

Editorial

Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into Higher Education

In recent years, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) has emerged as a critical component of higher education reform in India. Far from being merely a cultural revival, the integration of IKS offers a framework for holistic, interdisciplinary, and sustainability-oriented education. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes systematic inclusion of India's classical knowledge traditions, creating opportunities to bridge historical intellectual heritage with contemporary academic demands (National Education Policy, 2020; Sharma, 2022).

IKS encompasses a broad spectrum of disciplines, including mathematics, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, linguistics, and governance, representing centuries of sophisticated scholarship (Mehta & Singh, 2021). Historically, institutions such as Takshashila and Nalanda exemplified global centers of learning, and their pedagogical principles—mentorship, experiential learning, and ethical education—remain relevant today (Joshi & Bansal, 2023). Embedding these traditions within modern curricula can nurture students who are academically competent, socially responsible, and culturally grounded.

A compelling justification for integrating IKS lies in its alignment with sustainable development principles. Traditional practices in agriculture, water management, and ecological conservation reflect deep insights into environmental stewardship, ethical living, and community well-being (Mehta & Singh, 2021). Concepts such as *prakriti* (nature), *dharma* (ethical duty), and *lokasangraha* (collective welfare) can inform contemporary education, particularly in environmental sciences, public policy, and management programs.

Pedagogically, IKS fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and interdisciplinary inquiry. Experiential learning, mentorship models, and value-based education embedded within traditional systems resonate with modern student-centered, project-based, and holistic learning approaches (Joshi & Bansal, 2023). Classical scientific texts also demonstrate advanced understanding in mathematics, astronomy, and medicine, challenging the notion that indigenous knowledge is incompatible with empirical science (Sharma, 2022).

However, meaningful integration requires careful design and academic rigor. Without structured curriculum frameworks, trained faculty, and standardized research methodologies, IKS risks superficial adoption or misrepresentation. It is essential to balance cultural revival with scholarly critique, ensuring that IKS complements rather than competes with contemporary global knowledge systems (Joshi & Bansal, 2023).

The potential for research-oriented initiatives within higher education is substantial. Interdisciplinary programs combining IKS with modern disciplines can enhance innovation in health sciences, environmental management, and technology. Institutional support for IKS-focused research, digital archiving of manuscripts, and collaborative projects can facilitate critical scholarship, increasing global relevance and visibility of Indian knowledge traditions (Mehta & Singh, 2021; Sharma, 2022).

In conclusion, integrating the Indian Knowledge System into higher education represents a transformative opportunity. By fostering interdisciplinary learning, ecological consciousness, and cultural rootedness, IKS can

contribute to producing graduates equipped to navigate global challenges responsibly and ethically. Institutionalizing these systems with academic rigor, critical engagement, and sustained policy support will create an educational model that honors India's intellectual heritage while addressing contemporary societal needs.

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