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## Integration Of Indian Knowledge Systems In The National Education Policy 2020: Towards A Holistic And Inclusive Education Framework

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### Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant shift in India's educational landscape by emphasizing the integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into mainstream education. This paper explores the role and relevance of IKS in the context of NEP 2020, analyzing how ancient Indian wisdom, cultural values, and interdisciplinary approaches can be effectively woven into modern pedagogy. The study critically evaluates policy provisions, potential benefits, challenges, and implementation strategies for integrating IKS in contemporary education.

### Keywords

Indian Knowledge System (IKS), National Education Policy 2020, holistic education, indigenous knowledge, curriculum reform, NEP, ancient Indian wisdom

### Introduction

India's rich civilizational heritage boasts a wealth of indigenous knowledge systems encompassing philosophy, science, art, medicine, architecture, and education. For centuries, these systems flourished through oral traditions and institutions such as Gurukuls and Nalanda University. However, colonial education policies marginalized traditional Indian knowledge in favor of Western paradigms. The Indian Knowledge System is rich and ancient treasure trove of wisdom that encompasses diverse fields such as philosophy, science, art and literature. It is rooted in veda, Upnishads and other ancient scriptures, providing profound insights into the nature of reality, human existence and the universe. Indian Knowledge System has played a significant role in the advancement of various field be it, Science, Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine, Philosophy, Education, Cosmology, Architecture, Metlurgy, Virtual Arts and performing Art and Agriculture. Indian Knowledge system are rich sources of evolving knowledge comprising six main Darshans (Philosophies), fourteen Vidyas (sources of knowledge) and sixty four kalas (specialized art and skill).

Indian Knowledge System comprises three words namely- Indian, Knowledge and System. Indian refers to Akhanda Bharata. Knowledge refers to the unstated knowledge and it lies in the wisdom of knowledge seekers. It is gained by insights into personal experiences through observations. System means a well organized methodology and classification scheme used to access a body of knowledge. The Indian Knowledge System is the systemic transfer of ancient and modern knowledge from one generation to another. It covers ancient knowledge from various domains to current and future challenges. The NEP 2020 attempts to reverse this trend by promoting Indian Knowledge System as a foundational element of the curriculum, aiming to instill national pride and global competency among students.

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## NEP 2020: An Overview

The NEP 2020 is India's first education policy of the 21st century, replacing the 1986 policy. It envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos, focused on character building, critical thinking, multidisciplinary, and global relevance. Key highlights include:

- Flexible curriculum and choice-based learning
- Emphasis on mother tongue/local language in early education
- National mission to promote foundational literacy and numeracy
- Establishment of the National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)
- Creation of the Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITI)

NEP characterizes Indian Knowledge systems as a rich corpus of ideas and practices-philosophical, scientific, artistic, medical, mathematical, ecological and craft based knowledge-developed over centuries through observation, experimentation and local practices. The policy notes Indian knowledge System's historical contribution to law, administration, health, art and industry and highlights its interdisciplinary character.

### Focus on integrating IKS into education at all levels

The NEP has provided a broader framework covering physical and non-physical domains through academic and non-academic spheres. NEP 2020 has rightly stated the purpose of education is to make good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion, empathy, courage and resilience. Scientific temper and creative imagination with sound ethical moorings and values. The NEP 2020 has emphasized the Indian Knowledge System will be part of the curriculum and will be included scientifically. Indian Knowledge System will be included in mathematics, engineering, philosophy, yoga, medicine, sports, games, literature, languages and various other domains.

**Integration of Indian Knowledge System into Higher Education:** Higher Education institutions are regarded as the knowledge production centre and the students are to get these knowledge from various fields. The inclusion of Indian Knowledge System in higher education is paramount for the holistic development of the nation. This approach not only revitalizes the education system but also contributes to the preservation and endorsement of Indian languages, arts and culture. NEP 2020 underscores the significance of these systems and advocates for their integration into higher education institutions. The Government of India has taken the NEP 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. 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 policy proposes interdisciplinary centres and courses that bridge Indian Knowledge System with modern sciences, humanities and technology. The Ministry subsequently established Indian Knowledge System initiatives and funded centres to create courses and research projects.

### Benefits of Integrating IKS in Education

Integration of Indian Knowledge System into the mainstream education system can have numerous benefits including cultural revival, Holistic learning, Environmental sustainability, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and inclusivity that validates the knowledge of rural and tribal communities. Integration of Indian Knowledge System into Education also ensure that India's ancient knowledge system such as Ayurveda, Yoga and traditional arts all preserved and promoted for future generation. Contextualized learning and relevance as local knowledge make learning place-based, improving engagement and retention. It also promotes interdisciplinary thinking by blending observational science, philosophy and practice which models cross disciplinary research and problem solving teaching multiple knowledge traditions cultivates critical thinking about how knowledge is produced, validated and applied, countering epistemic monocultures.

### Challenges in Implementation

Despite its potential, integrating IKS faces several obstacles: such as

#### 1. Curriculum Overload

Risk of burdening students with excessive content if not streamlined

#### 2. Standardization Difficulties

Diverse regional traditions may be hard to codify and assess

#### 3. Resistance From Academia

Perception of traditional knowledge as unscientific or outdated

#### 4. Language Barriers

Many ancient texts are in Sanskrit or regional dialects

#### 5. Training and Resources

Many schools and universities lack faculty trained in Indian Knowledge System scholarship. The teacher education programs need redesign and significant investment. Infrastructure, textbooks, localized resource repositories and verified primary/secondary source materials are necessary but currently inadequate, state level disparities further exacerbate uneven implementation. Shortage of trained educators and authentic resource material, Lack of adequate resources and infrastructure to support the integration of Indian Knowledge System into curriculum.

#### 6. Monitoring and Evaluation Difficulties

Measuring outcomes from Indian Knowledge System integration requires new metrics and long term evaluation frameworks. Initial years show a lack of consistent

monitoring data. Government reporting provides counts of centers and courses but less on learning outcomes or quality assurance.

### Strategies for Effective Integration

#### 1. Interdisciplinary Pedagogy

IKS should be taught in conjunction with modern disciplines offering courses on Indian history, philosophy, arts and literature (e.g., Ayurgenomics, Sanskrit AI)

#### 2. Digital Tools and Ed Tech

Use of AI, VR/AR to visualize IKS concepts in engaging formats

#### 3. Collaborative Research

Encourage global and national interdisciplinary research that blends traditional knowledge with modern scientific approaches.

#### 4. Community Involvement

Involve artisans, healers, and local experts in curriculum enrichment

#### 5. Teacher Empowerment

Providing funding and support for projects exploring and practical applications of Indian Knowledge System across various fields. Organizing cultural events and activities that celebrate Indian tradition. Develop MOOCs, training modules, and fellowships on Indian Knowledge System. Programs such as faculty development modules including Indian Knowledge System components and University level interdisciplinary courses have been piloted.

### Conclusion

The NEP 2020 focuses on the holistic development of a child and integrating the Indian Knowledge System which can help students become more equipped with the necessary skills and a blend of ancient and contemporary knowledge for employability. It is clear that Indian Knowledge System is rich from the ancient times. In the curriculum, according to NEP-2020, there should be provision of spiritual subjects for the development of humanity.

The integration of the Indian Knowledge System into the NEP 2020 framework presents an opportunity to revolutionize Indian education. By blending ancient wisdom with modern innovation, India can craft a truly global yet rooted education system. However, this ambitious vision can only be realized through careful planning, inclusive dialogue, academic openness, and investment in resources and training. IKS is not just about reviving the past—it is about building a sustainable, ethical, and holistic future.

But this inclusion of Indian Knowledge System has certain challenges and these challenges need to be addressed before inclusion. The Indian Government has taken a step under NEP to integrate Indian Knowledge System into the curriculum. There is an emergent need for proper training of the teachers so that they have proper knowledge of Indian Knowledge System and can deliver it in a

meaningful way. There is a dearth of trained educators and validated curricular material that can be effectively bridge ancient knowledge with modern frameworks.

The NEP 2020 is a remarkable paradigm shift in the Indian education system which aims to make it more inclusive, holistic and global and follows an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach to integrate the Indian Knowledge System to preserve and revival the traditional Indian Knowledge.

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