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Integration Of IKS In Education: NEP 2020 Initiative Towards Holistic Development Of Students

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Abstract: Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a massive storehouse of India's traditional knowledge that spans diverse fields such as health, medicine, science, environment, sustainability, art and culture, ethics and values, agriculture, spirituality etc. Rooted in ancient literature and traditional practices, IKS offers holistic approach for all rounded development of students through understanding of nature, life and the cosmos. Despite the profound insights they offer into sustainable living, community well being, and human flourishing, India's traditional knowledge systems have often been overlooked within the framework of formal education dominated by western educational paradigms. But now, with the introduction of NEP 2020, the Govt. of India is undertaking significant efforts to promote India's rich intellectual inheritance through strategic initiatives in education and research. By integrating IKS into modern curriculum framework, the NEP 2020 proposes a transformative vision for Indian education. This integration aims at holistic development of students in an inclusive and multidisciplinary educational environment that revitalizes India's rich indigenous knowledge in diverse domains of modern education. This study explores the Govt. initiatives on the integration of IKS in the curricular and co-curricular activities, its impact on students' overall development, focusing on challenges in its implementation.

Key words: Indian Knowledge System, NEP 2020, Modern curriculum framework, Challenges

Introduction: India has a glorious tradition of wisdom. Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a comprehensive wisdom system of ancient India deeply rooted in ancient texts and practices. The IKS has developed over thousands of years covering diverse areas. The main components of IKS i.e. Jnan (knowledge), Vijnan (science), and Jeevan Darshan (philosophy of life) has a profound impact on diverse fields including education. Its vast wealth of knowledge has the potential to uplift individual and community.

IKS is recognized as highly relevant even today, offering practical solutions for contemporary challenges. It offers students a unique perspective and potentiality to solve contemporary and emerging problems by using ancient knowledge system of India. With the implementation of NEP 2020, the Government of India is working to integrate IKS into mainstream education, bridging ancient wisdom with contemporary education. NEP 2020 proposes a transformative vision for higher education by integrating traditional IKS with modern education. NEP 2020 advocates the necessity of incorporating IKS into mainstream education to promote holistic development opportunity for students and protect India's rich intellectual, cultural legacy. The integration of ethics, values in education through IKS has the potential to promote sustainable, equitable, and overall development of students.

Objectives:

- I) To explore the need of incorporating IKS into modern education system in India
- II) To evaluate the potential of IKS in promoting holistic development of students
- III) To identify the challenges and best practices for the effective implementation of IKS in modern education

Methodology:

This study utilizes a qualitative and descriptive research methodology, focusing on in-depth analysis through secondary data gathered from academic journals, historical texts and Government Reports on NEP 2020 and IKS.

Significance of IKS in the present education:

The foundation of IKS lies in the rich Indian culture, philosophy, and spirituality, evolving over millennia. Ayurveda, Yoga, Vedanta, and Vedic sciences are some integral components of IKS which still remain relevant in the contemporary world. The primary objective of incorporating IKS in education is to draw from the past and integrate to solve contemporary and emerging problems, utilizing the uninterrupted tradition of knowledge transfer and the unique perspective of "Bharatiya Dristi" (Indian view point). The integration of IKS into the mainstream education is an approach aims at introducing diverse learning experiences for students. It has numerous advantages in encouraging interdisciplinary learning, promoting holistic development, enhancing environmental awareness, nurturing ethical values in students. Some key points regarding the incorporation of IKS in formal education framework are

Preservation of heritage: Inclusion of IKS courses in mainstream education is expected to inspire students preserving the rich heritage of traditional knowledge system.

Develop ethical and moral values: IKS emphasizes on inculcating some strong humanitarian values like truth, harmony or unity, love and respect, discipline etc. These values are essential for building sound character and leading responsible life.

Understanding culture: IKS helps students gain a better understanding about India's deep cultural roots and legacy by exploring traditional and contemporary concepts. Thus it makes them feel proud of their cultural heritage and identity.

Promote physical health and mental well-being: Practices like Yoga, Pranayam, and meditation serve as natural methods of healing and maintaining physical and mental health.

Encourage sustainability: IKS teaches students the art of living with nature in harmony. It teaches how to use natural resources wisely, and adopt eco-friendly habits for living.

Expansion of knowledge: Through exposure to a diverse range of subjects within the IKS framework students can experience an expansion in their intellectual development.

Build confidence: By providing a holistic and culturally rooted education, IKS enhances students' confidence.

Support research: IKS facilitates further more interdisciplinary research across various domains to address contemporary societal issues in various fields including art and literature, health and medicine, agriculture, nature and environment, basic science, mathematics and sustainable development etc.

NEP 2020 in integrating IKS in education: The NEP 2020 has provided a comprehensive framework for incorporation of IKS in the mainstream education which covers the following key aspects.

Incorporating IKS in curricula: Encourages the integration of IKS into curricula at all levels of education.

Training of faculty: Promotes interest in exploring IKS through induction programmes and refresher courses to generate positive attitude towards IKS among faculty members.

Introduction of courses based on Indian heritage and culture: To familiarize people with the cultural and intellectual heritage of India, offers short-term multi-tier credit based modular programmes covering various dimensions of learning, including universal human values, Vedic maths, Yoga, Ayurveda, Sanskrit, Indian language etc.

Mandatory credit component: UGC mandates the inclusion of 5% of total credits in the curriculum related to IKS courses.

Designing regional courses: States and Union Territories encourages to document their native culture, arts, crafts, traditions etc. to tailor dedicated courses for learners.

Online/ODL courses: Synchronizing of existing IKS courses with digital learning platforms like SWAYAM and NPTEL for learners across geographies.

Translation: Translating academic contents or teaching-learning materials into local languages by IKS centers to engage diverse learners.

Recruitment: Inclusion of IKS as a subject in Entrance Examination syllabus under UGC-NET.

Hands-on-Learning opportunities: Provision of IKS internship and Hands-on Workshops for students to learn various skills.

Support research and innovation: Funding for IKS related research, inclusion of IKS in prestigious schemes like PMRF to attract top talent into interdisciplinary IKS research.

International collaboration: Encourages institutions to access global collaborations through bodies like the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) for India-centric research.

Fund for institutional support mechanism: Establishes IKS Centers to catalyze, research, education, and outreach activities. Initial seed funding provided for the establishment of IKS Centers in various HEIs.

Challenges in incorporating IKS into modern education: Though it holds immense potential for holistic development of students but the integration of IKS into the modern education within a formal educational structure is not an easy task. It requires careful planning and systematic curriculum development. Some of the challenges faced in its implementation are

Lack of awareness and understanding: There could be biases against traditional indigenous knowledge regarding its relevance in modern contexts. Many people, even the students, teachers and academic administrators are also unaware of IKS and its significant role in the betterment of human life and society. This ignorance creates major challenges in incorporation of IKS into contemporary teaching.

Lack of resources: IKS is a flow of India's indigenous knowledge system mostly transmitted orally from one generation to the next. The lack of sufficient written records creates obstacles in the path of creating and implementing IKS based programs and courses in institutional curricula.

Job opportunity: Only few students think that careers in IKS are feasible. In the global economy, there is a need for professions that directly involve Indian knowledge. As a result the stakeholders face a significant problem in its promotion.

Teacher preparedness: Teacher preparedness is another obstacle in the integration of IKS in education. As of now only 25% of higher education institutions have trained faculty for IKS courses. (Vageeshan,2025)

Curriculum and Pedagogical balance: Balancing traditional knowledge with contemporary subjects and teaching methodologies can be challenging. In contrast to traditional structured curricula, experiential learning is the foundation of traditional IKS. A major problem is creating a curriculum that satisfies contemporary educational standards while incorporating oral traditions and ancient texts. A survey by NITI Aayog (2023) revealed that 45% of educational institutions face difficulties in balancing IKS with existing curricula.

Language barrier: Most of the India's traditional knowledge documented in ancient texts is written in Sanskrit, Tamil and other regional languages. Language barriers can hinder access to these texts and limit the dissemination of traditional knowledge among wider audiences.

Lack of proper recognition: Rapid urbanization, globalization, and cultural changes may create lose of interest in traditional practices of indigenous knowledge system in minds of younger generation leading to its neglect in mainstream education and a downfall of its transmission.

Conclusion: Integration of IKS into modern education is significant for preserving the rich intellectual heritage of the nation and fostering holistic development of students. The NEP 2020 has provided a comprehensive framework for inclusion of IKS in the mainstream educational curricula, highlighting its importance in fostering a more inclusive, culturally responsive, and enriching learning environment for all students. But its implementation poses many challenges. To ensure the relevance of IKS, it is essential that educational institutions align it in such a way that balance the demands of modern society and address present day challenges. The process of revival of IKS is a practical effort that must go beyond theoretical discussions. Efforts should be made to document and preserve the vast body of knowledge existed in various forms. Researches and interdisciplinary approaches also needed to explore the relevance of IKS in the fields like sustainable development, health care and medicine, science and technology etc. It needs collaboration from Government, academic institutions, and local communities to

work together to realize the vision of integrating IKS into the education system in alignment with the provisions of NEP 2020.

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