

# Integrating India's Traditional Wisdom: Exploring the Role of NEP-2020 in the Indian Knowledge System

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## ABSTRACT

NEP-2020 recognizes the diverse and rich socio-cultural heritage of the knowledge system ('*Gyaan Parampara*') of our ancient India civilization. The NEP also believes that revival of knowledge system of the ancient past is significant in the journey towards making Bharat a '*Vishwaguru*' in true sense. The Indian Knowledge System comprises of *Jnan* (Knowledge), *Vignan* (Science), and *Jeevan Darshan* (Life's philosophy) that have evolved out of practice, observation, experimentation, and thorough analysis. This tradition of experimentation and research has positively impacted our education, the arts, management, legislation, justice, health, manufacturing, and commerce. This has impacted classical and other languages of Bharat that were transmitted through textual, scriptural, oral, and artistic traditions. The integration of IKS and NEP will help to understand contemporary social problems and conduct more research on common problems. It will certainly encourage the development and understanding of rich and diverse indigenous knowledge among various stakeholders and bring indigenous knowledge to life with the help of modern technology. This paper is an attempt to explore how Indian knowledge can be integrated with the existing education system to address India's contemporary challenges, particularly in the education sector. In addition, challenges in implementing the provisions of IKS are also discussed.

**Keywords:** NEP - 2020, Indian Knowledge System, Challenges, Implementation Strategies

The NEP - 2020 represents a paradigmatic shift in India's approach to education, aiming to revitalize and modernize its educational landscape while preserving and integrating its rich intellectual heritage. At the heart of this transformative agenda lies the recognition and reclamation of India's indigenous knowledge systems, which have long served as the bedrock of its cultural, scientific, and philosophical traditions.

India's traditional knowledge systems, rooted in ancient texts, oral traditions, and experiential wisdom, encompass a diverse array of disciplines ranging from *Ayurveda* and Yoga to mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy. These systems have flourished over millennia, embodying a holistic worldview that integrates spiritual, ecological, and ethical dimensions of human existence. Despite the

profound insights they offer into sustainable living, community well-being, and human flourishing, traditional knowledge systems have often been marginalized within the formal education sector, overshadowed by Eurocentric epistemologies and colonial legacies.

The NEP-2020 seeks to redress this historical imbalance by mainstreaming indigenous knowledge and fostering a culture of innovation rooted in local contexts. By promoting multilingualism, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary inquiry, the policy aims to develop a more inclusive and responsive educational ecosystem that empowers

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students to critically engage with diverse knowledge traditions and real-world challenges. Key provisions of the policy, such as the incorporation of vocational education, the promotion of arts and crafts, and the revitalization of cultural heritage, reflect a concerted effort to bridge the gap between traditional knowledge and contemporary skills, fostering a sense of pride and ownership in India's cultural heritage.

### Review of Related Literature

Banga (2010) analyses the key national advances in higher education for sustainable development in India and highlighted the varied educational strategies that are emerging in relation with education for sustainable development.

Jagadesh (2020) emphasized that NEP-2020 is timely and futuristic approach, which will lead in promoting critical thinking, competency and making learning experiential. It will lead to prepare students to actively contribute to economic progress of the nation.

Kannan (2020), views that NEP- 2020 is the vision that the policy has for the country as a whole and its documents is visionary in character. The study determined that the NEP- 2020 is of vision to change not only education field but also expected to impact on nations growth.

Kumar (2021) conducted exploratory research based on secondary data in which he viewed that the implementation of NEP-2020 is part of a progressive reform in the existing education system. It concluded that the execution of NEP will lead to boosting the skill development and the pursuit of higher education in students by remodeling of the educational system of India.

Patil (2021) believes that the new National Education Policy will result in promoting Indian value-based education, Bharat-centric education, development of knowledge-based society, and emphasis on knowledge-based education. Pathak (2021) analyses about the improvement in the academic outcome of students after the execution of NEP2020 and measures the enhancement level of faculty motivation in higher education. The paper identifies the intrinsic and extrinsic factors which will motivate satisfy faculties in higher education institution.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate the alignment of the National Education Policy-2020 with Indian Knowledge System.
2. To systematically identify and categorize challenges in the implementation of the provisions of Indian Knowledge System.

### Methodology

This is a qualitative study is based on secondary sources of information. The current study is grounded on reviews of the related literature, for which information was gathered from variety of journals, magazines, and websites and published articles that deal with the subject matter.

- (a) **Data Collection:** Identifying a comprehensive and diverse set of research papers, and expert opinions akin to the Indian and Knowledge system and National Policy 2020 and its implementation
- (b) **Data Selection:** Reviewing the collected articles which are recently published and relevant to research topic.
- (c) **Thematic Analysis:** Reading through the selected articles to gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges highlighted and using coding system to label and categorize challenges based on recurrent themes that appear from the articles. Themes might include curriculum restructuring, teacher training, infrastructure, multilingualism, community engagement etc.

### Integrating Indian Knowledge System with the National Education Policy 2020

India's National Education Policy 2020 aims to revamp the education system, including a renewed focus on Indian knowledge systems (IKS). The NEP recognizes the splendid heritage of India's traditional knowledge systems and aims to integrate them into the mainstream education framework. This is how IKS fits into the context of NEP-2020:

1. **Promotion and Preservation:** NEP-2020 emphasizes the promotion and preservation of India's diverse knowledge systems, including languages, arts, sciences, and traditional practices. It acknowledges that

India's heritage of knowledge encompasses various domains, such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedas, Jyotish, and other indigenous sciences.

2. **Incorporation in Curriculum:** The policy advocates for the amalgamation of Indian knowledge systems into the school and higher education curriculum. It suggests integrating aspects of IKS into like disciplines like sciences, mathematics, social sciences, and languages. This integration aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of various subjects and their historical and cultural context.
3. **Research and Documentation:** NEP-2020 encourages research and documentation of Indian knowledge systems. It proposes setting up specialized research institutions and centers dedicated to studying and documenting traditional knowledge. This initiative aims to enhance understanding, preservation, and dissemination of IKS among scholars, practitioners, and the general public.
4. **Interdisciplinary Studies:** The policy promotes interdisciplinary studies that integrate Indian knowledge systems with modern disciplines. It encourages universities to offer courses that combine traditional and contemporary knowledge, fostering a comprehensive approach to education.
5. **Language Preservation:** NEP-2020 emphasizes the preservation and promotion of Indian languages, recognizing them as carriers of indigenous knowledge systems. It suggests multilingualism as a fundamental principle of education, enabling students to access traditional texts and knowledge in their original languages.
6. **Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity:** The policy emphasizes the significance of cultural sensitivity and diversity in education. It calls for the celebration of India's pluralistic heritage and the accreditation of diverse knowledge traditions, fostering respect and understanding among learners.

Overall, the inclusion of Indian knowledge systems in the NEP-2020 reflects a broader shift towards a more inclusive and holistic approach to education,

aiming to nurture students' intellectual, cultural, and spiritual development in the context of India's rich heritage.

## Challenges of Implementing the Indian Knowledge System

Implementing Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in the education system and beyond faces several challenges, despite their rich heritage and potential benefits. Here are some of the significant challenges:

1. **Lack of Institutional Support:** Majority of the educational organizations and regulatory bodies have not prioritized the integration of IKS into the curriculum or policies. There might be a lack of dedicated funding, infrastructure, and trained personnel to support the implementation of IKS initiatives.
2. **Perception and Recognition:** Traditional knowledge systems may not always be perceived as credible or relevant in modern contexts. There could be biases against indigenous knowledge, leading to its marginalization or neglect in mainstream education and research.
3. **Standardization and Validation:** Traditional knowledge often lacks standardization and validation according to modern scientific methods. There is an urgent need to develop frameworks for validating and integrating traditional Indian knowledge with contemporary scientific principles and practices, ensuring accuracy, safety, and efficacy.
4. **Language Barrier:** Much of India's traditional knowledge is documented in ancient texts written in languages such as Sanskrit, Tamil, and other regional languages. Language barriers can hinder access to these texts and limit the dissemination of traditional knowledge among wider audiences.
5. **Loss of Indigenous Knowledge:** Rapid urbanization, globalization, and cultural changes have contributed to the erosion of indigenous knowledge systems. Younger generations may lose interest in traditional practices, leading to a downfall in the transmission of knowledge from elders to younger members of society.

6. **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Issues:** Traditional knowledge is often vulnerable to misappropriation and exploitation by external entities. Protecting indigenous knowledge holders' rights and ensuring fair compensation for their contributions pose significant challenges, especially in the context of intellectual property laws.
7. **Integration with Modern Education:** Integrating IKS into the modern education system requires careful planning and curriculum development. Balancing traditional knowledge with contemporary subjects and teaching methodologies while meeting academic standards and examination requirements can be challenging.
8. **Socio-cultural Factors:** Socio-cultural factors such as caste, gender, and religious beliefs may influence the transmission and reception of traditional knowledge. Addressing social inequalities and biases is very significant for ensuring equitable access to and utilization of IKS

## MAJOR SUGGESTIONS

### 1. Curriculum Development and Revision

- ❑ Develop a curriculum framework that integrates elements of Indian knowledge systems across all subject areas and grade levels.
- ❑ To work together with subject matter experts, traditional knowledge practitioners, and cultural institutions to make sure the authenticity, accuracy, and relevance of traditional knowledge in the curriculum.
- ❑ Reviewing and revising the curriculum periodically is essential to reflect advancements in research, emerging trends, and evolving societal needs while maintaining continuity with India's intellectual heritage.

### 2. Teacher Training and Professional Development:

- ❑ To provide comprehensive training programs for teachers to enhance their understanding of Indian knowledge systems and equip them with pedagogical strategies for effective integration into classroom instruction.

- ❑ Foster partnerships between academic institutions, cultural organizations, and traditional knowledge practitioners to facilitate teacher training workshops, seminars, and experiential learning opportunities.
- ❑ Establish networks of master teachers and mentors to support ongoing professional development and peer learning initiatives focused on Indian knowledge systems.

### 3. Resource Allocation and Infrastructure Development

- ❑ Allocate adequate funding and resources for the development of instructional materials, textbooks, digital resources, and educational tools that incorporate Indian knowledge systems.
- ❑ Invest in the establishment and enhancement of cultural institutions, museums, and heritage centers dedicated to preserving and promoting traditional knowledge.
- ❑ Upgrade educational infrastructure, including libraries, laboratories, and multimedia facilities, to facilitate immersive learning experiences and research in Indian knowledge systems.

### 4. Assessment and Evaluation Practices

- ❑ Develop alternative assessment methods and evaluation criteria that assess students' understanding of Indian knowledge systems, critical thinking skills, and cultural awareness.
- ❑ Incorporate performance-based assessments, portfolios, project-based learning, and oral examinations to evaluate holistic learning outcomes and encourage creative expression.
- ❑ Provide training and support for educators to implement authentic assessment practices aligned with the principles of Indian knowledge systems.

### 5. Language Policy and Multilingualism

- ❑ Promote multilingualism by offering instruction in multiple languages, including indigenous languages, regional dialects, and classical languages such as Sanskrit.
- ❑ Develop language learning resources, bilingual textbooks, and digital tools that support the

acquisition of Indian languages and facilitate cross-cultural communication.

- ❑ Provide incentives and support for schools and educational institutions to implement language immersion programs, language exchange initiatives, and cultural exchange activities.

## 6. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Participation

- ❑ Foster partnerships between educational institutions, community organizations, and traditional knowledge practitioners to co-create and co-implement initiatives related to Indian knowledge systems.
- ❑ Engage parents, caregivers, and local communities in educational decision-making processes, curriculum development, and extracurricular activities that celebrate India's cultural heritage.
- ❑ Developing platforms for knowledge sharing, intergenerational dialogue, and collaborative learning that promote the transmission and revitalization of Indian knowledge systems.

## 7. Policy Advocacy and Collaboration

- ❑ Advocate for policy reforms and institutional changes that recognize the importance of Indian knowledge systems in education and support their integration into mainstream curricula.
- ❑ Collaborate with government agencies, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and civil society groups to develop holistic approaches to implementing NEP-2020 provisions related to Indian knowledge systems.
- ❑ Leverage international partnerships, research collaborations, and best practices from other countries to inform policy development and capacity-building initiatives focused on Indian knowledge systems.

## CONCLUSION

The integration of Indian knowledge systems into mainstream education poses significant challenges, including issues related to curriculum design, teacher training, and assessment practices. Moreover, the entrenched dominance of Western epistemologies and the legacy of colonial education continue to shape educational priorities and practices, necessitating a nuanced approach to policy implementation and institutional reform.

By implementing these suggestions, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders can work together to realize the vision of integrating Indian knowledge systems into the education system in alignment with the provisions of NEP-2020, fostering a more inclusive, culturally responsive, and enriching learning environment for all students.

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