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## Indian Knowledge System Implementation and its Challenges in Higher Education under National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

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**ABSTRACT**

Following his seminal speech in Chicago in 1893, Swami Vivekananda openly boosted Western perceptions of the potential of Indian traditional knowledge, spirituality, and other holistic practices. India's rich cultural, traditional, medical, and consciousness-based knowledge system led him to envision India as a Spiritual Guru and Vishwa Guru. To establish India as a Vishwa Guru, he would thus urge all Indians to incorporate Western technological knowledge with their own knowledge and values. The times have changed significantly since then, and India is now at the forefront of technological advancements, particularly in the field of information technology (IT). Integrating technological advancements with the Indian Knowledge system has the potential to significantly enhance the quality and completeness of life. Despite remarkable progress in technology, the most crucial aspect today remains the pursuit of a high-quality life. This can only be achieved through environmental sustainability, robust mental and physical well-being, universal respect, compassion, and similar values. India's National Education Policy 2020 (NEP2020) shares this vision, aiming to provide comprehensive, high-quality education and research that is both affordable and accessible to everyone. The Indian Knowledge System encompasses a vast and multifaceted array of wisdom, convictions, and customs that have been cultivated over millennia in the Indian subcontinent. This system finds its origins in the ancient scriptures of the Vedas, Upanishads, and Puranas, and has continuously evolved through the influences of numerous civilizations and cultural traditions.

## KEY WORDS

*National Education Policy, Indian Knowledge System, Bhartiya Gyan Parampara, Indian Culture, Vedas, HEI's.*

## INTRODUCTION

Modern education is being revolutionized by incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) with thorough conceptual understanding, effectively equipping India's youth for the future. IKS embodies the rich heritage of Bharat and aims to install a sense of pride in India's cultural legacy. The Indian civilization is distinguished by two unique characteristics. Firstly, it is the only ancient civilization that still maintains a living connection to its historical roots in the modern world. Secondly, it provides comfort to individuals worldwide who are struggling with fundamental questions about life, death, and purpose, as well as those seeking to experience timeless truths in their daily lives. A new vision for India can be realized through deep introspection and by learning from sustainable practices of the past that were well ahead of their time. The Indian knowledge systems (IKS) represent a comprehensive collection of wisdom, techniques, and discoveries accumulated over centuries in India, covering diverse fields such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, and ecology. These systems, despite their substantial contributions to technological progress, have frequently been neglected in India's educational framework. Throughout history, Indian people have gained knowledge and insights by meticulously observing nature and their environment, leading to the development of concepts like sustainable agricultural methods, plant-based medicines, and ecological management. Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into Indian education supports the core principle of nurturing a sense of cultural identity and national pride, as highlighted in the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020). This policy seeks to emphasize India's rich, varied, ancient, and contemporary cultural heritage, knowledge systems, and traditions. It envisions an educational approach rooted in Indian values and principles.

## Literature Review

The Indian knowledge system, also known as the Indian school of thought or Hindu philosophy, refers to the vast body of knowledge, beliefs and practices that have been developed and passed down from ancient times in the Indian subcontinent. This knowledge system is deeply rooted in the ancient Vedic scriptures and has evolved over thousands of years, shaping the cultural, intellectual and spiritual landscape of India. (Kapil Kapoor, 2020)

The Indian Knowledge System, or IKS, is a comprehensive collection of traditional knowledge covering a wide range of disciplines, including astronomy, medicine, mathematics, the arts, and spirituality. With its roots in ancient writings like the Vedas and Upanishads, IKS has had a major impact on global and Indian knowledge paradigms. Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan are the three parts of the Indian Knowledge Systems that have evolved through trial and error, experience, and in-depth research. A renewed interest in incorporating these age-old methods with contemporary systems has emerged in recent years, motivated by the realization of their comprehensive advantages and environmentally friendly methods. We can understand the richness of contextual background of Indian knowledge system by going through its domain –

**Indian Classical Literature:** Indian classical literature is commonly described as “chaturdaśa-vidyâsthânas” (14) and includes the following aspects:

- The 4 Vedas (namely Zgveda, Yajurveda, Sâmaveda, AtharvaGaveda)
- The 6 VedâEgas (namely Æikcâ, Kalpa, VyâkaraGa, Chhandas, Niruktam and Jyotica)
- Itihâsa (RâmâyaGa and Mahâbhârata) and PurâGa (VicGupurâGa, Bhâgavata etc.)
- Dharmâûâstra (Manusm[ti, Yâjñavalkya-sm[ti, Parâûara-sm[ti etc.)
- Darceana (Six orthodox and six heterodox systems)
- Nyâya (Logic and Epistemology)

**Ayurveda:** As a key component of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Ayurveda balances the body, mind, and spirit to provide a holistic approach to care. It still serves as a fundamental component of traditional Indian medicine, having its roots in ancient Vedic texts more than 5,000 years ago. There are more than 500,000 registered Ayurvedic practitioners in India, according to the Ministry of AYUSH, demonstrating the broad use of this treatment (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023). Grand View Research (2022) projects that the global market for Ayurvedic products will reach USD 140.9 billion by 2026, indicating a rise in interest in natural healthcare. The National AYUSH Mission is promoting a comprehensive healthcare approach by progressively integrating Ayurveda into contemporary healthcare systems (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023).

**Yoga:** Yoga, a fundamental component of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), provides a comprehensive strategy for mental, spiritual, and physical well-being. With its origins in the Vedas and Upanishads more than 5,000 years ago, yoga has become a global phenomenon with more than 300 million practitioners worldwide (International Yoga Federation, 2023). The inclusion of yoga in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India emphasizes its significance by incorporating it into school curricula to promote holistic development (NEP, 2020). Additionally, in order to train certified teachers and researchers, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has implemented specialized yoga courses (UGC, 2023). The Ministry of AYUSH was founded in 2014 and uses events like the International Day of Yoga, which is observed on June 21st and attended by people from more than 190 nations, to promote yoga (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023).

**Vedic Mathematics:** Originating from the Atharva Veda, Vedic Mathematics is an age-old system of 16 sutras and 13 sub-sutras that makes quick mental computations easier (Glover, 2010). This approach is becoming more popular in contemporary education because it can improve students' cognitive and problem-solving abilities. Research shows that students who apply Vedic mathematics strategies do better on competitive tests, showing improved accuracy and speed (Sharma and Singh, 2021). Vedic Mathematics has been integrated into the school curriculum by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in recognition of its importance and to promote mathematical competency from a young age (NCERT, 2022). In order to prepare students for standardized tests such as the Common Admission Test (CAT) and the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), numerous coaching centres and educational institutions in India also use Vedic Mathematics (Rao, 2020). Through this integration, traditional knowledge is preserved while also offering cutting-edge resources for mathematical excellence.

**Classical Arts:** Indian classical arts, such as dance, theatre, and music, are essential components of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and serve to highlight the country's rich philosophical and cultural legacy. Supported by organizations such as the SangeetNatakAkademi and maintained through traditional pedagogy, these art forms have a strong connection to spiritual and cultural narratives. A 20 percent rise in student enrolment in classical arts programs over the previous ten years, according to the Ministry of Culture (2023), indicates that young people are once again interested in these subjects. Important establishments like the National School of Drama and several state academies foster talent and offer venues for creativity and performance. The incorporation of classical arts into contemporary education is emphasized in the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in order to promote a comprehensive understanding of Indian culture (NEP, 2020). By encouraging the inclusion of traditional arts in school curricula, this policy fosters cultural continuity and pride. Cultural exchange has been improved by international partnerships and performances that have increased the appeal of Indian classical arts worldwide.

## Implementation of Indian Knowledge System

The preservation of traditional knowledge in modern India depends on the incorporation of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the curriculum. IKS is emphasized in the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 as a way to promote holistic and culturally based education. This encompasses courses like yoga, Vedic mathematics, Ayurveda, and classical arts with the goal of fostering holistic growth and cultural pride. Due to

the widespread adoption of yoga and meditation classes, more than 90% of urban schools now incorporate yoga into their curricula (UGC, 2023; Ministry of Education, 2023). The establishment of departments for Ayurvedic and Vedic studies at higher education institutions like Gujarat Ayurveda University and Banaras Hindu University has drawn more students (BHU, 2022; GAU, 2023). According to the Ministry of AYUSH, enrolment in Ayurvedic courses has increased by 25% in just five years (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023). Exam scores increase by 15% when Vedic Mathematics is incorporated by NCERT, which also improves analytical abilities (NCERT, 2022; Sharma and Singh, 2021). With a 20% rise in enrolment over the previous ten years, SangeetNatakAkademi and the National School of Drama are promoting classical arts through their programs (Ministry of Culture, 2023). By supporting these initiatives, Government scholarships and online resources such as the National Digital Library of India increase access to traditional knowledge (Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan, 2023; NDLI, 2023).

The revival of traditional Indian lifestyle practices, especially yoga and ayurveda, has become very popular in India and around the world. Through diet, herbal remedies, and yogic breathing, the 3,000-year-old holistic medical system known as Ayurveda aims to balance the body's systems. The Indian Ayurvedic market was estimated to be worth USD 44.4 billion in 2021, and the Ministry of AYUSH projects that it will expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16 percent between 2022 and 2027 (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023). Yoga, which combines physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation, has also gained popularity all over the world. India is home to a large number of the world's 300 million yoga practitioners, according to the International Yoga Federation (International Yoga Federation, 2023). With yoga centers and wellness retreats helping to fuel its expansion, this worldwide interest has strengthened India's wellness tourism sector, which FICCI projects will grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 12% between 2021 and 2026 (FICCI, 2022). By incorporating traditional health practices into the country's healthcare system, the Indian Government has supported these practices through programs like the Ministry of AYUSH and the International Day of Yoga.

## Challenges

Fast globalization poses a threat to the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), which could be lost as fewer people follow these customs (UNESCO, 2022). Knowledge in disciplines like yoga, Ayurveda, and the classical arts is frequently restricted to particular communities. For example, the National Mission for Manuscripts has digitized more than 32.5 million manuscripts, demonstrating the importance of digitization (Ministry of Culture, 2023). However, cooperation between local communities, academic institutions, and Governments is required for this resource-intensive process. To stop biopiracy and guarantee the benefit of indigenous communities, intellectual property rights must be addressed (Gupta and Kumar, 2021). In order to develop future practitioners, NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on incorporating IKS into formal education (NEP, 2020). AI and virtual reality are examples of contemporary technology that helps with preservation (Sharma et al. 2020). It's critical to strike a balance between modernization and authenticity so that ethical commercialization preserves cultural integrity while offering financial incentives (Gupta & Kumar, 2021). All parties involved must work together to protect IKS.

Both opportunities and challenges have been brought about by the substantial impact of globalization on the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). It has made traditional Indian practices like yoga, Ayurveda, and classical arts more widely known throughout the world. With over 300 million yoga practitioners worldwide, the Ayurvedic product market is expected to reach USD 140.9 billion by 2026 (Grand View Research, 2022; International Yoga Federation, 2023). Globalization does, however, also bring with it commercialization, which can weaken the authenticity of customs. The commercialization of yoga, for instance, has given rise to variations that may deviate from its original principles by emphasizing marketability and physical fitness (Gupta and Kumar, 2021). Through programs such as the Ministry of AYUSH, the Indian Government strives to

preserve the integrity of customs while advancing them internationally (Ministry of AYUSH, 2023). To preserve IKS's integrity in a globalized world, it is imperative to strike a balance between innovation and preservation.

Research conducted at organizations such as the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) has demonstrated how Vedic Mathematics can improve computational efficiency by simplifying difficult mathematical problems (IIT, 2022). Furthermore, department of science and technology (DST)-funded interdisciplinary projects have integrated contemporary technology with conventional farming methods to create sustainable farming solutions (DST, 2023). Funding constraints, a lack of standardized procedures, and problems with intellectual property rights are still present. Public-private partnerships, stronger regulatory frameworks, and increased R&D investment are essential for IKS's long-term growth and international recognition.

## CONCLUSION

The Indian knowledge system is still applicable today and offers helpful advice on topics like stress management and sustainability, among others. There is a wealth of information available that can be applied to better people, communities, and society. It is a sincere action that promotes intercultural understanding, enhances students' educational experiences, and closes the knowledge gap between conventional wisdom and contemporary understanding. Integrating the IKS into higher education courses may provide a more comprehensive, diverse, and inclusive learning environment that equips students with the values, knowledge, and profound awareness of their cultural heritage they need to face the challenges of the modern world. Faculty members should be encouraged to create and instruct these courses in engaging ways in order to anticipate the impact of these initiatives beyond the classroom, as HEIs are crucial in producing the next generation of morally and culturally aware individuals who will advance India as a knowledge-driven society.

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