



## Integrating the Indian Knowledge System into Modern Education: A Critical Study

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### Abstract:

*Indian Knowledge System (IKS) represents a rich heritage of indigenous wisdom, pedagogical practices, and philosophical thought shaped over thousands of years in the Indian subcontinent. This study critically examines the concept and contemporary relevance of IKS within modern educational systems. It focuses on identifying the challenges and opportunities in integrating IKS into present-day curricula, and analysing the core principles and historical evolution of IKS-based pedagogy. The research adopts a qualitative approach of research using documentary analysis, drawing insights from classical texts, policy documents. The analysis highlights that IKS encourages holistic learning, experiential understanding, ethical development, and integrated personality growth. It supports the balanced development of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of the learner. Historically, IKS made remarkable contributions to mathematics, astronomy, medicine, arts, governance, and environmental knowledge. Its pedagogical foundations—such as the guru–shishya tradition, inquiry-based learning, and value-oriented education—demonstrate its continued relevance in contemporary educational contexts. The study finds that the integration of IKS faces notable challenges, including inadequate teacher training, limited standardized curricula, misconceptions about indigenous knowledge. Despite these constraints, significant opportunities emerge, such as fostering culturally responsive education, strengthening interdisciplinary learning, promoting value-based education, and revitalizing traditional scientific and artistic knowledge systems. The study recommends developing specialized teacher training, designing context-sensitive curricula, and building collaborations between traditional knowledge holders and modern institutions. Morally, integrating IKS into modern education is recognized as a meaningful step toward achieving holistic, inclusive, and sustainable learning.*

**Keywords:** *Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Holistic Education, Indigenous Pedagogy, Curriculum Integration, Contemporary Education.*

### Introduction:

India continues to be one of the only countries with an unbroken and highly pluralistic tradition of knowledge-making, now referred to as the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). IKS ranges over thousands of

years involving domains of knowledge including philosophy, Education system, mathematics, astronomy, medicine particularly Ayurveda, architectural design, arts as well as spirituality including Yoga. Rather surprisingly these are realistic systems giving insights into health, education and the environment and general human development. If we look at the education system at that time, we will see that ancient universities like Takshashila and Nalanda were once famous in the international market to which scholars came for study. But, during colonial rule, due to the influence of Educations models of the west, the education system in India negated Indigenous knowledge system. Continuing over the years, the process of modern education in India became a parallel of Western education and the country's intellectual legacy was forgotten. Recently, however, there have been increased efforts to reclaim and reinstate these knowledge systems into the twenty-first century learning environment. The National Education Policy 2020 has come out as a systematic approach in this direction. Today the modern education system focuses on making multilateral, inter-disciplinary school education system grounded in India but in compliance with international systems. Among them is the incorporation of IKS into the curriculum in order to ensure that the two worlds meet at the middle. This paper investigates how IKS can coexist with modern system of education to enhance holistic learning experiences. The study seeks to highlight both the transformative potential and the practical challenges of embedding IKS in contemporary curricula.

### **Review of Related Literature:**

A literature review is a critical component of research and academic writing, serving multiple essential purposes, including- Understanding Existing Knowledge, Identifying Knowledge Gaps and Selecting Appropriate Methodologies. Here researcher has studied various related works, these are as follows-

**Shanwal (2025)** Integrating Indian Knowledge System into Modern Education: an analysis of NEP 2020. Conducted a study on IKS in modern education system The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims for a holistic development that merges indigenous knowledge systems with the educational framework. To enhance the significance and effectiveness of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), it is crucial to develop a structured plan that introduces IKS-based courses across various disciplines. The research was carried out based on the method descriptive and analytical research design in the direction of qualitative approach of research. The finding of the study revealed that A systematic approach can effectively address these challenges. Graduates will then be equipped with the essential skills for the 21st century, promoting their overall development.

**Kumar et al. (2025)** Integrating Indian knowledge system-based pedagogy into formal education to address the challenges of shadow education. Conducted a study on this topic he had analysed the potential of embedding IKS based pedagogy with mainstream education to mitigate the growth of shadow education. The research was carried out based on the qualitative research approach. The findings suggest that a well-implemented IKS approach can provide a balanced education that not only improves academic out comes through IKS pedagogy.

**Singh (2024)** Indian Knowledge Systems: Preserving Ancient Wisdom in Contemporary Context made in study on this topic his paper examines the historical foundations, contemporary relevance, and integration challenges of Indian Knowledge Systems in modern educational and scientific frameworks. The research was carried out based on the method descriptive and analytical research design in the direction of qualitative approach of research The finding of the study revealed that. The preservation and integration of Indian Knowledge Systems is not just an academic exercise but a crucial component of maintaining cultural diversity, promoting sustainable development, and ensuring that the wisdom accumulated by human civilizations continues to benefit future generations.

**Kumar & Nair (2022)** study investigates the ways in which Indian Knowledge System-based activities such as yoga, meditation, and value education enhance the mental and emotional health of students. It recommends incorporating these techniques into regular school activities to help students become more self-aware and psychologically resilient.

**Singh & Tripathi (2020)** explores how interdisciplinary teaching can be used to systematically incorporate Indian Knowledge System into school curricula. The authors suggest models for curriculum integration that blend traditional Indian customs with contemporary scientific ideas, especially in areas like health, environmental science, and mathematics. They come to the conclusion that cultural sensitivity and student engagement in the classroom can be improved through careful integration.

### **Need and Significance of the Study:**

It is important to study how the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) can be included in modern education. Although India has a rich tradition of knowledge in areas like health, agriculture, environment, and ethics, this knowledge is not fully used in today's education system. This study helps to fill that gap.

The study is also important because the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 encourages the inclusion of traditional and indigenous knowledge in school and higher education. By exploring how IKS can be connected with modern subjects, this research supports the idea of holistic learning, value-based education, and sustainable development.

### **Objectives:**

- i. To analyse the relevance of IKS in modern education.
- ii. To identify the opportunities in implementing IKS in modern education.
- iii. To suggest strategies for effective integration of IKS into the education system.

### **Methodology:**

Here research has followed the approach of qualitative research, relying on an extensive review of existing literature, policy documents, and academic publications. Data sources include peer-reviewed journals, government reports such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, books by renowned scholars and empirical studies from google scholar. The method of document review is used to identify recurring themes such as Indian knowledge system, holistic education, and validation of modern education. Integrating IKS into modern education is recognized as a meaningful step toward achieving holistic, inclusive, and sustainable learning. The content of each document has reviewed in detail by the researchers.

### **Operational Definition:**

- **Indian knowledge system:** The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is an umbrella term for the vast, diverse, and deeply interconnected body of indigenous knowledge, philosophies, sciences, and practices that originated and evolved in the Indian subcontinent over millennia. Rooted primarily in Vedic literature, it represents a holistic framework of understanding that views all aspects of life—physical, mental, and spiritual—as interconnected.
- **Modern Education:** Modern education is a system that has evolved significantly from traditional models, largely driven by advancements in technology, changing societal needs, and new understanding of cognitive science. It is generally characterized by a shift from a teacher-centered, rote-memorization approach to a more learner-centered, skill-focused, and holistic one.

## Data Analysis:

**Objective–1:** To Analyse the Relevance of the IKS in Modern Education.

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) refers to the multidisciplinary body of indigenous knowledge developed over millennia across philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, arts, ethics, and spirituality. (Hoque, 2025; Desai, 2025).

**Philosophical and Epistemological Relevance:** IKS is rooted in a holistic worldview that sees knowledge (*vidyā*) as inseparable from ethical conduct (*dharma*) and societal well-being. Rather than treating knowledge as fragmented subject domains, traditional Indian thought emphasizes integration between inner wisdom and outer skills, fostering intellectual, moral, and emotional dimensions of learners. Such a framework aligns with current educational aims that prioritize social-emotional learning, ethical reasoning, and lifelong learning dispositions (Hoque, 2025). The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 explicitly advocates this epistemic integration by encouraging Indian knowledge traditions like yoga, Ayurveda, ethics, classical languages, indigenous arts, and environmental wisdom as part of mainstream education, positioning IKS not merely as cultural heritage but as an epistemic resource for contemporary learning (Sarita & Singh, 2025).

**Pedagogical Relevance:** Traditional Indian education emphasized experiential, reflective, and discussion-based learning, principles that resonate strongly with modern pedagogical theories such as constructivism and experiential learning. Techniques like *śravaṇa* (listening), *manana* (reflection), and *nididhyāsana* (meditative deep engagement) parallel contemporary emphasis on critical reflection, inquiry, and metacognition (Desai, 2025). Furthermore, IKS supports teacher–learner relationships that go beyond transmission to co-construction of knowledge. (Nirajkumar & Patel, 2025).

**Relevance to Holistic, Multidisciplinary, and Sustainable Education:** IKS inherently embodies such an integrative stance. For example, disciplines such as *Ayurveda* link biology with ethics and ecology, while *Vedic mathematics* connects numerical reasoning with cognitive strategies (Jain, 2025). Studies suggest that the inclusion of IKS fosters sustainability awareness and aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (quality education), by making education both contextually relevant and socially responsive (Majhi & Bera, 2025).

**Academic and Institutional Relevance:** Empirical and theoretical research underscores IKS’s potential in enhancing academic engagement. For instance, integrating IKS into curricula has shown positive outcomes such as improved learner engagement, stronger cultural identity, and greater relevance of education to student’s lived contexts (Gupta, 2025). This reflects an increasing recognition of IKS as an academic resource rather than peripheral content (Begum & Sankar, 2025).

**Cultural Identity and Decolonization of Curriculum:** The integration of IKS into modern education contributes to decolonizing the curriculum, a concern that has emerged strongly in global educational discourse. Modern curricula dominated by Eurocentric epistemologies often marginalize indigenous traditions. By reintegrating Indian epistemic traditions, education can support cultural agency, identity formation, and epistemic diversity, especially among learners who have historically experienced knowledge marginalization (Desai, 2025; Gupta, 2025).

**Policy Relevance and Implementation Challenges:** The NEP 2020’s strategic emphasis on IKS reflects a policy affirmation of relevance at the national level. It provides a foundation for incorporating Indian knowledge traditions across educational levels, highlighting indigenous languages, ethics, physical and mental wellness (Sarita & Singh, 2025).

## Objective–2:

To identify the opportunities in implementing the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in modern education.

The integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into modern education has gained renewed academic and policy attention in recent years. IKS is now increasingly recognized as a valuable intellectual resource capable of enriching contemporary educational discourse. The opportunities for implementing IKS arise from structural reforms in education, evolving pedagogical paradigms, technological advancements, and a growing global emphasis on indigenous and alternative knowledge systems.

**Curriculum Flexibility Opportunity:** Modern education emphasizes competency-based, multidisciplinary, and flexible curricula. This allows IKS to be integrated through core subjects, electives, interdisciplinary modules, and contextual examples. Indian contributions to mathematics, science, philosophy, ecology, and health can be meaningfully incorporated without overburdening the curriculum.

### Policy-Level Opportunities:

**Policy → (Institutions → Curriculum → Classroom)**

NEP 2020 provides **formal recognition** to IKS

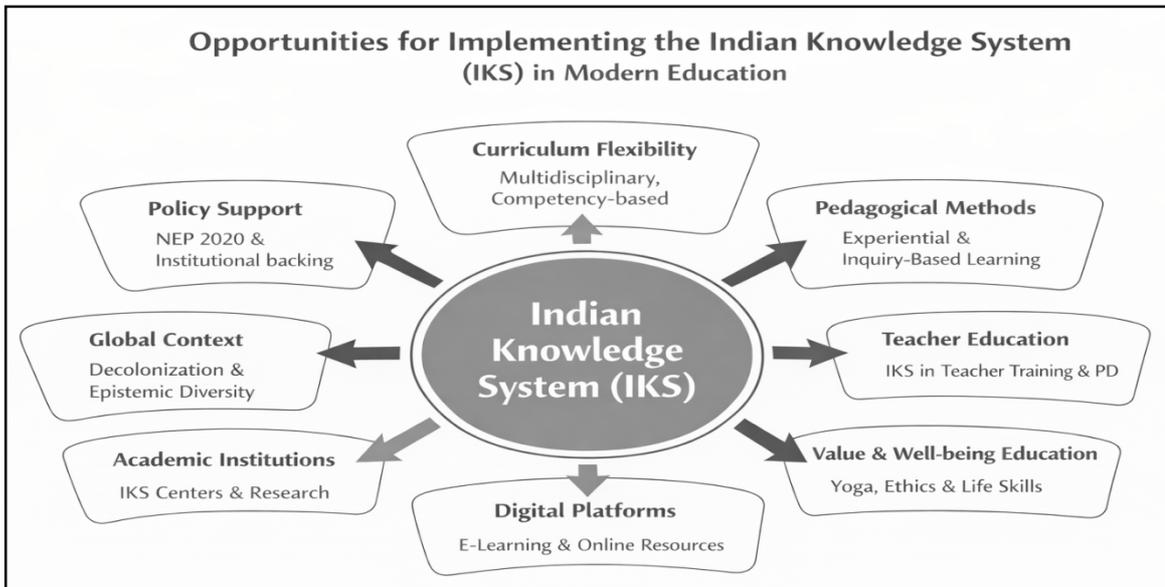
- Encourages inclusion of:
  - Indian philosophy
  - Yoga, Ayurveda
  - Indigenous sciences and arts

**Pedagogical Opportunity:** Traditional Indian pedagogical practices such as *Shravana* (listening), *Manana* (reflection), and *Nididhyasana* (deep understanding) align with contemporary constructivist, experiential, and reflective learning approaches. This compatibility provides opportunities to integrate IKS using inquiry-based, project-based, and learner-centered pedagogies.

**Opportunity in Teacher Education:** Teacher education reforms emphasize reflective practice, cultural responsiveness, and continuous professional development. Integrating IKS into pre-service and in-service teacher education programs can enhance teachers' ethical sensitivity, pedagogical competence, and cultural understanding. Well-prepared teachers are essential for the effective and critical integration of IKS into modern classrooms (Shukla, 2021; Nirajkumar & Patel, 2025).

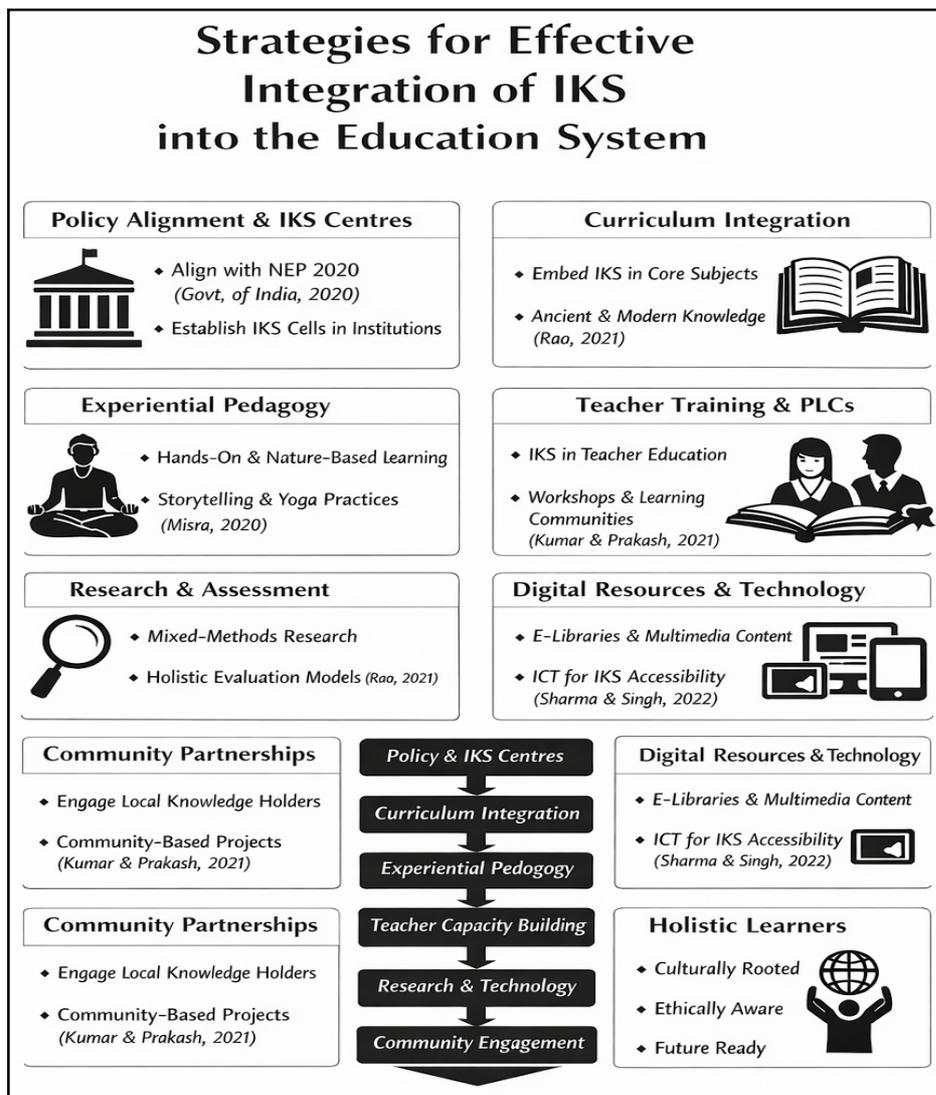
**Digital Transformation of Education:** Education is rapidly adopting digital platforms and online learning environments. Digital tools can modernize IKS presentation through multimedia resources, online courses, and virtual repositories, making it accessible to contemporary learners (Gupta, 2025).

**Value Education Opportunity:** Modern education recognizes the importance of ethics, emotional intelligence, and mental well-being. IKS offers valuable resources through concepts such as *Dharma*, *Karma*, *Ahimsa*, Yoga, and meditation. These elements support holistic development and help address contemporary challenges such as stress, anxiety, and moral disorientation among learners (Majhi & Bera, 2025).



**Objective- 3:**

To suggest strategies for effective integration of IKS into the education system.



The effective integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the contemporary education system requires a systematic, multi-dimensional strategy that bridges traditional wisdom with modern pedagogical practices. Such integration is essential for fostering holistic learning, cultural rootedness, ethical reasoning, and sustainable development, as emphasized by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 (Government of India, 2020).

The effective integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the education system necessitates a comprehensive and structured framework that connects policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and community engagement. In alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, IKS integration aims to promote holistic education by blending indigenous knowledge traditions with modern disciplinary knowledge (Government of India, 2020). The following visual model presents key strategies for this integration, including institutional support through IKS centres, interdisciplinary curriculum design, experiential and culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher capacity building, research-based assessment practices, and the use of digital technologies. The framework also highlights the critical role of community participation in preserving and transmitting traditional knowledge (Kumar & Prakash, 2021).

### **Findings of the Study:**

**Objective–1:** The study finds that the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) remains highly relevant in modern education due to its holistic, ethical, and experiential orientation. IKS supports integrated cognitive, emotional, moral, and spiritual development of learners. Its epistemological foundations align with contemporary educational priorities such as interdisciplinary learning, sustainability, value education, and social-emotional learning.

**Objective–2:** The study reveals significant opportunities for implementing IKS in modern education due to curriculum flexibility, policy support, pedagogical compatibility, and digital advancement. NEP 2020 provides institutional legitimacy, while learner-centered and competency-based curricula allow interdisciplinary integration of IKS.

**Objective–3:** The findings indicate that effective integration of IKS requires coordinated strategies across policy, curriculum, pedagogy, teacher education, research, and community engagement. Establishing IKS cells, interdisciplinary curriculum design, experiential pedagogy, teacher capacity building, holistic assessment, and digital resource development emerge as key strategies. Collaboration with traditional knowledge holders is essential to ensure authenticity, contextual relevance, and sustainability of IKS integration within formal education systems.

### **Discussion:**

The findings collectively suggest that integrating IKS into modern education is both feasible and pedagogically valuable when approached systematically. While challenges such as limited teacher preparedness and curriculum standardization persist, policy initiatives like NEP 2020 and contemporary pedagogical reforms provide strong enabling conditions. The alignment of IKS with holistic, interdisciplinary, and value-oriented education positions it as a transformative force capable of addressing cultural alienation, ethical concerns, and sustainability challenges in modern education.

### **Conclusion:**

The study concludes that the Indian Knowledge System holds substantial potential to enrich modern education by fostering holistic, culturally rooted, and sustainable learning. Effective integration requires structured strategies, supportive policies, trained educators, and active community participation. By bridging

ancient wisdom with contemporary educational needs, IKS integration can contribute meaningfully to inclusive education and national development, aligning education with ethical values, cultural identity, and the vision of *Atmanirbhar Bharat*.

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