



International Conference on Indian Knowledge Systems
(ICIKS 2026)



Bridging Tradition and Modern Education: Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems

Prof.(Capt.) Sandeep

Dr. Baljeet Kaur

Assistant Professor-Department of Commerce
Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, University of Delhi

Dr. Rakesh Kumar

Assistant Professor - Department of Economics
Motilal Nehru College, University of Delhi

Abstract

The shifting dynamics of education in the 21st century have caused us to reassess the ways we approach knowledge systems, teaching pedagogies, and knowledge itself across the globe. Within this paradigm shift, the area that deserves attention among other topics for discussion and research is the incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) within contemporary educational practices. Incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems in modern education will contribute to closing the gap between ancient wisdom and modern science. Based on a centuries-old tradition, Indian Knowledge Systems span many fields of knowledge, including philosophy, mathematics, medicine, ecology, linguistics, and arts. The Indian Knowledge Systems embody a holistic understanding of the world in terms of interconnectedness, sustainable development, ethics, and practical experience.

At the same time, Indian Knowledge Systems have not received appropriate recognition as an object of study and pedagogical resource in formal education due to historical reasons, Western-centricity of education, and prevalence of standardised forms of knowledge. It is worth noting that, while modern education has contributed greatly to the advancement of sciences and technologies, it also suffers from fragmentation, instrumentalisation, and disregard for values, culture, and holistic education.

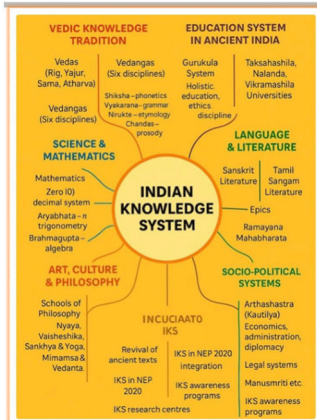
In this paper, it is intended to investigate the importance of incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems in the current educational system and also identify some measures that should be considered in order to develop a balanced curriculum incorporating both traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge. The study reveals that incorporating IKS in education can bring about holistic learning, foster cultural identity, ethical thinking, and sustainability, among other benefits.

Keywords

Indian Knowledge Systems, Modern Education, NEP 2020, Holistic Learning, Indigenous Knowledge, Educational Reform, Cultural Integration

Introduction

Education is always a dynamic and ever-evolving process that is closely associated with the intellectual, cultural, and socio-economic ethos of any particular era. The tradition of knowledge creation and dissemination in India is said to have a long and glorious history that is associated



with considerable diversity in terms of philosophical, pedagogical, and interdisciplinary approaches. From the ancient gurukul system of knowledge creation and dissemination to the academic traditions of ancient centres of learning like Takshashila and Nalanda, Indian education is said to have always been associated with holistic development, value systems, and knowledge-integrated learning. However, with the advent of colonial educational systems, Indian education is said to have undergone considerable transformation. In the modern age, the limitations of modern and Western-centric educational theory have become more and more obvious. Modern education has been responsible for scientific advancements and global connectivity.

The criticism levelled against IKS primarily involves the promotion of rote learning and the compartmentalisation of knowledge that has been established by IKS. In light of this, there has been a recognition

of the need to incorporate traditional knowledge systems into current education to create an educational paradigm that is both more balanced and contextually appropriate. Generally, IKS consists of a large body of intellectual knowledge accumulated through time (i.e., through the ages). IKS consists of knowledge accumulated in various disciplines, including Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedic mathematics, classical arts, architecture, agriculture and environmental management. The philosophical foundations upon which IKS is based consist of the idea that Knowledge is an integrated whole and the principles of integration (i.e., the view that knowledge consists of integrated wholes). There are considerable difficulties associated with integrating IKS into contemporary educational practices, and there are many factors to consider before attempting to integrate IKS into contemporary educational practices. Scientific validation and the standardisation of IKS are critical components of integrating IKS into contemporary education around the world, and thus need to be given careful consideration.

The 2020 NEP is a significant step in this direction and has highlighted the need for an Indian Knowledge System to be integrated into all levels of education. It has also called for the implementation of a multi-disciplinary, experiential approach, as well as the inclusion of local tradition and knowledge. The Policy has stressed that the education system must do more than just provide students with knowledge and skills; it should create awareness of the cultural, ethical, and personal identity of its inhabitants. This study will attempt to investigate how successful the integration of the IKS concept into the current education system is, examining both the opportunities and challenges involved. Additionally, we have developed three key research questions: How will the integration of the IKS into the modern educational system be carried out? What benefits will there be from incorporating the IKS concept into the modern education system? What challenges will be faced during the IKS concept's implementation in today's education system?

Through an interdisciplinary approach, this study will utilise information from education, history, philosophy, and sociology to present a complete discussion on this topic, as well as provide a balanced perspective by recognising the importance of both sides of the issue to ensure a complete understanding. Finally, in conclusion, the introduction presents an overview of the critical discussion that is to follow in terms of the significance of bridging the gap between tradition and modernity in education and creating an inclusive and holistic education system that is compatible with the present and the past.

Literature Review

The topic of integration of TK with education has been widely debated by scholars in recent times. The earliest research carried out regarding Indian education mostly dealt with the history and contribution made by the TK system. For example, in his paper "The Beautiful Tree," Dharampal (1983) emphasised the richness of the indigenous education system before colonisation and pointed out the presence of learning systems within the community. Similarly, Sub-

barayappa (2001) has studied the contributions made by Indian thinkers in mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and linguistics and the scientific foundations of IKS.

Other scholars have investigated how IKS is holistic and interrelated in nature. For example, Chandrasekharan (2017) explained how TK helps in developing holistic knowledge regarding human, nature, and society. As a result, sustainable development is achieved. Likewise, Sharma (2019) emphasised the importance of IKS in solving today's problems through value-based education systems.

Several papers have focused on the interconnection of IKS with the current education system. Rao and Mishra (2020) pointed out several shortcomings associated with modern education, such as the heavy reliance on assessments, knowledge fragmentation, and lack of consideration for culture. Gupta (2021) stated that the inclusion of ancient sciences like Ayurveda, Yoga, and classical arts in the school curriculum may be beneficial for students' development and increase their understanding of cultures. Moreover, Singh and Verma (2022) discussed the significance of using learner-centred approaches from traditional practices.

The field of policy-based research is growing popular now, especially after the introduction of NEP 2020. Kumar (2021) explored the policy provisions concerning IKS and found that it is rather conducive to the integration of IKS into education. Likewise, Joshi and Patel (2023) provided an overview of both the benefits and difficulties in integrating IKS into the educational process.

While there is increasing evidence regarding the incorporation of IKS in modern education, there still seem to be several deficiencies. The existing literature tends to either concentrate on the discussion of theories or provide isolated instances of the integration of IKS. Not much research has been carried out on developing a holistic approach to such integration.

Research Objectives

- ◆ To understand the importance of including IKS into the present-day education system.
- ◆ To understand the philosophy behind IKS and its important principles.
- ◆ To evaluate the importance of holism, experience and value-based education in today's education system.
- ◆ To determine the part played by educational policy-making processes and NEP 2020 in promoting IKS inclusion into educational systems.
- ◆ To study the difficulties involved in including IKS into the existing educational systems.
- ◆ To provide recommendations on how to incorporate IKS into educational institutions.
- ◆ To contribute to educational reforms through culture, sustainability and ethics-based education.

Research Methodology

This research study uses qualitative and interdisciplinary methodology in exploring Indian knowledge systems in relation to modern education. The study mainly relies on secondary data. Secondary data includes journals, books, policy documents, reports, etc. The study critically examines all these materials in relation to identifying key themes, patterns, and insights on the particular topic. A historical-analytical method is used in exploring Indian knowledge systems. This method is used in analysing historical documents in relation to understanding the basic principles of Indian knowledge systems. A comparative method is also used in this study. This method is used in analysing differences in traditional and modern education systems.

Content analysis is used to analyse the textual data, and the themes include curriculum integration, teaching practices, and policy frameworks. The study also involves a critical perspective in which the effectiveness of the available practices is analysed. Moreover, the study involves a constructive approach in which the opportunities and benefits of the practices are analysed, in addition to the challenges faced in the process. The limitations of the study include the fact that it is based on secondary data and that no empirical data were collected from the field.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The current study is informed by a review of literature on the topic of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and modern education, with references to the works of Dharampal (1983), Subbarayappa (2001), Sharma (2019), Rao & Mishra (2020), Gupta (2021), Kumar (2021), Singh & Verma (2022) and NEP (National Education Policy) 2020. The observations made from the results obtained from these studies show that incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems into modern education may bring about a paradigm shift in education through the process of learning-teaching. In total, four key themes of integration of IKS into modern education are identified through a review of the above studies: Epistemology, Pedagogy, Curriculum, and Socio-cultural Relevance. As for Dharampal (1983) and Subbarayappa (2001), they pointed out the holistic and interdisciplinary nature of traditional Indian knowledge. Meanwhile, Sharma (2019) focused on how such knowledge can help tackle today's social and environmental issues. Moreover, Rao & Mishra (2020) pointed to certain shortcomings of modern education, such as fragmentation of knowledge and the domination of evaluation systems.

Reviewing the literature on policy documents like NEP 2020 and the research conducted by Kumar (2021), it becomes evident that there is an increased emphasis on IKS in education reforms. This literature highlights the importance of designing inclusive curricula, interdisciplinary learning, and the inclusion of knowledge systems indigenous to local cultures in the process of teaching and learning. According to Gupta (2021), along with Singh & Verma (2022), the integration of traditional disciplines such as Yoga, Ayurveda, and Vedic Mathematics would add a new dimension to the teaching-learning process and help develop cultural awareness amongst learners. It has also been highlighted that traditional modes of learning, including experiential learning, interactions between teachers and students, storytelling, and involvement of communities in the process, can be considered complementary to contemporary modes of learning.

However, the studies mentioned above point to some challenges such as the lack of any integrated model, lack of teachers' preparation, institutional resistance, curricula-related issues, and doubts about scientific validity. Despite these challenges, however, based on the analysis of all the reviewed literature, one can argue that the benefits that arise from incorporating IKS in education outweigh any possible disadvantages if this process is carefully considered and approached. Hence, the analysed literature proves that Indian Knowledge Systems provide good grounds for developing an educational system that incorporates culture and tradition.

Findings and Discussion

The outcome of this study is that integrating Indian Learning Systems into Education can transform education in a positive way and have a positive effect on educational quality. Literature, policy analysis, and the development of educational models determined the following major conclusions to assist in providing an understanding of this area of study. Indian Learning Systems provides a comprehensive framework that has the potential to integrate all areas of modern education, whereas currently modern education often emphasises a narrow view with a strong emphasis on specific areas of Education and dividing education into separate areas. Indian Learning Systems provides a comprehensive view that allows students to understand how everything is connected.

IKS makes a huge contribution to the value-based education offered by the Traditional Education System in India. For example, the importance and relevance of ethics, morals, and social responsibility in life are principles that are being largely ignored in today's education systems. If young people are taught these principles from early childhood, it can help them grow into well-rounded individuals who not only have strong intellectual abilities but also have a greater understanding of social issues. A key aspect of this research paper was examining how much IKS contributes to the development of cultural awareness and identity in young people. Cultural awareness and identity are critical in modern-day global environments, where cultural identity

is being lost quickly. India has a long history of cultural diversity and richness; therefore, our youth must be adequately educated about the culture of India.

In addition, the research shows experiential and participatory learning modes embedded within Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) facilitate higher levels of student engagement/learning. Experiential and participatory IKS learning modes, such as storytelling and showing (demonstrating), make learning an interactive experience and therefore much more effective for students. Experiential and participatory learning modes of IKS have been shown to increase student engagement and learning. The study shows ways in which the use of IKS in education encounters challenges. These include issues like reforming the curriculum, preparing teachers, and developing resources. In addition to these, the challenge presented by the lack of a standardised framework and the predominance of Western epistemology also creates a challenge to integrating IKS within the educational system. However, it has also been indicated that these challenges may be solved by working collaboratively and applying research-driven approaches to the integration of IKS in education.

Furthermore, the findings of this research article emphasise the importance of creating a holistic framework for integrating Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge systems. Rather than viewing integration as a way of eliminating Western knowledge from Indigenous education, one could see the integration as augmenting contemporary systems to create a new, more inclusive education process and maybe the best way to facilitate the development of a larger pool of graduates who will belong to two different cultures. Ultimately, as discussed previously, integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems with Modern Education is possible; however, it has many advantages.

Challenges and Recommendations

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into modern education is full of promise, but it is also faced with many challenges that need to be carefully considered so that the integration process is effective. One of the main challenges is the epistemological disconnect between traditional and modern knowledge systems. While modern education is informed by the use of empirical and scientific methodologies, the Indian Knowledge Systems are informed by the use of experiential and holistic methodologies. This disconnect would need to be addressed through the development of frameworks that are capable of accommodating the diverse epistemological perspectives. Another challenge is the absence of sufficiently trained teachers who are capable of integrating the two knowledge systems into modern education. Teacher training would need to be revised to include the Indian Knowledge Systems so that they are capable of integrating the two knowledge systems.

A major challenge is the structured approach to designing the curriculum. The integration of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) into a curriculum requires meaningful connections between IKS and various subject areas. This requires a considerable amount of preparation. Additionally, there may be institutional barriers to implementing IKS into curricula. The institutions/**organisations** that develop curricula for schools must be ready to make an accurate commitment to proactively plan for the full integration and use of IKS in the schools. Additionally, a dedicated effort by institutions/**organisations** is required to gain the institutional commitment required to progress through the challenges. To address these challenges, it is recommended that the development of inter-disciplinary curricula be promoted so that IKS can be structured and developed. The teacher preparation programs must also be strengthened to encourage the use of traditional knowledge systems.

In addition, there is a need for research and documentation of traditional knowledge that validates it as an appropriate source of knowledge in educational settings. Experiential-based learn-



ing approaches using the IKS principles should be encouraged in educational institutions. Additionally, there needs to be programs established to provide information about the importance of using traditional knowledge in education, which may help through the process of acceptance of the changes resulting from IKS.

Conclusion

The incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems into the curriculum of modern educational institutions represents not just an incremental reform of education but rather a radical rethinking of the way we think about education itself in our current time period. The current age is an age of technological development, education and knowledge; therefore, due to the current age, education cannot be so easily confined to traditional definitions or boundaries. Rather, there is now a growing awareness that education, which has historically focused primarily on producing something useful for students, is no longer sufficient in meeting the challenges of the current period. Therefore, the inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems into the curriculum of modern educational institutions should be viewed as an opportunity to establish an equilibrium within education by incorporating the intellectual, moral, cultural and spiritual components of education into the education process. This current study has clearly identified the significant impact that the inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems can have on improving the quality of education.

As such, education can be a powerful agent of change if it bridges the gap between tradition and new directions in learning, in addition to simply teaching knowledge. It can facilitate deeper levels of comprehension, reasoning, and critical reflection, as well as foster the development of value systems such as empathy, social responsibility, sustainability, and respect for difference. The principles and beliefs underlying Indian Knowledge Systems are grounded in ideas about interdependency, experiential learning, and balancing human beings with nature — all of which serve as a philosophical base for providing an alternative to traditional scientific method (s). This study's results strongly suggest that an appreciation for existing (positive) aspects of both traditional and contemporary models of Knowledge is crucial for developing an integrated educational model that is innovative and culturally rich, providing students with competencies that will allow them to be not only technically skilled but also demonstrate integrity and have an understanding of their identity.

The use of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) also has value by helping to preserve and revitalise India's rich historical legacy as an intellectual resource. It was also often omitted from mainstream education as a consequence of historical and colonial perspectives. Therefore, educational institutions can play a significant role in promoting cultural pride and continuity, as well as developing awareness about Indigenous knowledge through integration into the curriculum, creating inclusive learning environments which respect and celebrate diversity and supporting additional ways of knowing to prepare students with knowledge on how to successfully relate to global knowledge sources and develop individuals capable of competing on a global level.

At the same time, we must recognise that the integration process presents multiple challenges and obstacles in areas such as curriculum development, differing epistemologies, inadequate teacher education/training, and institutional resistance; however, these obstacles are not insurmountable or prohibitive. Given the existence and support for policy frameworks as discussed in current educational reform efforts, integration can definitely be implemented successfully through support way of educational institutions taking a proactive and flexible approach to integrating IKS into their curriculum.

To summarise, introducing the Indian Knowledge System within the framework of contempo-



rary education is a significant change in terms of both the objectives and implementation of today's educational systems. This initiative aims to develop an education system that is flexible enough to adapt to a changing world while reflecting the richness of the cultural heritage of India. By doing so, the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into the educational landscape has the potential to help create individuals who are intellectually capable, ethically and socially responsible, and environmentally conscious. Ultimately, the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into the educational framework has the capacity to create an education system that will enable individuals to succeed professionally, live an intentional life, and contribute to the betterment of society as a whole.

References

- ◆ Agrawal, A. (2018). Indigenous and scientific knowledge: Some critical comments on integration, epistemology, and sustainability. *Indigenous Knowledge Journal*, 12(2), 45–60.
- ◆ Altbach, P. G. (2019). *Global perspectives on higher education: Trends, policies, and internationalisation*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- ◆ Bhushan, S. (2021). Indian knowledge systems and education: Philosophical foundations and contemporary relevance. *Educational Philosophy Review*, 8(1), 22–39.
- ◆ Central Sanskrit University. (2020). *Indian knowledge systems and their relevance in contemporary education*. New Delhi: Central Sanskrit University Publications.
- ◆ Government of India. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India.
- ◆ Kapur, R. (2019). Education and cultural identity in India: Exploring the role of indigenous knowledge systems in shaping modern learning. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(3), 101–115.
- ◆ Kumar, K. (2018). *What is worth teaching? Rethinking curriculum and educational priorities in India*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan.
- ◆ Mishra, R. (2021). Integrating traditional knowledge in modern education: Opportunities, challenges, and pedagogical implications. *International Journal of Education*, 10(4), 55–70.
- ◆ Nanda, M. (2019). *Science and tradition in India: Debates, dialogue, and the future of knowledge systems*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ◆ NCERT. (2021). *Integrating Indian knowledge systems in school education: Framework and implementation strategies*. New Delhi: National Council of Educational Research and Training.
- ◆ Rao, M. (2020). Indigenous pedagogy and modern education: Bridging the gap through experiential learning approaches. *Education Today*, 9(2), 33–48.
- ◆ Sharma, S. (2018). Value-based education in India: Philosophical roots and contemporary applications. *Journal of Educational Studies*, 7(1), 66–82.
- ◆ Singh, P. (2022). Holistic learning and Indian traditions: Reimagining education through cultural integration. *Journal of Humanities*, 11(2), 77–95.
- ◆ University Grants Commission. (2023). *Introduction of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Courses in Universities and Colleges: Framework and Guidelines*. New Delhi: UGC.