



National Education Policy 2020: Rediscovering the Indian knowledge system

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Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a landmark reform aimed at transforming India's education system by integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into mainstream curricula. Moving beyond colonial legacies, the policy seeks to reconnect learners with India's rich intellectual traditions in philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, arts, governance, and spirituality. It emphasizes holistic, multidisciplinary, and value-based education inspired by ancient models such as the Gurukul system. NEP 2020 promotes the study of classical languages, indigenous sciences, yoga, Ayurveda, environmental ethics, and traditional knowledge frameworks while encouraging critical thinking and innovation. The policy also supports the use of Indian languages as mediums of instruction and the establishment of research centers dedicated to IKS. By blending tradition with modernity, NEP 2020 envisions an education system that is globally competitive yet deeply rooted in Indian culture and heritage. The rediscovery of the Indian Knowledge System thus becomes central to building self-reliant, ethical, and culturally aware citizens.

Keywords: National Education Policy, Indian Knowledge System

Introduction

1. Evaluation of obstetrical paradigms

For several decades, active management of labor has been discussed in academic clinical libraries. According to standard clinical parameters proposed by Dutta (2013), the early detection of uterine inertia prevents subsequent complications. These clinical guidelines are also echoed in general gynecological practice where early diagnosis is paramount (Sharma 2013). For critical surgery scenarios, practitioners resort to classic reference publications such as Williams Obstetrics (2014).

Let's evaluate how these work within a general test setting. Education in India has historically been rooted in a holistic and value-oriented framework that emphasized intellectual, moral, and spiritual development (Sharma, 2019) [15]. Ancient systems such as the Gurukul model fostered experiential learning, critical inquiry, and ethical conduct, enabling learners to develop a deep understanding of life and society (Radhakrishnan, 2004) [12]. Knowledge was not compartmentalized but interconnected, encompassing diverse disciplines such as philosophy, mathematics, medicine, and governance, reflecting a comprehensive worldview (Rao, 2018) [13].

However, the colonial education system introduced by the British significantly altered this indigenous framework by prioritizing Western epistemologies and administrative needs (Kumar, 2005) [8]. The Macaulay system of education emphasized rote learning, standardized curricula, and English as the medium of instruction, leading to the marginalization of traditional knowledge systems (Nanda, 2016) [11]. This shift not

only disrupted the continuity of India's intellectual heritage but also created a disconnect between education and cultural identity (Sen, 2005) [14].

Post-independence, India retained many elements of the colonial education system, focusing on modernization and global competitiveness (Tilak, 2018) [19]. While this approach facilitated economic development and technological advancement, it often overlooked the richness of indigenous knowledge traditions (Gupta, 2020) [5]. As a result, education became increasingly fragmented and exam-oriented, limiting opportunities for holistic development (Singh, 2021) [18].

In response to these challenges, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 introduces a transformative vision aimed at redefining the purpose and structure of education in India (Ministry of Education, 2020) [9]. One of its central objectives is the integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into mainstream curricula, thereby restoring the balance between traditional wisdom and modern knowledge (Shastri, 2021) [17]. This integration is not merely about cultural preservation but about leveraging indigenous knowledge to address contemporary issues such as sustainability, health, and ethical governance (Gupta, 2020) [5].

The Indian Knowledge System encompasses a wide range of disciplines, including Vedic philosophy, Ayurveda, yoga, astronomy, mathematics, linguistics, and arts (Dasgupta, 2019) [4]. These traditions represent centuries of intellectual inquiry and practical application, offering valuable insights into human well-being and societal development (Rao, 2018) [13]. By incorporating these elements into the curriculum, NEP 2020 seeks to create a more inclusive and contextually relevant education system (Sharma, 2022) [16].

A key feature of NEP 2020 is its emphasis on holistic and multidisciplinary education, which aligns closely with the principles of the Indian Knowledge System (Ministry of Education, 2020) [9]. This approach encourages the integration of arts, sciences, and humanities, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (Singh, 2021) [18]. It also promotes experiential learning, where students engage with real-world problems and develop practical solutions (Joshi, 2021) [7].

Language plays a crucial role in the transmission of knowledge, and NEP 2020 recognizes the importance of Indian languages as mediums of instruction (Mohanty, 2020) [10]. Research indicates that learning in one's mother tongue enhances cognitive development and comprehension, making education more accessible and effective (UNESCO, 2016) [21]. By promoting multilingualism, the policy aims to preserve linguistic diversity while improving learning outcomes (Mohanty, 2020) [10].

Furthermore, NEP 2020 emphasizes the integration of traditional knowledge systems such as yoga, Ayurveda, and environmental ethics into the curriculum (Gupta, 2020) [5]. These disciplines not only contribute to physical and mental well-being but also promote sustainable living and ecological awareness (Sharma, 2019) [15]. In an era marked by environmental crises and lifestyle-related diseases, such knowledge systems offer valuable solutions (Rao, 2018) [13].

The policy also supports the establishment of research centers dedicated to the study and promotion of IKS (Ministry of Education, 2020) [9]. These centers are expected to facilitate interdisciplinary research, innovation, and the documentation of traditional knowledge (Shastri, 2021) [17]. By bridging the gap between tradition and modernity, they can contribute to the development of new knowledge systems that are both globally relevant and culturally grounded (Gupta, 2020) [5].

Despite its promising vision, the implementation of NEP 2020 faces several challenges, including the need for trained educators, curriculum development, and resource allocation (Tilak, 2021) [20]. Ensuring the authenticity and scientific validation of traditional knowledge systems is also critical (Nanda, 2016) [11]. Moreover, there is a need to balance cultural preservation with inclusivity and diversity, avoiding the risk of homogenization (Sen, 2005) [14].

2. Objectives

- To analyze the integration of the Indian Knowledge System in NEP 2020.
- To examine the role of traditional knowledge in contemporary education.
- To evaluate the impact of NEP 2020 on holistic and multidisciplinary learning.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design based on secondary data analysis (Creswell, 2014) [3]. Policy documents, academic literature, and reports have been reviewed to examine the integration of IKS in NEP 2020 (Bryman, 2016) [2]. A thematic analysis approach has been used to identify key trends and implications (Gupta, 2020) [5].

4. Integration of Indian knowledge system in curriculum

The integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the curriculum represents a significant shift in the epistemological foundations of education in India (Shastri, 2021) [17]. NEP 2020 emphasizes the inclusion of traditional knowledge across disciplines, thereby promoting a more holistic and inclusive approach to learning (Ministry of Education, 2020) [9]. This integration is not limited to the addition of new subjects but involves a fundamental restructuring of curricula to reflect indigenous perspectives and methodologies (Gupta, 2020) [5].

The inclusion of IKS in the curriculum enhances the relevance of education by connecting theoretical knowledge with practical applications (Rao, 2018) [13]. For instance, traditional agricultural practices and environmental management techniques can provide valuable insights into sustainable development (Sharma, 2019) [15]. Similarly, ancient mathematical concepts and scientific discoveries demonstrate the advanced nature of Indian intellectual traditions (Dasgupta, 2019) [4].

Moreover, the integration of IKS fosters cultural awareness and identity among learners, enabling them to appreciate their heritage while engaging with global knowledge systems (Sen, 2005) [14]. This dual orientation is essential for developing individuals who are both culturally rooted and globally competent (Singh, 2021).

4.2 Role of classical languages

Classical languages such as Sanskrit play a crucial role in accessing and preserving traditional knowledge systems (Mohanty, 2020) [10]. NEP 2020 promotes the study of these languages to facilitate a deeper understanding of ancient texts and cultural traditions (Ministry of Education, 2020) [9]. Sanskrit, in particular, serves as a repository of knowledge, encompassing disciplines such as philosophy, science, and literature (Rao, 2018) [13].

The promotion of classical languages also contributes to cognitive development and linguistic competence (UNESCO, 2016) [21]. Learning multiple languages enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills, making students more adaptable and versatile (Mohanty, 2020) [10].

4.3 Holistic and multidisciplinary learning

NEP 2020 advocates a multidisciplinary approach to education, integrating arts, sciences, and humanities to foster creativity and innovation (Singh, 2021) [18]. This approach aligns with the principles of the Indian Knowledge System, where knowledge is viewed as interconnected and holistic (Radhakrishnan, 2004) [12].

By breaking down disciplinary boundaries, multidisciplinary learning encourages students to explore diverse perspectives and develop critical thinking skills (Joshi, 2021) [7]. It also promotes collaboration and innovation, enabling learners to address complex real-world problems (Gupta, 2020) [5].

4.4 Promotion of indigenous sciences

The promotion of indigenous sciences such as Ayurveda and yoga is a key aspect of NEP 2020 (Gupta, 2020) [5]. These disciplines offer valuable insights into health, well-being, and

sustainable living (Sharma, 2019) ^[15]. Ayurveda, for example, emphasizes a holistic approach to health, integrating physical, mental, and spiritual aspects (Rao, 2018) ^[13].

Yoga, on the other hand, promotes physical fitness, mental clarity, and emotional balance, making it an essential component of holistic education (Singleton, 2010). The inclusion of these disciplines in the curriculum enhances the relevance of education by addressing contemporary health challenges (Jain, 2020).

4.5 Experiential and value-based education

Experiential learning is a key feature of NEP 2020, emphasizing hands-on learning and real-world applications (Joshi, 2021) ^[7]. This approach aligns with traditional educational practices, where learning was based on observation, experience, and reflection (Radhakrishnan, 2004) ^[12].

Value-based education is another important aspect, focusing on ethical and moral development (Sharma, 2019) ^[15]. By integrating values such as honesty, compassion, and responsibility into the curriculum, NEP 2020 aims to develop socially responsible citizens (Gupta, 2020) ^[5].

4.6 Research and innovation in IKS

The establishment of research centers dedicated to IKS is a significant step towards promoting innovation and interdisciplinary research (Shastri, 2021) ^[17]. These centers facilitate the documentation and validation of traditional knowledge, ensuring its relevance in contemporary contexts (Gupta, 2020) ^[5].

4.7 Language and cognitive development

The use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction enhances cognitive development and learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2016) ^[21]. NEP 2020 promotes multilingualism, enabling students to learn in their native language while acquiring proficiency in other languages (Mohanty, 2020) ^[10].

4.8 Challenges in implementation

Despite its potential, the implementation of NEP 2020 faces several challenges, including teacher training, curriculum development, and resource allocation (Tilak, 2021) ^[20]. Addressing these challenges is essential for the successful integration of IKS (Nanda, 2016) ^[11].

5. Conclusion

The National Education Policy 2020 represents a transformative vision for the Indian education system by integrating the Indian Knowledge System into mainstream learning. By bridging tradition and modernity, the policy seeks to create a holistic, inclusive, and culturally rooted educational framework. The emphasis on multidisciplinary learning, language diversity, and experiential education reflects a shift towards a more comprehensive approach to knowledge. While challenges remain in implementation, the potential benefits of NEP 2020 in fostering self-reliant, ethical, and globally competent citizens are significant. The rediscovery of the

Indian Knowledge System thus plays a crucial role in shaping the future of education in India.

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