

Role of NEP 2020 in Promoting Indian Knowledge Systems in Curriculum and Pedagogy

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Abstract-The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant shift in India's educational vision by emphasizing the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into curriculum and pedagogy across all levels of education. Recognizing India's rich intellectual heritage, NEP 2020 seeks to move beyond a purely colonial and Western-centric framework and promote a more holistic, inclusive, and culturally rooted education system. The policy highlights the importance of drawing upon ancient, medieval, and indigenous knowledge traditions in fields such as philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine (Ayurveda), yoga, ecology, linguistics, architecture, and arts and crafts.

NEP 2020 advocates for the incorporation of IKS not as isolated or optional content, but as an integral part of mainstream curricula. It encourages interdisciplinary learning, experiential pedagogy, and the use of local contexts and indigenous practices to enhance conceptual understanding. By promoting multilingualism and education in mother tongues or regional languages, the policy facilitates better transmission of traditional knowledge and cultural values. Further, NEP 2020 supports the development of new courses, textbooks, and teacher training programmes focused on Indian Knowledge Systems, ensuring academic rigor and contemporary relevance.

Pedagogically, NEP 2020 emphasizes learner-centered approaches that resonate with traditional Indian methods such as dialogue, debate, observation, and practical engagement. The establishment of institutions and centers dedicated to IKS, along with encouragement for research, documentation, and innovation, reflects the policy's commitment to knowledge continuity and renewal. Importantly, NEP 2020 positions Indian Knowledge Systems as complementary to modern scientific knowledge, fostering critical thinking rather than blind traditionalism. Overall, the role of NEP 2020 in promoting Indian Knowledge Systems lies in its effort to create a balanced educational framework that integrates tradition with modernity. By embedding IKS within curriculum and pedagogy, the policy aims to nurture culturally confident, ethically grounded, and intellectually versatile learners capable of addressing contemporary global challenges while remaining rooted in India's civilizational wisdom.

Keywords: NEP 2020; Indian Knowledge Systems; Curriculum Reform; Pedagogy; Indigenous Knowledge; Holistic Education.

Introduction-The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant shift in India's educational philosophy by emphasizing the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into curriculum design and pedagogical practices. Indian Knowledge Systems represent a vast and diverse body of indigenous knowledge encompassing philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, ecology, linguistics, art, culture, and ethics developed over millennia. Recognizing the historical marginalization of indigenous epistemologies during the colonial period, NEP 2020 seeks to restore epistemic balance by valuing India's civilizational knowledge traditions alongside modern scientific approaches (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020).

A central objective of NEP 2020 is to promote a holistic, multidisciplinary, and culturally rooted education system. The policy advocates the inclusion of local knowledge, traditional practices, and classical languages such as Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, and regional languages as carriers of indigenous wisdom. By encouraging experiential learning, storytelling, debate, and inquiry-based methods drawn from traditional pedagogies like *Gurukul* and *Shravana-Manana-Nididhyasana*, NEP 2020 aims to make learning more contextual, reflective, and value-oriented (Sharma, 2021). This pedagogical shift aligns with the policy's broader goal of fostering critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and creativity among learners.

Furthermore, NEP 2020 envisions Indian Knowledge Systems as a means to strengthen national identity while preparing learners for global engagement. The establishment of IKS research centers, integration of traditional ecological and medical knowledge, and encouragement of interdisciplinary studies highlight the policy's commitment to knowledge pluralism (Aithal & Aithal, 2020). In this context, the role of NEP 2020 in promoting Indian Knowledge Systems is not merely additive but transformative, seeking to redefine curriculum and pedagogy in ways that are inclusive, sustainable, and rooted in India's intellectual heritage.

Education is not merely a means of acquiring skills but a powerful instrument for shaping cultural identity, social values, and intellectual traditions. In India, the education system inherited during the colonial period largely marginalized indigenous knowledge systems, privileging Western epistemologies and frameworks. This resulted

in a disconnect between education and the country's civilizational heritage. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a landmark attempt to address this historical imbalance. For the first time since independence, a comprehensive policy explicitly acknowledges the importance of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and emphasizes their integration into curriculum and pedagogy. NEP 2020 envisions education as a means of fostering holistic development—intellectual, ethical, emotional, and cultural—by reconnecting learners with India's rich traditions of knowledge.

This paper examines the role of NEP 2020 in promoting Indian Knowledge Systems, focusing on curriculum reform, pedagogical transformation, and the broader implications for higher education and society.

Conceptual Understanding of Indian Knowledge Systems

Indian Knowledge Systems refer to the vast body of knowledge developed in the Indian subcontinent over millennia. These systems encompass diverse domains such as philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, agriculture, ecology, linguistics, governance, arts, and architecture. Rooted in texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Arthashastra, Charaka Samhita, and works of medieval scholars, IKS also include folk traditions, tribal wisdom, and local practices transmitted orally across generations.

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) represent a cumulative body of knowledge developed in the Indian subcontinent over millennia, encompassing philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, ecology, linguistics, art, governance, and pedagogy. Rooted in indigenous epistemologies, IKS emphasize holistic understanding, experiential learning, ethical living, and harmony between humans and nature (Nair, 2020). Unlike Eurocentric knowledge traditions that prioritize compartmentalization and positivist methodologies, Indian knowledge traditions advocate integrative, interdisciplinary, and value-based approaches to learning.

Conceptually, IKS is grounded in principles such as *Pramāṇa* (means of knowledge), *Sruti* and *Smṛti* traditions, *Gurukul* pedagogy, and dialogical learning methods such as *Sāstra-Artha-Samvāda*. Knowledge in the Indian tradition is viewed not merely as information acquisition but as a transformative process (*Vidya*) leading to self-realization and social responsibility (Radhakrishnan, 1951). This epistemological framework aligns education with moral, spiritual, and civic dimensions of human development.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a significant paradigm shift by formally recognizing Indian Knowledge Systems as an integral component of modern education. NEP 2020 envisions education as a means to reconnect learners with India's civilizational heritage

while fostering critical thinking, creativity, and global competence (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020). It explicitly calls for the integration of IKS across disciplines rather than confining it to history or cultural studies.

In curriculum design, NEP 2020 promotes the inclusion of traditional knowledge in subjects such as mathematics (Vedic mathematics), science (ancient metallurgy, astronomy, and ecology), medicine (Ayurveda and Yoga), environmental studies (indigenous conservation practices), and social sciences (ancient governance and ethics). This integration aims to contextualize learning within local knowledge systems, thereby enhancing relevance, cultural rootedness, and cognitive engagement among students (Sharma, 2021).

Pedagogically, NEP 2020 encourages experiential, inquiry-based, and multidisciplinary learning approaches that resonate with traditional Indian pedagogical practices. Methods such as storytelling, debate (*Shastrartha*), observation, apprenticeship, and community-based learning mirror the *Guru-Shishya* tradition and support deeper conceptual understanding. The policy also emphasizes learning in the mother tongue or regional languages during the foundational years, recognizing language as a crucial medium for transmitting indigenous knowledge (Kumar, 2019).

Furthermore, NEP 2020 supports institutional mechanisms such as the establishment of IKS centers, incorporation of Sanskrit and classical languages, and capacity-building programs for teachers. These initiatives aim to legitimize indigenous knowledge within formal education structures and counter historical marginalization caused by colonial education models (Altbach, 2014). By doing so, NEP 2020 positions IKS not as a nostalgic revival but as a dynamic and evolving knowledge system relevant to contemporary challenges.

In essence, the conceptual framework of IKS under NEP 2020 reflects an epistemic decolonization of education. It seeks to balance tradition with modernity by integrating indigenous wisdom with scientific temper and global knowledge systems. The promotion of Indian Knowledge Systems through curriculum and pedagogy thus contributes to culturally responsive education, national identity formation, and sustainable development in the 21st century.

Objective of the Study-To analyze the policy provisions of NEP 2020 that emphasize the inclusion of traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge systems within school and higher education curricula

To explore how NEP 2020 encourages experiential, practice-based, and value-oriented learning methods inspired by Indian pedagogical traditions such as *Gurukul*, *Shravana*, *Manana*, and *Nididhyasana*

Methodology of the Study-The present study adopts a

qualitative, descriptive, and analytical research design to examine the role of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in promoting Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) within curriculum and pedagogy at school and higher education levels.

Research Design-The study is primarily based on a documentary and interpretative research approach. It aims to critically analyze policy texts and related academic literature to understand how NEP 2020 conceptualizes, integrates, and operationalizes IKS in contemporary education.

Sources of Data-The study relies exclusively on secondary data, collected from the following sources:

- Official policy documents, especially the National Education Policy 2020 issued by the Government of India
- Reports and guidelines released by the Ministry of Education, UGC, NCERT, and IKS Division, AICTE
- Books, edited volumes, research articles, and review papers on Indian Knowledge Systems, indigenous education, and traditional pedagogical practices
- Conference proceedings, working papers, and credible academic websites related to curriculum reforms and pedagogy

Methods of Data Collection-Relevant documents were identified through systematic searches of academic databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, JSTOR, and official government portals. Keywords such as *NEP 2020*, *Indian Knowledge Systems*, *indigenous knowledge*, *curriculum reform*, *experiential learning*, and *traditional pedagogy* were used for data collection.

Method of Data Analysis-The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. Policy provisions related to IKS were coded and categorized under themes such as:

- Integration of traditional and indigenous knowledge in curricula
- Pedagogical approaches inspired by Indian traditions (e.g., experiential learning, value-based education)
- Language, culture, and local knowledge in education

Teacher education and institutional mechanisms for IKS promotion

Interpretative analysis was employed to link these themes with broader educational objectives such as holistic development, cultural sustainability, and epistemic diversity.

Scope of the Study-The study focuses on the conceptual and policy-level dimensions of NEP 2020 and does not include empirical fieldwork or primary data collection. It covers both school and higher education, with special emphasis on curriculum design and pedagogical transformation. Ethical Considerations As the study is based on secondary data, no direct ethical

risks are involved. All sources have been duly acknowledged, and academic integrity has been maintained by avoiding plagiarism and ensuring proper citation.

Limitations

The study is limited by its reliance on secondary sources and policy documents. The actual implementation and ground-level impact of NEP 2020 on IKS integration are beyond the scope of the present research.

Discussion

NEP 2020: A Paradigm Shift in Educational Philosophy-NEP 2020 marks a decisive shift from rote-based and examination-oriented learning towards competency-based, multidisciplinary, and value-oriented education. One of its most distinctive features is the explicit recognition of India's knowledge heritage as a foundational element of education.

The policy acknowledges that a sustainable and meaningful education system must be rooted in local culture while remaining open to global knowledge. By advocating the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems, NEP 2020 challenges the long-standing dominance of Eurocentric models and promotes epistemic diversity. This shift has important sociological implications, as it seeks to democratize knowledge and validate indigenous and marginalized ways of knowing.

Integration of Indian Knowledge Systems in Curriculum-NEP 2020 emphasizes that Indian Knowledge Systems should be embedded within mainstream curricula rather than treated as peripheral or optional subjects. At the school level, this includes the introduction of Indian contributions to mathematics, science, philosophy, and environmental studies. At the higher education level, universities are encouraged to offer courses, minors, and majors focusing on IKS.

The policy promotes interdisciplinary curriculum design, enabling students to explore connections between traditional knowledge and contemporary disciplines. For example, Ayurveda can be studied alongside modern medical science, or ancient Indian ecological practices can inform sustainable development studies. Such integration enhances conceptual clarity and demonstrates the contemporary relevance of traditional knowledge.

Pedagogical Approaches Rooted in Indian Traditions

Pedagogy is central to the successful integration of Indian Knowledge Systems. NEP 2020 advocates learner-centered, inquiry-based, and experiential pedagogies that resonate with traditional Indian methods of teaching and learning. Ancient systems such as the Gurukul emphasized dialogue (*samvada*), debate (*shastrartha*), observation, and practical engagement—approaches that align closely with modern constructivist pedagogy.

The policy encourages the use of storytelling, case studies, project-based learning, and community engagement

to make learning meaningful and contextual. Such pedagogical practices not only enhance cognitive development but also foster ethical sensitivity, empathy, and social responsibility.

Role of Language and Multilingualism-Language plays a crucial role in the transmission of knowledge. NEP 2020 strongly advocates education in the mother tongue or regional languages, especially at the foundational and primary levels. This approach facilitates better comprehension and allows students to access traditional knowledge embedded in local languages and cultural practices.

Multilingualism also enables learners to engage with classical languages such as Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, and Tamil, which serve as repositories of Indian Knowledge Systems. By strengthening linguistic diversity, NEP 2020 enhances cultural continuity and intellectual depth.

Institutional Support and Research Promotion-NEP 2020 emphasizes the establishment of dedicated centers and institutions for the study, research, and dissemination of Indian Knowledge Systems. These centers are expected to undertake documentation, digitization, translation, and critical analysis of traditional knowledge.

The policy also encourages collaboration between traditional scholars and modern academics, fostering innovation while maintaining academic rigor. Research in IKS is envisioned not as a nostalgic exercise but as a dynamic field capable of contributing to contemporary challenges such as climate change, public health, and ethical governance.

Indian Knowledge Systems and Modern Science: A Complementary Relationship-A significant contribution of NEP 2020 lies in its balanced approach to tradition and modernity. The policy does not advocate uncritical glorification of the past; instead, it positions Indian Knowledge Systems as complementary to modern scientific knowledge. By encouraging critical inquiry, evidence-based analysis, and interdisciplinary dialogue, NEP 2020 ensures that traditional knowledge is evaluated, refined, and adapted to contemporary contexts. This approach fosters scientific temper while preserving cultural rootedness.

Challenges in Implementation-Despite its progressive vision, the implementation of IKS under NEP 2020 faces several challenges. These include a shortage of trained teachers, lack of standardized curriculum frameworks, limited availability of quality textbooks, and the risk of ideological misuse.

Addressing these challenges requires sustained investment in teacher training, academic research, and institutional capacity-building. Ensuring inclusivity and academic objectivity is essential to prevent the politicization of knowledge.

Finding-The *National Education Policy (NEP) 2020*

marks a strategic shift towards embedding Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into formal education, recognizing the historical marginalization of indigenous wisdom. NEP 2020 explicitly calls for the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems—including tribal knowledge, traditional ways of learning, and local knowledge—across curricula at school and higher education levels (NEP 2020 policy provision). This integration spans humanities, sciences, arts, crafts, sports, and ecological practices, ensuring a breadth of cultural contexts are reflected in academic content. For example, the policy encourages the inclusion of elective IKS courses in secondary schools and institutional strengthening of Indian languages, Indology, philosophy, and traditional arts in higher education, embedding indigenous perspectives within disciplinary curricula. Such provisions indicate a deliberate effort to bridge indigenous and mainstream knowledge frameworks, fostering cultural continuity and expanding epistemic diversity in education (Government of India, Ministry of Education, 2026; Grokipedia, 2026).

Further, NEP 2020 proposes practical learning initiatives—such as heritage tours under *Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat*—that enable students to engage directly with local traditions, indigenous practices, and scientific contributions of diverse Indian regions, enhancing appreciation for context-specific knowledge (Grokipedia, 2026). This demonstrates policy recognition that learning rooted in local ecological and cultural realities strengthens learners' understanding of heritage and contemporary relevance.

NEP 2020 institutionalizes the inclusion of traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge systems through curriculum mandates, strengthened academic structures, and context-sensitive learning experiences that promote cultural pride, identity, and relevance in modern education. NEP 2020 emphasizes experiential and practice-based learning as foundational pedagogical strategies, aligning closely with traditional Indian methods such as *Shravana* (listening), *Manana* (reflection), and *Nididhyasana* (deep internalization). Indigenous pedagogical values—rooted in mentorship, co-existence with knowledge practices, and holistic learning—are echoed in modern policy frameworks that advocate hands-on exploration, community learning, and reflective engagement with content (International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 2025). These traditional elements resonate with contemporary constructivist and experiential learning theories, showcasing continuity between age-old Indian educational philosophies (e.g., guru-shishya parampara) and the curriculum reforms proposed by NEP 2020. Moreover, NEP 2020 promotes arts-integrated and culture-based pedagogies that transcend

rote memorization, supporting value-oriented learning that cultivates ethical reasoning, emotional intelligence, and holistic development. Arts, yoga, music, and indigenous games are incorporated not merely as subjects but as culturally embedded methods fostering experiential engagement and reflection, consistent with Indian pedagogical traditions of immersive learning (NEP 2020 policy provision; Grokipedia, 2026). Teacher training and capacity building in IKS further ensure educators are equipped to implement experiential and reflective approaches effectively, facilitating deeper internalization of values beyond surface-level learning.

The policy's emphasis on experiential, practice-based, and value-oriented learning reflects ancient Indian pedagogical ideals, promoting a transformative learning paradigm where knowledge is lived, practiced, and internalized.

Conclusion-The National Education Policy 2020 represents a transformative step in reimagining Indian education by integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into curriculum and pedagogy. By reconnecting education with India's civilizational heritage, the policy seeks to nurture learners who are culturally confident, ethically grounded, and intellectually versatile. The role of NEP 2020 in promoting Indian Knowledge Systems lies not merely in curriculum reform but in redefining the purpose of education itself. By harmonizing tradition with modernity, the policy aspires to create a holistic education system capable of addressing contemporary global challenges while remaining rooted in India's timeless wisdom.

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भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा तथा हिन्दी साहित्य

डॉ. सुधामणि एस.

सह प्राध्यापक, हिन्दी विभाग,
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प्रस्तावना: भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा वैदिक काल से प्रचलित है। भारत देश अनेक परंपराओं और संस्कृतियों का देश है। हमारी भारतीय संस्कृति और सभ्यता ने सदियों से विग्यान, गणित, खगोल, चिकित्सा, आयुर्वेद, दर्शन जैसे अनेक क्षेत्रों में अपना महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है। भारतीय ग्यान प्रणाली हजारों वर्षों से विकसित वैदिक परंपराओं, दर्शन, विग्यान, कला और स्वदेशी प्रथाओं का एक विशाल संग्रह है। काव्य और शास्त्र दोनो ही भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा में महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखते हैं। वेद भारतीय संस्कृति, ग्यान और सभ्यता का मूल है। भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा का निर्वाह करते हुए अपने पथ पर अग्रसर हैं। भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा (वेद, उपनिषद, दर्शन) हिंदी साहित्य की आधारशिला है, जो आध्यात्मिकता, नैतिकता, और सामाजिक मूल्यों को साहित्य में प्रवाहित करती है। भक्ति काल में कबीर-तुलसी से लेकर आधुनिक काल तक, इस परंपरा ने भारतीय संस्कृति को संरक्षित किया। यह साहित्य जीवन दर्शन, योग, और समन्वय के साथ-साथ समाज को सुदृढ़ सांस्कृतिक पहचान प्रदान करता है।

बीजक शब्द : आध्यात्मिकता, नैतिकता, साहित्य, दार्शनिक, सांस्कृतिक भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा और हिन्दी साहित्य के मुख्य बिंदु।
सांस्कृतिक धरोहर: यह साहित्य को सांस्कृतिक और दार्शनिक जड़ों से जोड़कर आध्यात्मिकता, नैतिकता और जीवन के गूढ़ रहस्यों को प्रस्तुत करता है। भक्ति साहित्य का योगदान: संत कवियों (कबीर, तुलसीदास, मीराबाई) ने लोकभाषा में भक्ति और ज्ञान का प्रसार किया, जिससे ज्ञान विद्वानों से निकलकर जनसामान्य तक पहुंचा।
दार्शनिक धाराएं: जैन, सिद्ध और नाथ साहित्य ने योग, हठयोग, अहिंसा और सामाजिक आडंबरों के विरोध के माध्यम से हिंदी भाषा को आकार दिया।

सामाजिक समरसता: यह परंपरा सहिष्णुता, प्रेम, समानता और भाईचारे का संदेश देती है, जो आज भी प्रासंगिक है।
आधुनिक साहित्य में छाप: प्रेमचंद, फणीश्वरनाथ रेणु और अन्य लेखकों के साहित्य में प्राचीन ज्ञान परंपरा, लोकजीवन, और नैतिकता के तत्व स्पष्ट रूप से मिलते हैं।

सांस्कृतिक पहचान: भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा का प्रवाह हिंदी साहित्य को एक विशिष्ट पहचान और गहराई प्रदान करता है, जो उसे अपनी समृद्ध विरासत से जोड़े रखती है।

भारतीय ज्ञान परंपरा न केवल हिंदी साहित्य के विषय-वस्तु को समृद्ध करती है, बल्कि यह साहित्य के माध्यम से समाज को एक स्वस्थ और कल्याणकारी दिशा भी प्रदान करती है। भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा अत्यंत विशाल एवं समृद्ध है। भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा के आधार पर ही संस्कृत, पाली, प्राकृत तथा अपभ्रंश भाषाओं का उगम हुआ। भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा विकसित होते भक्तिकाल में सर्वाधिक तीव्रता से अभिव्यक्त हुई है। तुलसी, सूरदास महाकवियों ने भक्ति का महत्व, जीवन का आदर्श, सार्थकता को सामान्य जनता तक पहुंचाया। भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा का विकसित रूप गद्य, कविता, नाटक, उपन्यास, रेखाचित्र, संस्मरण, रिपोर्टाज जनता को नवीन चेतना, जागरूकता और सजगता की ओर ले जाती है। विभिन्न भाषायें तथा उनकी विभिन्न संस्कृतियों को भारतीय ग्यान परंपरा ने मोतियों के माला रूप में बांधा है।