



## Indian Knowledge Systems: A Pathway to Holistic Modern Education

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### Abstract:

*This study explores the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into contemporary education to create a more holistic, value-oriented, and culturally grounded learning framework. The introduction highlights the rich intellectual traditions of India ranging from mathematics, astronomy, and medicine to philosophy, arts, linguistics, and ecology and emphasizes their relevance in addressing modern educational challenges. The goals of education, as discussed in this research, extend beyond academic achievement to include ethical development, critical thinking, environmental consciousness, and emotional well-being. By aligning these goals with the principles of IKS, the study proposes an educational model that nurtures both individual potential and societal harmony. The methodology adopts a qualitative approach, examining existing literature, educational policies, and classroom practices while incorporating insights from educators and learner's familiar with IKS-based programs. Through thematic analysis, the research identifies key components experiential learning, multidisciplinary integration, contemplative practices, and community-based knowledge—as effective strategies for modern pedagogy. The findings reveal that incorporating IKS enhances learner engagement, promotes deeper understanding, and fosters cultural pride, while also strengthening competencies such as creativity, resilience, and collaborative learning. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of education as a transformative force capable of balancing scientific progress with human values. The educational significance of this research lies in its demonstration that IKS can enrich modern curricula, support holistic development, and contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable educational ecosystem. Ultimately, the study positions Indian Knowledge Systems as a vital pathway toward reimagining modern education for the 21st century.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Education, Sustainable Development, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), Holistic Education, Cultural Integration, Multidisciplinary Approach, Educational Innovation.*

### Introduction:

In the contemporary era of rapid technological advancement and globalization, modern education systems are increasingly being questioned for their overemphasis on rote learning, examination-oriented outcomes,

and limited attention to ethical, emotional, and holistic development of learners. In this context, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) emerges as a significant and relevant framework that offers an integrated and value-based approach to education. Rooted in India's ancient intellectual traditions, IKS represents a vast body of knowledge developed over millennia, encompassing philosophy, science, health, education, astronomy, and spiritual wisdom. Rather than being confined to the past, these knowledge traditions provide meaningful pathways for enriching and transforming modern education. The Indian Knowledge System promotes holistic learning by addressing the physical, mental, emotional, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of human development. Key components of IKS such as Yoga, Ayurveda, astronomy, and traditional Indian education systems offer valuable insights for creating balanced and learner centered educational practices. Yoga, for instance, contributes to mental wellbeing, concentration, emotional regulation, and physical health, making it highly relevant for students coping with academic stress and lifestyle related challenges. Ayurveda emphasizes preventive healthcare, harmony with nature, and sustainable living, which align closely with modern concerns related to wellness and environmental responsibility. Similarly, India's rich astronomical traditions reflect advanced scientific thinking, observation skills, and mathematical reasoning, offering opportunities to strengthen scientific inquiry and interdisciplinary learning in contemporary classrooms. Beyond theoretical contributions, the practical aspects of IKS play a crucial role in its relevance to modern education. Traditional pedagogical practices such as the guru shishya parampara highlight personalized learning, mentorship, experiential education, and moral development. These practices encourage active participation, critical thinking, and real-life application of knowledge, addressing the limitations of rigid, content-heavy curricula. Incorporating experiential learning methods, community-based education, meditation practices, and value-oriented discussions inspired by IKS can foster responsible, socially conscious, and emotionally resilient learners. The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into modern education is further reinforced by recent educational reforms such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates for multidisciplinary learning, cultural rootedness, ethical values, and holistic development. By embedding IKS into curricula, pedagogy, and institutional practices, education can move beyond mere skill acquisition to nurture well-rounded individuals equipped to face global challenges while remaining connected to their cultural heritage. Thus, Indian Knowledge System serves as a powerful pathway to holistic modern education, offering both conceptual foundations and practical strategies for creating an inclusive, value-driven, and sustainable educational framework suited to the needs of the twenty-first century.

### **Objectives:**

- To identify key components of the Indian knowledge system for promoting modern education.
- To find out the practical aspect of IKS in modern education.

### **Methodology:**

This study adopts a descriptive approach, aiming to analyse the Indian Knowledge System: A Pathway to Holistic Modern Education in this context. A systematic review of existing literature was conducted, drawing from secondary sources such as academic journals, reports, news articles, websites, research papers, and other scholarly publications.

### **Review of related literature :**

**Vageeshan H.,kamalakar G . (2025)** Conduct a study on “integrating Indian knowledge system in education: a study of government reform. This study explore the integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into education through an analysis of government reforms. The primary objectives of the study are to

preserve indigenous knowledge and to incorporate ancient Indian wisdom, science, and philosophy into the contemporary education system. The findings reveal that IKS highlights the importance of traditional knowledge and supports curricula that represent India's rich cultural and philosophical diversity, thereby strengthening students' engagement and sense of identity. Furthermore, the inclusion of IKS promotes a holistic educational approach by bridging disciplinary boundaries and nurturing critical thinking and creativity. Government reforms also emphasize skill-oriented education, which aligns with IKS by enhancing practical skills relevant to both local and global contexts, ultimately improving learners' employability.

**Shanwal.V.K,(2025)** conduct a study on “integrating Indian knowledge system into Morden education: an analysis of NEP 2020 “ The objective of this article is to evaluate the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 for integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into modern education. The findings indicate that NEP 2020 explicitly promotes the inclusion of IKS in both school and higher education curricula. The study highlights the transformative potential of IKS in Indian higher education by supporting practices that foster inclusive, holistic, and sustainable learning. It also emphasizes the role of andragogy in facilitating adult and autonomous learning for new-age learners. Furthermore, the article stresses the importance of identifying the challenges and opportunities involved in integrating IKS into the higher education system.

### **Operational Definition:**

**Indian knowledge system:** The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a comprehensive body of traditional knowledge, practices, and philosophies from India that spans subjects like philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, arts, and spirituality. Rooted in ancient texts and oral traditions, IKS includes diverse disciplines such as the Vedas, Ayurveda, Yoga, and various Indian languages and performing arts. Initiatives are underway to promote interdisciplinary research, preserve this knowledge, and integrate it into modern education to address contemporary challenges.

**NEP-2020:** NEP 2020 is India's National Education Policy of 2020, the first of the 21st century, designed to overhaul the country's education system by making it more holistic, flexible, and learner-centric. It introduces a new academic structure (5+3+3+4), promotes multilingualism, and emphasizes skills like vocational training, critical thinking, and the integration of technology in education. The policy is built on the pillars of Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability.

**Sustainable development:** Sustainable development in education, also known as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), is about equipping people with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to build a more sustainable future for the environment, economy, and society. It involves integrating key global challenges like climate change, poverty, and inequality into teaching and learning, while promoting critical thinking and empowering learners to act.

**Holistic education:** Holistic education focuses on the overall development of a learner rather than only academic achievement. It nurtures the intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual aspects of students so they can grow as balanced human beings. Instead of memorizing facts, holistic learning encourages creativity, critical thinking, values, self-awareness, and real-life skills. It aims to create responsible, confident, and compassionate individuals who can contribute positively to society.

**Cultural integration:** Cultural integration in education means including local traditions, languages, arts, values, and knowledge systems in the learning process. It helps students understand their heritage and develop pride in their cultural identity. When cultural practices—such as festivals, classical arts, environmental traditions, or historical wisdom—become part of teaching, learning becomes more

meaningful and relatable. Cultural integration strengthens social harmony and creates a sense of belonging among students from diverse backgrounds.

**Multidisciplinary approach:** A multidisciplinary approach connects different subjects so that students can understand a concept from multiple angles. Instead of studying each subject in isolation, this method blends knowledge from science, history, arts, mathematics, health, and culture to solve real-world problems. It encourages flexible thinking, creativity, and deeper understanding. NEP 2020 promotes this approach so learners can explore varied fields and develop broader skills for the future.

### **Finding:**

#### **Objective -1**

The study reveals that the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) consists of diverse and well-structured components that significantly contribute to the enrichment of modern education. One of the major findings is that Yoga functions not only as a physical discipline but also as an educational tool that promotes mental clarity, emotional balance, self-control, and ethical awareness. Its inclusion in educational institutions supports holistic development and enhances students' learning capacities. Another important component identified is Ayurveda, which emphasizes preventive healthcare, balanced lifestyle, and harmony between human beings and nature. The findings indicate that Ayurvedic knowledge contributes to modern education by fostering health awareness, sustainable living practices, and environmental consciousness among learners. This component aligns with the contemporary educational focus on wellness and sustainable development. The study also highlights Indian astronomical knowledge as a vital component of IKS that reflects advanced scientific understanding developed through observation, calculation, and logical reasoning. Incorporating traditional astronomical concepts into modern science education encourages analytical thinking, curiosity, and respect for indigenous scientific contributions. This integration strengthens interdisciplinary learning and enhances students' appreciation of scientific heritage. Additionally, the traditional Indian education system, particularly the gurukula and guru shishya parampara, emerges as a significant component promoting learner-centered education. The findings show that this system emphasized personalized instruction, experiential learning, moral education, and life skills development. Such components address the limitations of modern examination-oriented education by nurturing character, discipline, and critical thinking. Furthermore, the study finds that value-based education rooted in Indian philosophical traditions plays a crucial role in shaping responsible and ethically grounded individuals. Concepts such as dharma, karma, and self-realization provide moral frameworks that support social harmony and personal growth within modern educational contexts.

Overall, the findings confirm that the components of the Indian Knowledge System are highly relevant for promoting modern education. When integrated thoughtfully, these components enrich contemporary curricula by balancing intellectual advancement with ethical values, cultural awareness, and holistic human development.

#### **Objective -2**

The analysis of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) reveals that its practical application in modern education significantly contributes to holistic learning and learner development. One of the key findings is that practices such as Yoga and meditation, when integrated into school and higher education curricula, positively influence students' physical health, mental well-being, concentration, and emotional stability. Regular engagement in yogic practices has been found to reduce academic stress, enhance attention span, and promote self-discipline, thereby creating a supportive learning environment. Another important finding relates to Ayurveda, which emphasizes preventive healthcare, balanced lifestyle, and harmony with nature.

The incorporation of Ayurvedic principles in educational settings through awareness programs, lifestyle education, and wellness modules encourages students to adopt healthy habits and develop environmental sensitivity. This practical knowledge aligns with modern educational goals of promoting sustainable development and holistic health. The study also highlights the relevance of traditional Indian astronomy and scientific knowledge, which demonstrates advanced observational skills, mathematical reasoning, and scientific inquiry. Integrating these concepts into modern science education enhances interdisciplinary learning and fosters curiosity and analytical thinking among students. Such integration helps learners appreciate indigenous scientific contributions while strengthening their understanding of contemporary scientific concepts. Findings further indicate that traditional pedagogical practices, particularly the guru–shishya parampara, offer valuable insights for modern teaching-learning processes. Personalized mentorship, experiential learning, moral instruction, and value-based education are practical elements of this system that address the limitations of examination-oriented education. These practices promote critical thinking, ethical awareness, and real-life application of knowledge. Additionally, the practical implementation of IKS through project-based learning, community engagement, storytelling, and experiential activities encourages active participation and learner autonomy. Students become more connected to their cultural roots while developing social responsibility and problem-solving skills relevant to modern society.

Overall, the findings suggest that the practical aspects of the Indian Knowledge System, when thoughtfully integrated into modern education, enhance academic effectiveness, personal growth, and social consciousness. IKS serves not merely as a cultural heritage but as a functional and transformative framework capable of enriching contemporary educational practices in alignment with holistic and sustainable development goals.

#### **Analysis:**

**Ayurveda:** Ayurveda is one of India’s oldest medical traditions and focuses on maintaining overall well-being by balancing the mind, body, and spirit. It is founded on the principles of three vital energies Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, which shape an individual’s physical and mental health. Ayurvedic healing uses natural methods such as herbal medicines, healthy diet patterns, lifestyle regulation, detoxification practices, and rejuvenation therapies. It strongly promotes preventive healthcare through immunity-building, seasonal routines, and mindful living. In today’s world, Ayurveda remains highly relevant as it helps manage stress, chronic conditions, and lifestyle diseases while providing sustainable and holistic alternatives alongside modern medical approaches.

Ayurveda supports modern education and holistic development by promoting physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Its principles of balanced diet, proper sleep, seasonal routines, and natural remedies encourage healthy lifestyle habits among students. Ayurveda’s focus on immunity, stress reduction, and mental clarity helps learners stay focused and manage academic pressure more effectively. Ayurveda teaches harmony between body, mind, and environment. This aligns with modern goals of character building, emotional intelligence, and sustainable living. Practices like meditation, mindful eating, herbal awareness, and self-care cultivate self-discipline, inner peace, and resilience. By integrating Ayurveda into modern learning, students develop not only knowledge but also wellness, responsibility, and a deeper understanding of healthy living.

**Yoga:** Yoga is a comprehensive discipline that combines physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation to create harmony between the body, mind, and soul. Originating from Vedic philosophy, its aim is to achieve inner peace, self-awareness, and overall well-being. Practicing yoga improves flexibility, concentration, emotional balance, and physical strength. It is widely recognized as an effective approach for reducing stress and improving mental clarity. More than just exercise, yoga represents a lifestyle that

encourages mindfulness, moral values, and disciplined living. Today, it is embraced globally as a holistic practice that supports physical health, emotional wellness, and spiritual growth.

Yoga supports modern education by improving students' concentration, memory, and emotional balance. Regular practice of breathing exercises and simple postures helps reduce stress and anxiety, allowing learners to stay calm and focused during studies and examinations. Yoga also strengthens the body, improves posture, and boosts energy levels, which helps students participate more actively in classroom activities. Beyond physical benefits, yoga builds discipline, self-control, and a positive mindset quality that are essential for academic success. It encourages mindfulness, empathy, and peaceful behavior, creating a healthier learning environment. By including yoga in schools and colleges, modern education becomes more holistic, promoting both academic growth and overall well-being.

**Indian mathematics and astronomy:** Indian contributions to mathematics and astronomy have played a significant role in shaping global scientific knowledge. Thinkers such as Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, and Bhaskara introduced key ideas like zero, the concept of infinity, algebraic methods, and early forms of trigonometry. Indian astronomers closely studied planetary positions, eclipses, and patterns used to develop calendars for agriculture and religious activities. Foundational works like the Surya Siddhanta provided advanced principles for astronomical calculations. These achievements influenced scientific traditions in many regions, including the Arab world and Europe. Even today, Indian mathematical concepts support modern technological innovations, while ancient astronomical insights contribute to contemporary space science and research.

Indian mathematics and astronomy contribute to modern education by strengthening logical thinking, problem-solving, and scientific understanding among students. Ancient concepts such as zero, decimal systems, algebra, and early trigonometry form the foundation of today's mathematics and continue to support subjects like science, engineering, and technology. These principles help learners understand complex ideas in a clear and practical way. Astronomy from the Indian tradition encourages curiosity, observation skills, and a scientific mindset. Traditional knowledge of planetary movements, calendars, and time measurement introduces students to early scientific methods and critical thinking. When these ideas are included in modern education, they make learning more meaningful, show the deep scientific heritage of India, and inspire students to explore fields like space science, physics, data analysis, and research.

**Indian education system:** The traditional Indian education system was designed to promote all-round development, focusing equally on knowledge, skills, and character formation. Learning took place in gurukuls and major universities such as Nalanda and Takshashila, where students received intellectual, spiritual, and hands-on training. The curriculum covered a wide range of subjects, including philosophy, logic, medicine, mathematics, arts, and statecraft. Teachers, or gurus, played a central role by fostering discipline, moral values, and practical learning through close interaction with students. Knowledge was shared both orally and through written texts, combining scientific understanding with ethical principles. This educational model produced visionary thinkers and leaders. Today, its focus on holistic development and value-based learning is being reintroduced to enrich modern educational practices.

The ancient Indian education system supports modern learning by promoting holistic growth instead of focusing only on exams. Gurukul traditions encouraged close teacher student relationships, value-based learning, discipline, and practical knowledge ideas that are still useful today. This system emphasizes character development, ethics, and real-life skills, which modern education aims to strengthen. It also supported multidisciplinary learning, where students studied philosophy, mathematics, medicine, arts, and nature together. This approach matches the modern NEP 2020 focus on creativity, experiential learning, and

overall development. By bringing these traditional principles into today's classrooms, education becomes more balanced, meaningful, and connected to everyday life.

**Ethics and moral philosophy:** Ethical principles within the Indian Knowledge System arise from the concept of dharma, which outlines righteous conduct for individuals and society. Classical texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Dharma shastras provide guidance on moral behavior, emphasizing honesty, non-violence, empathy, and fairness. Ethical living was viewed as essential for maintaining balance between humans, society, and nature. Ideas like karma and ahimsa promoted responsibility, peaceful living, and respect for all beings. These age-old ethical frameworks continue to influence modern leadership, corporate ethics, and social justice movements, offering enduring insights for responsible decision-making in contemporary society.

Ethics and moral philosophy strengthen modern education by guiding students to make responsible and fair decisions. Rooted in ideas like dharma, truthfulness, non-violence, respect, and compassion, these values help learners develop good character and positive social behavior. When students understand concepts such as karma and accountability, they become more aware of the impact of their actions on others and the environment. Including ethics in education also creates a healthy, peaceful learning atmosphere. It encourages honesty, cooperation, empathy, and discipline qualities needed for both personal success and social harmony. By connecting traditional moral teachings with modern life, education becomes more meaningful and helps build thoughtful, ethical, and responsible citizens.

**Practical health and wellness** IKS provide an applied approach to physical and mental health through Yoga and Ayurveda. Schools can include yoga postures, breathing exercises, and meditation as part of daily routines. These practices help reduce anxiety, improve concentration, regulate emotions, and enhance cognitive performance. Concepts like balanced diet, daily routines (dinacharya), seasonal habits (ritucharya), and herbal health practices can support school health programs. This makes students aware of preventive healthcare, immunity building, and mindful living.

**Experiential and value-based learning** the traditional gurukul system focused on experiential, real-world learning. Modern applications include Mentor-student relationship models, Project-based learning, Outdoor learning (nature walks, observation-based study), Skill-based learning (craft, arts, practical science)

**Practical scientific learning** IKS includes powerful mathematical techniques and observational astronomy that can be practically taught. Vedic mathematics offers speed-based strategies that improve numerical skills and logical reasoning. Astronomy from ancient texts teaches students how to observe the sky, understand planetary motion, and relate science to everyday life.

**Practical culture and creative** IKS integrates arts not only as subjects but as practical tools for learning. Classical dance, music, and storytelling used for emotional and aesthetic development Theatre and folk art for communication skills Literature classes for moral and philosophical understanding.

### **Conclusion:**

The study shows that the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) can greatly support modern education. Practices like Yoga, Ayurveda, Indian mathematics, ethical values, environmental wisdom, and the traditional learning system help students develop physically, mentally, and morally. These elements make lea. The Indian Knowledge System provides a holistic foundation for modern education, combining physical, mental, spiritual, ethical, and intellectual development. Recommend that to strengthen the integration of the Indian Knowledge System in modern education, schools and colleges need to focus on improving teacher training, developing clear and practical learning materials, and creating more opportunities for students to learn

through real-life activities. Collaboration with experts in Ayurveda, yoga, culture, and traditional sciences can help ensure authentic knowledge is shared in the classroom. Institutions should also promote awareness programs and supportive policies so that IKS becomes a natural part of daily learning rather than an additional subject. Through these steps, the education system can successfully blend traditional wisdom with modern learning needs.

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