaningful Integration

A versatile and reactive approach is essential for the successful integration of India's ancient wisdom into higher education. The following strategies perhaps will serve as guiding steps:

1. Curriculum Reform:

- Insert IKS components into present subjects—e.g., discussing Vedic mathematics in engineering or ancient legal systems in law.
- Boost interdisciplinary courses that initiate students to IKS in fields like Ayurveda, Indian logic, Vastu Shastra and conventional arts.

2. Training for Educators:

- Support teachers to commence research on indigenous knowledge systems and apply it in classroom instruction.
- Organize faculty development programmes, refresher courses, and training workshops on IKS to train the educators.

3. Translation and Digitization of Sources:

- Create digital warehouses for storing and online courses for large scale access to IKS material.
- Set up countrywide projects to translate earliest texts into modern Indian languages and English.

4. Institutional Support for Research Funding:

- Allow particular grants for projects and research related to Indian traditions, wisdom, and innovation.
- Build research center of IKS within the university.

5. Interdisciplinary Research and Collaboration:

- Encourage interdisciplinary research for bridging IKS with technology, environmental sciences, etc.
- Collaborate with traditional scholars with present day researchers and integrate their conventional skills to modern day practices.

6. Creating Awareness and Removing Bias:

- Promote educational impartiality and honesty in exploring traditional systems without chauvinism.
- Host seminars, public awareness lectures, exhibitions, and student projects that emphasize the significance of IKS.

7. Policy Implementation and Monitoring:

- Implement NEP 2020 directives at the institutional level with clear roadmaps and quantifiable outcomes.
- Ensure that integration does not become tokenistic but leads to real epistemic transformation.

Conclusion

Integrating India's ancient wisdom into higher education is both a cultural necessity and a pedagogical prosperity. It represents a shift from mere information transmit to facts deep-rooted in our values, sustainability, and holistic improvement. Whereas challenges exist, they are not intractable. With educational guarantee, institutional shore up, and policy alliance, Indian higher education can be altered into a lively ecosystem where age-old wisdom meets present-day novelty. By depiction from the depth of Indian practices and orienting them with global educational standards, we can promote a generation that is both globally skilled and culturally proficient. This integration is not just about the past—it is a gateway to a more progressive and inclusive in future.

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