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Integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into Teacher Education through NEP 2020-Vision 2047

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes transforming India's teacher education system to make it holistic, value-based, and rooted in the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). This paper explores how the NEP 2020 envisions integrating IKS into teacher education to promote cultural awareness, ethical values, and experiential learning. Using descriptive and analytical methods, it examines policy frameworks, institutional roles, and pedagogical innovations. Findings reveal that integrating IKS can help teachers blend traditional wisdom with modern pedagogy, fostering holistic learning. However, challenges such as limited faculty training, lack of standardized curriculum, and inadequate resources hinder full implementation. The paper concludes with recommendations for capacity-building, curriculum redesign, and research to strengthen IKS in teacher education.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), Teacher Education, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Introduction

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) encompass ancient traditions of learning in philosophy, arts, science, and ethics developed over centuries. These systems emphasize experiential, value-based, and holistic learning, aligning well with the goals of modern education. The NEP 2020 aims to reorient teacher education by integrating IKS to produce teachers who are culturally grounded, innovative, and globally competent. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 envisions a transformative change in India's teacher education system by integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) to make it more holistic, value-based, and rooted in the nation's cultural heritage. Indian Knowledge Systems represent the vast traditional wisdom of India in fields such as philosophy, mathematics, medicine, art, language, and education, developed through centuries of experiential learning. Integrating these systems into teacher education aims to prepare teachers who are not only pedagogically skilled but also culturally conscious and ethically grounded. The NEP 2020 emphasizes that teachers must become facilitators who can blend ancient Indian educational philosophies with modern teaching methodologies. By including elements like yoga, environmental ethics, Indian philosophy, and local knowledge traditions, teacher education programs can nurture reflective, compassionate, and context-sensitive educators. This integration also aligns with the global movement toward indigenous knowledge and sustainable education. Hence, incorporating IKS into teacher education through NEP 2020 represents a crucial step toward creating a balanced education system that combines tradition with innovation.

1) NEP 2020 Insights for Teacher Education Based on Indian Knowledge System (IKS)

The core insights and implications of NEP 2020 for teacher education based on IKS are as follows:

1. Holistic and Interdisciplinary Education:

NEP 2020 promotes a comprehensive educational approach that merges modern academic disciplines with traditional Indian knowledge systems. This integration equips teachers to create well-rounded, culturally rich learning environments, enhancing both conceptual understanding and cultural identity among students.

2. Promotion of Cultural Heritage and Local Contexts:

The policy underscores the importance of preserving and promoting India's diverse cultural heritage through education.

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Teachers are encouraged to incorporate regional customs, languages, and knowledge into their teaching, enabling students to connect with their cultural roots and local realities, fostering inclusiveness and relevance.

3. Use of Mother Tongue and Local Languages:

NEP 2020 advocates using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, especially during early education stages. Teacher education must prepare educators to teach effectively in local languages, which facilitates better comprehension of complex concepts and authentic transmission of IKS.

4. Teacher Preparation and Professional Development:

Teacher education programs are called to embed IKS into curriculum design, pedagogical methodologies, and continuous professional development (CPD). This involves training teachers to utilize culturally responsive teaching methods aligned with IKS principles such as empathy, harmony with nature, and respect for diversity. Ongoing research, innovation, and mentorship in IKS content are integral to sustaining these efforts.

5. Research and Innovation in IKS:

NEP encourages establishing research centers and promoting scholarship in IKS, which teacher education institutions should leverage for developing updated and validated teaching materials. Teachers trained in research can contribute to revitalizing IKS in contemporary education.

6. Integration of Experiential and Inquiry-driven Pedagogies:

Aligned with IKS values, NEP 2020 promotes active, experiential learning over rote memorization. Teacher training programs must equip educators to facilitate inquiry-based, project-oriented, and reflective teaching practices that resonate with Indian philosophical traditions.

7. National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPST):

NEP envisions defining teacher standards that include competencies to integrate IKS in teaching, ensuring accountability and quality enhancement.

II) Recommendations for Integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into Teacher Education

- 1. Curriculum Integration:** Incorporate IKS as a core component in B.Ed and M.Ed programmes. Embed traditional knowledge examples across disciplines—science, mathematics, arts, and social studies—to ensure holistic learning.
- 2. Faculty Development:** Organize regular workshops and training for teacher educators on IKS concepts, pedagogy, and content. Create fellowship programs for research on indigenous educational practices.
- 3. Resource Development:** Establish national and regional IKS resource centers for curriculum materials, digital content, and case studies. Encourage collaboration with local knowledge holders and communities.
- 4. Pedagogical Innovations:** Promote experiential and project-based learning methods rooted in indigenous wisdom. Integrate yoga, Ayurveda, environmental ethics, and Indian philosophy in teaching practices.
- 5. Research and Documentation:** Fund systematic research to identify, validate, and document indigenous educational practices. Encourage comparative studies between modern education and IKS for evidence-based integration.
- 6. Institutional Support:** The National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) should issue guidelines for embedding IKS in teacher education curricula. Create partnerships between universities, NCERT, and IKS Division (MoE) for implementation and monitoring.
- 7. Assessment and Evaluation:** Develop outcome-based assessment tools to measure teacher competence in integrating IKS. Encourage reflective portfolios and community engagement as evaluation components.
- 8. Awareness and Sensitization:** Conduct awareness campaigns for teachers and students to promote respect for indigenous knowledge traditions. Include IKS themes in national teacher awards and academic recognitions.
- 9. Community and Cultural Engagement:** Integrating IKS into teacher education involves collaboration with communities to preserve and promote indigenous knowledge. This engagement ensures that education is rooted in the local context, making it more relevant and impactful for students.
- 10. Assessment and Evaluation:** The NEP emphasizes the need for assessments that go beyond rote learning, focusing instead on understanding and application of knowledge. This shift aims to evaluate students' holistic development, including their ability to think critically and solve problems.

Roadmap for 2047:

To build a self-reliant, culturally grounded, and globally competent teacher education system that draws strength from India's rich heritage of knowledge and values, aligning with the goals of NEP 2020 and Viksit Bharat@2047.

Phase I: Foundation (2025–2030)

Goal: Establish the institutional and curricular base for IKS integration. Introduce compulsory IKS modules in all B.Ed and M.Ed programmes. Create IKS Resource and Research Centres in every State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). Launch national faculty development programmes on IKS pedagogy. Develop textbooks, e-resources, and MOOCs on IKS themes. Initiate collaboration with local knowledge holders for field-based learning.

Phase II: Expansion (2030–2035)

Goal: Strengthen implementation and build capacity. Include IKS-based practicum and community immersion projects in teacher training. Introduce inter-university IKS fellowships and scholarships for research. Establish regional IKS Teacher Training Hubs for curriculum innovation. Promote bilingual and regional-language teaching materials rooted in local traditions. Integrate IKS in national teacher eligibility tests and professional standards.

Phase III: Consolidation (2035–2040)

Goal: Institutionalize and mainstream IKS in teacher education. Ensure 100% integration of IKS into all teacher education institutions. Develop international collaborations to share India's educational heritage globally. Establish National Repository of

Indigenous Pedagogies and Case Studies. Introduce IKS-based leadership programmes for teacher educators and principals. Integrate traditional ecological, artistic, and ethical knowledge into school education through trained teachers.

Phase IV: Excellence and Global Outreach (2040–2047)

Goal: Achieve global recognition and research excellence in IKS-based education. Establish Centers of Excellence for IKS in every Central and State University. Encourage global teacher exchange programmes focused on IKS-based education models. Publish world-class research on IKS pedagogy, curriculum, and teacher training. Use AI and digital technologies to preserve and disseminate traditional knowledge. Showcase India's IKS-based teacher education model as a template for sustainable and value-driven education worldwide.

Outcome by 2047:

By 2047, the integration of IKS into teacher education will result in:

1. Holistic Teacher Preparation:

All teachers will be trained to blend modern pedagogy with India's traditional wisdom, fostering balance between scientific temper and cultural values.

2. IKS-Embedded Curriculum:

Every teacher education institution will have a fully integrated IKS curriculum, promoting indigenous perspectives across all subjects.

3. Skilled and Culturally Rooted Educators:

Teachers will demonstrate competence in using traditional methods such as storytelling, yoga, environmental ethics, and experiential learning derived from Indian traditions.

4. Research and Innovation Hubs:

Established Centers of Excellence in IKS will lead global research on indigenous education, sustainable learning, and ethical pedagogy.

5. Community and Knowledge Linkages:

Strong partnerships between teacher education institutions and local communities will preserve and transmit regional knowledge systems.

6. Global Recognition:

India will emerge as a global model for integrating indigenous knowledge with modern education, showcasing its educational philosophy internationally.

7. Values-Based Education System:

Teachers will nurture students with values of harmony, empathy, environmental consciousness, and respect for cultural diversity—reflecting Bharatiya Jnana Parampara.

8. Viksit Bharat through Education:

The teacher education system will contribute to Viksit Bharat@2047 by producing enlightened, ethical, and innovative educators shaping a self-reliant and knowledge-driven nation. A transformed teacher education system that embodies the spirit of Bharatiya Jnana Parampara holistic, ethical, inclusive, and globally respected makes India a world leader in knowledge and education.

Conclusion

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education, as envisioned by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, represents a transformative effort to align modern pedagogy with India's cultural and philosophical heritage. By embedding IKS in teacher training, education becomes more holistic, value-based, and contextually relevant. It prepares teachers to connect classroom learning with real-life experiences and traditional wisdom, fostering critical thinking, ethical behavior, and respect for diversity. However, achieving this vision requires curriculum reform, teacher training, research support, and collaboration with IKS experts. When effectively implemented, this integration can produce educators who are not only academically competent but also culturally rooted and socially responsible. Thus, NEP 2020's emphasis on IKS in teacher education is a step toward building an education system that blends heritage with innovation, ensuring that future generations of teachers preserve India's intellectual legacy while meeting contemporary educational needs.

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Conflicts of interest

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