

## **INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM IN NATION- BUILDING: ROLE AND CHALLENGES**

**Shainy Mole P T**

Assistant Professor.

Mores College of Arts and Science, Chembra.

### **Abstract**

India, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse knowledge traditions, possesses a unique Indian Knowledge system (IKS) that has played a significant role in shaping its identity and development. By integrating IKS into education, research, policy making, and community development initiatives, India can unleash the transformative potential of its cultural heritage, driving sustainable development, fostering national unity, and promoting global cooperation. This particular paper discusses the various roles of IKS and also points out the challenges it faces in contemporary India.

### **Introduction.**

India's knowledge legacy spans thousands of years and encompasses diverse intellectual discourses. These collections are referred to as Indian Knowledge System. IKS have a significant role not only in global discourse but also in shaping the socio cultural set up of the nation. The NEP 2020 recognizes India's rich and eternal knowledge history, which includes Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan as its guiding principles, with evolution based on experience and experiments. The Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) is recommended to be scientifically integrated, encompassing tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional modes of learning. It intends to include several themes, such as mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, and so on. Other key areas of focus include tribal ethno- medical practices, forest management, natural farming etc.

There is a Bhāratiya approach prioritizes sustainability and strives for the well being of all. If we want to become the Knowledge Leader, the 'Viśvaguru' of this century, it is imperative that we regain a comprehensive knowledge of our heritage and demonstrate the 'Indian way' of doing things to the entire world. Rejuvenating and mainstreaming Indian Knowledge Systems is necessary for today's globe.

### **Role of IKS in Nation Building:**

The Indian Knowledge System plays a varied and heritage- rich role in nation- building.

#### **1. Cultural identity.**

The Indian Knowledge System, emphasizes cultural enrichment through the exposure of their rich heritage and India's legacy to students. This exposure fosters a strong feeling of identity and pride, instilling in students a connection to their roots. Incorporating ancient writing and ideas into the curriculum provides a unique opportunity for pupils to learn about values and ethical ideals.

By engaging with the nation's cultural tapestry, students gain academic insights and develop a deeper understanding of the historical and philosophical foundations which pave the way to shape their society. This cultural enrichment fosters personal growth, leading to a well-rounded worldview and contributing to the development of not only academically adept but also culturally aware and socially conscious individuals. The IKS has the potential to complement and enrich contemporary higher education by providing a more comprehensive understanding of human knowledge, civilization, and cultural heritage and bringing benefits to students, academia, and society at large.

## **2. Sustainable development.**

Sustainable development through the Indian knowledge system entails incorporating traditional Indian wisdom, such as Ayurveda, Yoga, and environmental ethics, into current practice. It promotes ecological harmony, community-centered techniques, and cultural legacy preservation while tackling contemporary issues such as climate change and resource management. The IKS promotes the link between human well being and environmental health and sustainability. For a better sustainable society people must prioritize various eco friendly practices, community based resources management, and a life style which minimize environmental degradation. This includes, employ agricultural methods that promote soil fertility, save water, and lessen the dependence on fertilizers, leading to sustainable farming practices.

## **3. Social cohesion.**

Furthermore, IKS contribute to social connection and resilience. Indigenous knowledge is typically shared and passed down through communal activities and rituals, which strengthen social bonds and community identity. This kind of social cohesion improves the community's capacity to adapt to changes and overcome challenges, and so contributing to social development. The Indian Knowledge System promotes common ideals, cultural awareness and community participation, all of which contribute to social cohesiveness. It establishes a framework for inclusive development that values multiple perspectives and encourages collaboration among social groupings. IKS enhances interpersonal relationships, creates empathy, and promotes a sense of belonging through practices such as yoga, meditation, and traditional festivals, so leads to a more unified and harmonious community.

## **4. Innovation and Creativity.**

Critical thinking, logical reasoning, and reflective inquiry all contribute to the Indian Knowledge System. IKS can develop analytical skills and learn to approach problems from diverse perspectives, fostering creativity and scholarly agility among the students.

IKS fosters innovation and creativity by promoting interdisciplinary thinking, holistic perspectives, and a thorough grasp of nature and society. It contains a wealth of ancient knowledge, such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy, which might inspire creative answers to modern problems. By combining traditional wisdom with modern technologies and approaches, IKS promotes culturally rooted and globally relevant innovation, thereby contributing to long- term development and social progress.

### Challenges in implementing IKS:

As the world grapples with complex issues ranging from climate change to public health, there is a growing recognition of the value of traditional knowledge systems in offering innovative solutions rooted in centuries- old wisdom.

In India, the IKS stands as a testament to richness and depth of ancient traditions, offering insights into diverse fields such as healthcare, agriculture, and governance. However, despite its potential contributions to contemporary society, the implementation of IKS faces a myriad of challenges.

From institutional barriers to intellectual property rights issues, navigating the path to integration requires careful consideration of the obstacles that stand in the way. and some of them are as follows.

- **Lack of awareness and understanding of IKS:** IKS is often overlooked, even by college administrators and staff. Lack of awareness and comprehension will make it challenging to implement IKS in institutions. Indian knowledge systems have existed for centuries, but have been overshadowed by western ways of thinking. To raise awareness about IKS, it's necessary to shift public perception.
- **Intellectual property rights:** protecting the intellectual property rights of traditional knowledge holders is a complex issue. Ensuring that indigenous communities benefit from the commercialization of their knowledge while preventing exploitation is challenging. And also rejuvenating historic information has issues such as retaining its authenticity, quality, and relevance to modern times.
- **Lack of resources:** IKS is frequently undocumented and passed down verbally from generation to generation. This makes it challenging to establish and administer IKS-based courses and programmes in institutions. Additionally, funding for IKS research and teaching in India is lacking. Adequate funding for supporting IKS initiatives to solve modern difficulties, encourage pride in cultural heritage, intellectual growth, and self confidence among the students and interested individuals.
- **Resistance to change:** Accepting changes may be difficult for certain individuals, causing chaos.
- **Language barrier:** As IKS is commonly transmitted in Indian languages. It might be a difficulty among the people those who are not familiar with the same.
- **The focus on Western knowledge systems:** The Indian education system remains primarily focused on Western knowledge systems. As a result, incorporating IKS into the curriculum is problematic.
- **The lack of qualified faculty:** As IKS is a new discipline, there is a shortage of trained faculties to transact concept.

### Way forward:

The Indian Knowledge system holds promise as a repository of ancient wisdom, offering holistic solutions to contemporary challenges. However its integration into mainstream discourse faces obstacles such as recognition, preservation, and adaptation.

Here proposes strategies to overcome these challenges, paving the way for the effective utilization of IKS in addressing pressing societal issues and fostering sustainable development.

Some of the solutions for overcoming the challenges can be listed as,

➤ **Awareness and Advocacy:**

Campaigns, seminars, and workshops stressing the importance of IKS can promote awareness among educators, students, policymakers, and the general public.

➤ **Research and Documentation:**

Establishing repositories and digital archives is vital for preserving and disseminating IKS for future generations. Additionally, research and documentation on IKS should be promoted.

➤ **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:**

Develop an interdisciplinary collaboration among the traditional knowledge with that of the modern knowledge system.

➤ **Community Empowerment:**

Local communities possess a wealth of traditional wisdom. Engaging them in resource management and conversation may be beneficial. Incentives and recognition, including awards and grants, can be used to promote them.

➤ **Legal and Policy Frameworks:**

Develop a strong supportive and effective policy frameworks and legal structures that highlight and protect traditional knowledge. And that must be inclusive, transparent, and respectful of indigenous rights and cultural values.

➤ **International Collaboration:**

Collaboration with international organizations, research institutes, and communities allows for the exchange of best practices and new techniques to preserve and promote traditional knowledge globally. We can't turn our face against the fact that NEP 2020 advocates a good education system to provide knowledge of 64 kalaas or arts and eliminate rigid boundaries between disciplines, makes IKS that much more relevant in HEIs. Indian Knowledge System represents a holistic approach to learning, drawing inspiration from the country's ancient wisdom while incorporating contemporary knowledge and global perspectives. As we navigate the complexities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, let us draw inspiration from the timeless wisdom of our ancestors and embrace the rich tapestry of India's cultural identity, recognizing that in preserving and promoting IKS lies the key to building a more equitable, resilient, and prosperous society for generations to come.

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