



## Indian Knowledge System in Modern Curriculum: Towards Holistic Learning

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### Abstract:

*The modern curriculum often places primary emphasis on intellectual development, resulting in limited focus on cultural grounding, value-based education, and experiential learning. In response to this gap, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 highlights the significance of integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into contemporary education. The aim of this research is to examine the extent to which IKS can influence the modern curriculum in promoting holistic learning and to explore effective strategies for its implementation, along with the challenges that may arise in the process. This study adopts a qualitative content analysis approach based on a systematic review of secondary data. Relevant research articles, academic journals, policy documents, concept notes, NEP-2020 provisions, and UGC guidelines were carefully analysed to understand the conceptual and practical dimensions of IKS integration. The findings indicate that the Indian Knowledge System holds strong potential to enrich multiple areas of the modern curriculum, including medicine, science, research methodologies, teaching practices, and curriculum design. Integrating IKS supports holistic learning by fostering ethical values, cultural awareness, creativity, emotional well-being, and real-life application of knowledge. However, its implementation faces several challenges such as lack of teacher training, insufficient organizational support, limited awareness, and the need for well-structured curricular frameworks. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to developing improved and culturally rooted curricula that support the overall development of students. By embedding IKS meaningfully within modern education, holistic learning becomes a viable pathway for shaping responsible, competent, and culturally grounded learners.*

**Keywords:** Modern Curriculum, Indian knowledge system, holistic learning, NEP 2020. Curriculum Development, Educational Reform.

### Introduction:

Education has always been central to the civilizational ethos of India, serving not merely as a means of acquiring information but as a holistic process aimed at the development of the individual and society. The Indian Knowledge System (IKS), rooted in ancient texts, traditions, and lived practices, represents a rich and

diverse body of knowledge encompassing philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, ecology, arts, ethics, and spirituality. Unlike fragmented modern disciplinary approaches, the Indian knowledge tradition emphasized the integration of intellectual, moral, physical, and spiritual dimensions of learning. In the contemporary context, marked by rapid technological advancement, globalization, and complex social challenges, there is a growing realization that education systems must move beyond rote learning and narrow skill acquisition towards more holistic and value-based models of learning.

Modern curricula, largely influenced by colonial legacies and Western epistemological frameworks, have often marginalized indigenous knowledge systems, including IKS. While modern education has contributed significantly to scientific progress and economic development, it has also been criticized for promoting excessive specialization, learner alienation, and a disconnect between knowledge and lived realities. This has led to a renewed academic and policy-level interest in reintegrating Indian Knowledge Systems into contemporary education, not as a rejection of modern science, but as a complementary and enriching perspective that fosters balance, sustainability, and ethical responsibility.

The concept of holistic learning aligns closely with the foundational principles of the Indian Knowledge System. Traditional Indian education, exemplified by the Gurukul system, emphasized experiential learning, dialogue, self-discipline, and the cultivation of character alongside intellectual growth. Knowledge (Jnana) was inseparable from wisdom (Prajna) and action (Karma), ensuring that learning contributed to both personal transformation and social well-being. Disciplines such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Astronomy, Mathematics, Architecture, Linguistics, and Environmental Ethics demonstrate the scientific rigor and interdisciplinary nature of IKS, offering valuable insights for addressing contemporary issues such as mental health, environmental sustainability, and ethical governance.

In recent years, policy initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 have explicitly recognized the importance of integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into the modern curriculum. The policy advocates for a multidisciplinary, flexible, and culturally rooted education that nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and ethical values. Incorporating IKS into school and higher education curricula can promote contextual learning, cultural self-confidence, and a deeper understanding of India's intellectual heritage while maintaining global standards of knowledge and innovation.

This paper seeks to examine the relevance and potential of integrating the Indian Knowledge System into the modern curriculum as a pathway towards holistic learning. It explores how IKS can contribute to learner-centered education, interdisciplinary thinking, and value-based development in contemporary times. By bridging ancient wisdom with modern pedagogical practices, the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems holds the promise of creating an education system that is inclusive, meaningful, and responsive to the needs of both individuals and society.

**Curriculum:** The Latin word “curare” is where the English term “curriculum” comes from. To curare is to run or to move forward. The term describes how children develop into mature people via their experiences and actions. The curriculum serves as the foundation for the learning objectives and exercises that develop the teaching and learning process (Phlebolith, 2024). Curriculum can be described in terms of content (the way we organize and digest knowledge) or subject matter (math, science, English, history, and so on). Nature I: It is well-structured and ordered. II. The nature of it is progressive. III. It is thorough and integrated. It has a dynamic character.

**Holistic learning:** In addition to imparting academic knowledge, holistic learning places an emphasis on students' physical, mental, spiritual, intellectual, and creative development. It supports students' consolidation, critical thinking, and practical learning. The educational idea of holistic learning seeks to

develop the full person—intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, and creatively. The integration of many knowledge forms, the significance of relationships and human values in the learning environment, and experiential learning—which offers hands-on or laboratory work—are all highlighted in holistic education.

**Indian knowledge system:** The rich and ancient body of knowledge that originated in India and developed over millennia is represented by the Indian knowledge system. It is firmly ingrained in the nation's scientific, philosophical, artistic, linguistic, medical, and governmental traditions as well as in philosophy, science, art, and language. The comprehensive approach of the Indian knowledge system, which aims to achieve balance between the material and spiritual facets of life, is what makes it unique. Rajneet Quart and Ryan Jacob, 2024

The courses are –

- I. Indian philosophy – which gives students knowledge about what the Indian knowledge system is like and provides knowledge about the existence or consciousness of the soul or god, six philosophy school, epistemology, metaphysics, Axiology logic etc.
- II. Science and Mathematics – which includes arithmetic, measurement, metallurgy, etc. Aryabhata discovery of zero which provides accurate knowledge about mathematics.
- III. Medicine and Health- it provides knowledge about Ayurveda and herbal medicine. Srishti discovered herbal and Ayurveda Medicine which provided knowledge about medicine.
- IV. Yoga and concentration which gives us knowledge about yoga and the eight limbs of yoga. Concentration helps to concentrate and unify the mind, there by exercising the mind and helping in self – control and self-discipline.
- V. Also classical, art, Sanskrit literature, devourment ethics etc.

**NEP-2020:** India's new education policy, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, aims to update the educational system to suit the demands of the twenty-first century. On July 29, 2020, the Indian government gave their approval. The main objective of NEP-2020 is to make education more comprehensive, adaptable, and multidisciplinary while also being in line with the objectives of equity, quality, and access for all students. A redesigned 5+3+3+4 school structure, an emphasis on basic reading and numeracy, a greater emphasis on technology and flexibility in higher education, and new frameworks for teacher preparation are some of the salient aspects. Access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability are the five pillars around which the policy is based. Vision I. Encourages creativity and critical thinking. II. cultivates morally upright and accountable citizenry. III. Preserves Indian traditions and culture. IV. Fosters competency and skill development. V. Gets students ready for the global economy.

**Curriculum Development:** Curriculum Development is the systematic process of planning, creating and updating educational programs to ensure students acquire specific Knowledge and skills. Curriculum development constructs a curriculum without deciding it's goals, content, learning experiences and evaluation.

#### **Objectives of study:**

1. To understand the Holistic learning in modern Curriculum.
2. To analysis the impact of Indian knowledge system on Holistic learning in modern Curriculum.

3. To find out the influence of Indian knowledge system in modern Curriculum.
4. To find out the challenges in implementation of Indian knowledge system in modern curriculum

### **Review Of Related literature:**

Rahman Q. (2024) conducted a study titled “*Curriculum and Pedagogical Practices in Indian Knowledge System.*” The study emphasizes that individual and community well-being, along with quality of life, are crucial in today’s technologically advanced and rapidly evolving world. Recent literature highlights the growing integration of artificial intelligence, particularly in fields such as medicine.

The proposed work focuses on the domains of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and mindfulness practices. It underscores their relevance in promoting the holistic development of students and enhancing community wellness. The study aligns with the objectives of the National Education Policy (2020), advocating for value-based, culturally rooted, and integrative educational practices that support both personal growth and societal development.

Bhardwaj et al. (2024) conducted a study titled “*Curriculum and NEP-2020: Perspectives and Inter-connections.*” The purpose of the study was to analyze the concept of curriculum from various learning perspectives and examine how NEP-2020 draws inferences from these theoretical foundations.

The study suggests that this is an opportune time to improve quality, flexibility, and innovation within the Indian education system. It emphasizes that the curriculum should be enriched by drawing upon India’s diverse culture, knowledge traditions, and heritage. Simultaneously, it should integrate local knowledge systems and cultural contexts while incorporating modern learning approaches developed by curriculum theorists over the past century.

The research highlights the need for a balanced curriculum that connects traditional Indian knowledge with contemporary educational theories to meet present and future educational demands.

Desai’s study (2025) examines the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into modern education as a way to enrich curriculum design and promote holistic learning. This research emphasizes experiential and value-based education drawn from IKS traditions—including Gurukul pedagogy, ecological wisdom, and ethical reasoning—to address challenges such as rote learning and cultural disconnection in current educational systems. The paper also evaluates policy frameworks, particularly the *National Education Policy (NEP) 2020*, and highlights case studies where IKS elements have successfully enhanced student engagement and sustainability awareness.

Majhi & Bera (2025) investigate how integrating IKS with the modern education system contributes to sustainable and culturally relevant learning environments. Their qualitative research suggests that traditional Indian knowledge—such as Vedic mathematics, Ayurveda, and yogic sciences—supports SDG 4 (quality education) by fostering inclusivity, creativity, and stronger teacher–student relationships. The study also notes that meaningful integration requires curriculum redesign, teacher training, and institutional support for effective implementation.

Jacob & Gaur (2024) focus on how Indian Knowledge Systems can be implemented in secondary school curricula to foster holistic development. Their research highlights IKS contributions to intellectual, emotional, ethical, and metaphysical growth, aligning with holistic learning goals. They also discuss the perspectives of educators and learners on IKS integration and identify obstacles (such as rigid curricular

structures) along with strategies for successful implementation, reinforcing the idea that IKS enhances personal and cognitive development beyond conventional academic outcomes.

Niraj Kumar & Patel (2025) review the roles that teachers, schools, and government institutions play in the integration of IKS into the curriculum. The authors argue that effective IKS implementation depends not only on curriculum content but also on pedagogical innovation, institutional support, teacher preparedness, and policy advocacy. They emphasize that without clear guidelines and educator training, the potential of Indian knowledge traditions remains underutilized in educational practice.

Hoque's critical review (2025) provides an analytical overview of the challenges and possibilities in embedding Indian Knowledge Systems in contemporary education. Drawing on national policy directives (NEP 2020) and global examples of indigenous knowledge integration, the paper highlights barriers such as Eurocentric curricular dominance, lack of structured frameworks, and insufficient scholarly discourse. It also discusses pedagogical approaches—like storytelling, experiential learning, and indigenous methodologies—that could support deeper integration of holistic knowledge systems into mainstream curricula.

Acharya's study (2025) explores the theoretical foundations of IKS and its practical relevance to modern curriculum reforms. This research highlights IKS's potential to decolonize education by grounding learning in culturally rooted knowledge bodies like Vedic logic, traditional ecology, and Indian philosophical thought. Furthermore, it discusses the global implications of IKS integration, including enhanced critical thinking, ethical reasoning, cultural consciousness, and curriculum inclusivity.

### **Methodology:**

This study is mainly descriptive in nature. Secondary data are used for the purpose of the study. The secondary data were collected from different books, research articles, and websites. Then, the collected data was analysed qualitatively and discussed accordingly as per the objectives of the study.

### **Findings and Discussion:**

#### **OB. 1. To Understand the holistic learning in modern Curriculum.**

In terms of school curriculum the curriculum and teaching method will be transformed into a 5+3+3+4 structure for 3–18-year-olds. This redesign focuses on play based learning in the foundation stage emphasis will be on reducing rote memorization, for steering holistic development and integrating subjects such as physical education and arts seamlessly into the curriculum. Language learning, particularly the use of mother tongues will play a crucial role, promoting multilingualism and cultural understanding. Standards at assessment will shift from rote test to more formative evaluation, promoting ongoing development and critical thinking. Measures will be implemented for gifted students including support for specialized national competitions, in various fields. This initiative aims to provide a well- rounded and relevant education that prepares students for future challenges while being grounded in India culture and values. The universities of Taxila and Nalanda have a rich history of Inclusive and multidisciplinary education. This type of education included not just traditional subjects but also practical skill and science, which are now often grouped under liberal arts. The revival of this approach in modern Indian education is essential for 21<sup>st</sup> – century need. Research shows that combining humanities and arts with STEM subject in undergraduate education leads to better learning outcome. Students become more creative, improve their critical thinking, problem- solving skills and engage more deeply with their students. A holistic education aims to develop various human capacities – intellectual, social, emotional, and moral prepared for modern challenges.

The national education policy 2020 emphasizes the need for such an education system to prepare Indians for the future. Even technical institutes like IITs will incorporate more arts and humanities, while arts students will again gain knowledge in science. A flexible Curriculum will encourage students to explore various subjects and learn throughout their lives. The degree structure will be adapted to provide flexibility. Students can complete a degree in 3 or 4 years with multiple exit options for different qualifications. An Academic Bank Of Credit (ABC) will help track earned credits, making it easier for institutions to award degrees based on students' achievements. Various master's program designs will be offered, including options focused on research. To pursue a Ph.D. students will need either a master's or a relevant 4-year bachelor's degree with research. The M.Phil. program will be discontinued, streamlining graduate education. Large multidisciplinary universities will support high-quality education by offering creative course combinations and allowing students to specialize in certain subjects while still learning about others. Improved teaching methods will focus on communication, debate and interdisciplinary thinking. Several departments will be strengthened in higher education institutions (HELS) covering subjects like literature, arts, Mathematics, and Science. Students can earn credits in these areas, even if they are not offered in class. The curriculum will also include community, engagement, environmental education, and values-based education to ensure holistic development. Vocational – in the field of vocational education ancient sciences and vocational subjects should be included so that a better understanding can be obtained. Which will help in the overall education of the students. Technology- Digital platforms need to be further developed to make the Indian knowledge system accessible and attractive to learners. To use current technologies to preserve and understand the Indian knowledge system. Digital platforms will be further developed if knowledge of the rules of existing technology is incorporated.

## **OB.2. To analyse the impact of Indian knowledge system on Holistic Learning in modern Curriculum.**

Analysing Indian knowledge in modern curriculum it can be understood that the impact of Indian knowledge on holistic learning is immense. There are effects –

### **Intellectual Development –**

The integration of ancient subjects such as Mathematics, science, astronomy and philosophy into the modern curriculum will help students develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills and interdisciplinary connections.

### **Moral Development:**

Integrating ancient subjects like the Vedas and Upanishads into modern curriculum will lead to moral development among students.

### **Cultural identity and relevance:**

Indian cultural aspects should be highlighted along with the current curriculum. The cultural groups that are present should be highlighted and various cultural aspects (Chhota Nagpur chow dance etc.) should be highlighted in the curriculum which will preserve culture and preserve weightage.

### **Emotional and Mental well-being:**

Through the practice of yoga and meditation which are the core of the Indian knowledge system, helps students develop self-awareness and self-control to manage stress.

### **Increase in collaboration:**

Helps to increase collaboration among learners across disciplines by integrating existing curricula with Indian knowledge.

### **OB.3. To find out the influence of Indian knowledge system in Modern Curriculum.**

Modern Curriculum within Indian knowledge system is needed to implement for a thoughtful and systematic approach. The aspects or areas of implementation are –

#### **Science:**

To include Indian mathematics in the modern curriculum the zero method of Aryabhata must be included in Mathematics. In the field of science, metallurgy, and physics should be included so that a broader and more comprehensive understanding can be obtained.

#### **Medicine:**

Currently allopathy is given more importance in medicine. Indian medicine is almost extinct. Therefore, Ayurveda and herbal medicine should be included along with Indian medicine which will provide better and more advance idea.

#### **Collaborative curriculum development:**

Create a balanced, pertinent curriculum by incorporating the Indian knowledge system with contemporary curricula. To guarantee that indigenous knowledge is accurately represented in the curriculum, involve indigenous communities and knowledge keepers in its creation. Encourage cooperation between contemporary academics, educational policymakers, and traditional knowledge holders. Work together with educators and indigenous people to create curriculum materials that integrate the Indian knowledge system.

#### **Pedagogy:**

Ancient gurukul storytelling and practical teaching methods must be incorporated with modern teaching methods. This will further improve the teaching and learning process.

#### **Technology:**

To make the Indian knowledge system more approachable and appealing to students, digital platforms must be improved. to conserve and comprehend the Indian knowledge system through the application of modern technologies. Understanding the guidelines of current technologies will help digital platforms advance.

#### **Research:**

Research must be applied to verify and refine the Indian knowledge system. The Indian knowledge system needs to be documented and validated to incorporate current research.

#### **Vocational:**

In the field of Vocational education ancient sciences and Vocational subjects should be included so that a better understanding can be obtained.

#### **Evaluation method:**

To further improve the assessment methodology of modern curricula. Ancient assessment methodologies must be incorporated so that the overall development of learners can be assessed.

#### **OB.4. To find out the challenges in implementation of Indian knowledge system in modern curriculum.**

There are some challenges to be faced in implementing Indian knowledge with modern curriculum. Such as-

##### **Standardization:**

To ensure that the essence of ancient Indian knowledge is not lost, it is necessary to incorporate the ancient curriculum into the current curriculum structure.

##### **Teaching training:**

Teachers need to develop their professional skills to enable them to implement Indian knowledge in their classrooms.

##### **Resource constraints:**

Appropriate tools are needed to implement Indian knowledge into modern curriculum.

##### **Resistance to change:**

To implement Indian knowledge the inertia and scepticisms of established educational institutions must be overcome.

##### **Lack of Resources:**

Many institutions lack the material and human resources to implement Indian knowledge into the current curriculum.

##### **Cultural sensitivity:**

To avoid misappropriation or stereotyping it is essential to approach Indian knowledge system with respect and cultural sensitivity.

##### **Lack of awareness and understanding:**

Many educators may be unfamiliar with Indian knowledge system and its potential benefits.

##### **Conclusions:**

The outcome is obtained after According to data analysis, the current NEP-2020 curriculum should incorporate experiential learning, critical topics, and social education instruction. Students' overall growth must be promoted in order to decrease memorizing. Students must improve their mother tongue, multilingualism, and cultural awareness at this level. Talented students require special attention. Indian wisdom needs to be reintroduced into the contemporary educational system in higher education. STEM courses must be combined with the humanities and arts at the undergraduate level. Modern medical science, technological research, and evaluation must incorporate ancient wisdom. The teaching and learning process will be enhanced in order to conserve Indian expertise and advance these fields. This results in the students' overall growth. Numerous issues, like standardization, a lack of resources, awareness', etc., will need to be addressed in order to integrate Indian knowledge. This research is currently important since it clarifies which areas require implementation and what issues or difficulties may arise as a result. In order for pupils to become excellent citizens, it aids in their entire growth as well as the development of attributes such as self-control, awareness, self-discipline, and critical thinking. Nevertheless, more research is required to clarify how the findings of the current research can be used to address the issue of the Indian knowledge system of

pedagogical practices in contemporary education and the part that the Indian knowledge system of modern curricula plays in advancing holistic education.

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