

Collaborative Pathways: The Role of Stakeholders in Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems in Teacher Education

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Abstract—In line with NEP 2020, this study intends to investigate stakeholder roles in incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education in North-East India in order to promote culturally sensitive pedagogies among various tribal epistemologies. The study's goals are to Identify opportunities and obstacles in utilizing indigenous traditions; and examine the roles of government, institutions, teachers, elders, and NGOs in IKS embedding. According to Braun and Clarke's (2006) conceptual thematic analysis methodology, 28 initial codes were iteratively coded into five themes (Stakeholder Roles 30%, Challenges 25%, Opportunities 20%, NEP Alignment 15%, and Framework 10%) by synthesizing secondary data from ten recent peer-reviewed sources, policy documents (NEP 2020), and seminar abstracts. Through policy requirements, curriculum revisions, experiential workshops, and community linkages, stakeholders propel IKS infusion, unlocking cultural relevance and holistic growth. Curriculum overload, training deficits, and language barriers—particularly in multilingual—are obstacles.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge Systems, Stakeholder Engagement, NEP 2020.

I. INTRODUCTION

As required by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which stresses holistic, multidisciplinary learning rooted in India's ancient intellectual traditions, the incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education represents a crucial shift towards culturally responsive pedagogies. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 states that integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education entails actively integrating traditional Indian knowledge, such as Ayurveda, yoga, classical arts, and philosophy, into teacher training programs with the goal of empowering educators to teach students about their rich cultural heritage while also connecting it to modern disciplines, fostering a holistic and culturally relevant learning experience for students. This includes curriculum development, specialized teacher training programs, and IKS-focused research study. (Abbasi, 2024; Mandavkar, 2025).

In order to promote a comprehensive knowledge of education, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 states that teacher education should heavily integrate the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) by including traditional Indian pedagogies, philosophies, and cultural practices into the curriculum. Essentially, teachers should be trained to seamlessly integrate traditional wisdom into contemporary teaching practices to create a richer and more inclusive learning environment for students. Important insights include: emphasizing experiential learning, incorporating local knowledge, promoting multilingualism, developing cultural competence, and using technology to disseminate information while respecting regional languages.

Integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into education is emphasized in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. This integration has the potential to revolutionize teacher education by strengthening ties to India's rich cultural, historical, and philosophical traditions while educating educators for a locally based, internationally competitive educational system. (Thakar

& Desai, 2023; Pandey, 2024). By explicitly acknowledging the significance of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) at all educational levels, including teacher education, the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 signifies a substantial change in India's educational vision. The scientific, philosophical, cultural, indigenous, and tribal traditions that make up India's rich intellectual legacy are all included in the Indian Knowledge System.

This infusion has the potential to revolutionize teacher training programs in North East India, which has a rich tapestry of tribal epistemologies, including Bodo oral histories, Mishing folklore, Assamese folk pedagogies, and Manipuri ritual-based learning. In order to embed IKS and prepare instructors for a variety of indigenous contexts, stakeholders such as government agencies, educational institutions, teachers, community elders, and non-governmental organizations are essential.

By encouraging mother-tongue instruction, cultural competency, and multidisciplinary approaches to develop well-rounded educators, NEP 2020 sees IKS as a link between traditional knowledge and contemporary education. While practical implementation of IKS is still limited, studies highlight options such as experiential workshops and curriculum modules that improve teacher understanding and attitudes toward IKS. Stakeholder cooperation is crucial to decolonizing curricula and bringing global norms into line with local knowledge in North East India, where language variety and colonial legacies still exist. This conceptual paper investigates these dynamics and suggests a framework for scalable IKS integration that is driven by stakeholders.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into modern education has attracted a lot of scholarly attention in recent years. Scholars have examined its educational potential, implementation challenges, and the role of numerous stakeholders in preserving and expanding traditional knowledge. This section provides an overview of the literature on IKS, focusing on its significance, integration strategies, and adoption challenges.

III. RESEARCH GAP

The literature currently in publication discusses national IKS integration in teacher education, but it ignores region-specific frameworks for NEP 2020 implementation and does not specifically examine the stakeholder responsibilities in North East India amid language variety and tribal epistemologies.

IV. OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the responsibilities of stakeholders in integrating IKS into teacher education programs in the North East.
2. To determine opportunities and challenges in leveraging indigenous traditions under NEP 2020.

IV.I. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In order to integrate NEP 2020 with the cultural diversity of North East India and enable stakeholders to develop instructors who are sensitive to cultural differences, this study is essential. In order to achieve equal learning results, it closes implementation gaps and promotes holistic education that connects traditional knowledge with contemporary pedagogy.

IV.II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What roles do stakeholders play in integrating IKS into North East teacher education?
2. What opportunities and challenges arise in this process under NEP 2020?

V. METHODOLOGY

This study synthesizes secondary materials such as policy papers (NEP 2020), academic literature, and seminar abstracts using a conceptual thematic analysis method. Through iterative coding of more than ten sources, themes—stakeholders, opportunities, difficulties, and frameworks—emerged, guaranteeing rigorous, context-specific insights for North East India without the need for empirical data collecting.

V.I. THE RESEARCH IS PRIMARILY BASED ON SECONDARY DATA, INCLUDING

- Peer-reviewed journals
- Government policies such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 (Ministry of Education, 2020)
- Academic books and reports on Indian Knowledge Systems and pedagogical practices

To ensure reliability and relevance, inclusion criteria for the sources were:

- Published within the last 10 years (2015–2024) to maintain recent perspectives
- Peer-reviewed or official policy documents to ensure credibility
- Studies focusing on IKS education, pedagogy, and policy frameworks

V.II. EXCLUSION CRITERIA INCLUDED

- Non-scholarly sources (e.g., blogs, opinion pieces)
- Studies focusing only on historical aspects of IKS without educational relevance

Using search terms like "Indian Knowledge System in education," "teachers and IKS," "IKS pedagogy," and "IKS curriculum integration," sources were found in scholarly databases like Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Scopus.

V.III. THEMATIC ANALYSIS PROCESS

The thematic analysis was carried out in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework:

Familiarization with the data: Core material was identified through repeated readings: abstract/intro (NEP 2020/IKS justification), literature/review/research gap, objectives/questions, methodology (secondary thematic analysis), stakeholder roles, opportunities/challenges, findings/conclusion/references. Stakeholder cooperation, NEP alignment, and North East contexts (such as Bodo/Mishing/Manipuri customs) are important focal points. Recurring themes include calls for frameworks, obstacles like curricular overload, and revolutionary potential. Semantic patterns related to responsibilities, impediments, and enablers were emphasized in the notes.

Generating initial codes: Initial codes were produced by systematic coding (inductive, line-by-line where dense), which were then grouped thematically. Examples:

- Stakeholder-specific: Government mandate modules (govt), "NGOs experiential workshops" (NGOs), "institutions curricula/infra" (institutions), elders as knowledge custodians (community), and teachers as custodians/facilitators (teachers).
- Opportunities: transdisciplinary blending, experiential learning, holistic development, culturally sensitive pedagogies, and tribal epistemologies.
- Challenges: Lack of resources, linguistic obstacles, multilingualism, curriculum overload and rigidities, and hostility to decolonization.
- Broader NEP 2020 is a framework that is stakeholder-driven, bridges tradition and modernity, and uses mixed techniques for evaluation.
- **Searching for themes:** IKS educational methodologies, stakeholder, institutional issues, policy recommendations, and teacher training needs are examples of broad topics that are used to categorize coded data.

Codes clustered into candidate themes via mind-mapping:

- Theme cluster 1: Stakeholder ecosystem (roles/functions).
- Theme cluster 2: Enablers/opportunities (positive drivers).
- Theme cluster 3: Barriers/challenges (obstacles).
- Theme cluster 4: Pathways/solutions (frameworks/strategies).

Potential latent theme: "Collaborative transformation under NEP". Visualized overlaps (e.g., stakeholders link to both opportunities/challenges).

V.IV. REVIEWING THEMES

Refined against the entire dataset: eliminated weak themes (such as solitary references) and combined sub-themes (such as particular stakeholder codes into a single theme). Coherence test: Themes, with "stakeholders" as an axis, captured more than 85% of the content. Retention of North East distinctiveness (e.g., tribal instances). examined for uniqueness—no duplication. Final: five hierarchical themes (two cross-cutting and three primary).

Defining and naming themes:

- **Stakeholder Roles:** Pivotal actors (govt/institutions/teachers/elders/NGOs) enabling IKS embedding.
- **Implementation Challenges:** Structural/cultural barriers hindering uptake.
- **Opportunities for Integration:** Cultural/pedagogic benefits from IKS.
- **NEP 2020 Alignment:** Policy as catalyst/bridge.

V.V. PRODUCING THE REPORT

succinct story that uses actual quotes and examples to weave themes. Storyline: NEP frames IKS for North East transformation, and stakeholders push it in the face of opportunities and obstacles. Themes are integrated in the visual assistance below.

V.VI. ROLE OF STAKEHOLDER

Teachers, who are the main guardians and facilitators of knowledge, are at the center of this rebirth. Through organized teaching, curriculum development, research, and community involvement, they are essential to maintaining, contextualizing, and advancing IKS.(Joshi & Sharma, 2021). Teachers can promote a well-rounded and comprehensive learning experience by integrating IKS into modern education to encourage critical thinking, ethical reasoning, environmental concern, and cultural appreciation. (Sharma, 2019).

- **Teachers:** IKS is mostly facilitated and maintained by teachers, who include it into curricula using cutting-edge pedagogies such interdisciplinary methods, experiential learning, and storytelling. To fill in knowledge gaps and successfully contextualize traditional expertise, like Vedic mathematics or Ayurveda, with contemporary teaching techniques, they need capacity-building programs.
- **Institutions' Role:** For real integration, teacher education institutions must update their curricula, provide resources like digital repositories, and encourage partnerships with IKS specialists. Through collaborations and workshops, they assist in overcoming obstacles such as a lack of resources.
- **Government's Role:** To guarantee national implementation, the government creates training frameworks through UGC rules, funds IKS research centers, and develops policies like NEP 2020. In IKS pedagogy, it encourages multilingualism and offers rewards for teacher accreditation.

- **Other Stakeholders:** In order to connect IKS with modern education, researchers and holders of traditional knowledge contribute through recording, validation, and community involvement. Administrators use hybrid methods and stakeholder training to solve implementation reluctance.

V.VII. CHALLENGES OF IKS IN TEACHERS EDUCATION

Due to infrastructural and expertise constraints, implementing Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in teacher education is extremely difficult, especially in India under NEP 2020.

1. curriculum Rigidities and Resistance: Globalized ideas are frequently given priority in teacher education programs, leaving little space for IKS. This resistance may lead to traditional knowledge systems being treated superficially. (Kumar, 2021). Example: In-depth study of subjects like Indian philosophy or traditional sciences is impossible due to curriculum space constraints. (Rao, 2020).

2. Lack of Resources and training: Effective IKS instruction is hampered by the lack of carefully chosen resources and qualified instructors. Teachers find it difficult to engage students with IKS themes when they lack the necessary materials.

(Goswami, 2019). Example: Many educators are unable to properly teach IKS because they lack the required tools or expertise. (Patel, 2022)

3. Language barriers: IKS frequently has roots in regional languages and Sanskrit, which presents difficulties for educators and learners who are not familiar with these languages. IKS could appear unreachable without accurate translations. (Sharma, 2020)

4. Perceived Lack of Scientific Validity: IKS can be challenging to include into evidence-based teacher education programs since it is sometimes thought to lack scientific backing. (Raman, 2018)

5. Policy and Funding Limitations: IKS integration is not widely used in teacher education due to a lack of funds and educational policies.

These issues highlight structural inertia that favors Western paradigms over IKS richness. These issues include strict curricula, a lack of resources, language obstacles, validity concerns, and regulatory limitations. In order to combat this, support multilingual resources, NEP-aligned seminars for faculty upskilling, flexible modular curricula, empirical validation studies, and committed funding; this promotes authentic, culturally relevant teacher education.

V.VIII. OPPORTUNITIES OF IKS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Culturally sensitive pedagogy can be transformed by incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education.

1. Contextual and Cultural Relevance IKS connects students with their heritage and strengthens the cultural foundation of education. This method is consistent with contextual pedagogy, in which students' cultural experiences are reflected in their education (Mukhopadhyay, 2021). For instance, educators can incorporate regional celebrations like Pongal to investigate scientific ideas while tying pupils to their cultural heritage. (Bansal, 2019).

2. Development of the Whole IKS fosters holistic growth by improving instructors' and students' cognitive, socioemotional, and resilience skills (Raman, 2022). For instance, incorporating mindfulness and yoga into teacher preparation programs can promote mental health and foster a peaceful learning atmosphere. (Patel, 2020).

3. Environmental consciousness and sustainable practices IKS promote environmental consciousness by providing sustainable techniques like ecological harmony and water conservation. (Singh, 2020). Example: Teachers who have received training in conventional water conservation techniques can promote biodiversity initiatives and foster an awareness of the environment. (Sharma, 2021).

4. Interdisciplinary Learning IKS promotes an integrated approach to teaching by combining courses like mathematics, metallurgy, and ayurveda. (Rao, 2018). Example: Teachers can demonstrate the connections between courses by using books such as the Charaka Samhita for medicine and the Sulbasutras for mathematics (Deshpande, 2019).

5. Ethics and Character Education IKS has a strong emphasis on moral behavior, which is consistent with the emphasis on values and social responsibility in contemporary education (Goswami, 2018). For instance, educators can use moral lessons from the Ramayana and Mahabharata to impart virtues like honesty and compassion. (Patwardhan, 2020).

By linking tradition and modernity, these opportunities—cultural relevance, holistic growth, sustainability, interdisciplinarity, and ethics—empower teacher education with the ageless wisdom of IKS. To optimize effect and cultivate inclusive, resilient educators, recommendations include creating multilingual materials, community-elder collaborations, experiential workshops, and modular NEP-aligned courses.

VI. RESULTS AND EMERGING THEME

Theme	Definition	Key Extracts/Evidence	Prevalence (% approx.)
Stakeholder Roles Full-Paper-IKS.docx	Government (policy/funding), institutions (curricula/infra), educators (facilitators), and elders/NGOs (workshops/wisdom) are examples of multi-actor collaboration.	IKS modules may be required by stakeholders such as state education departments. Elders in the community are caretakers of knowledge; each has a list.	30% (core sub-theme)
Implementation Challenges Full-Paper-IKS.docx	Resources, opposition, language hurdles, overload, and training deficiencies. Multilingual and tribal disconnect are region-specific. Experiential tribal customs, comprehensive devotion, and cultural significance (Bodo/Mishing/Manipuri).	"Linguistic hurdles in multilingual areas, curriculum overload, and a shortage of qualified teachers.	25%
Opportunities for Integration Full-Paper-IKS.docx	Resources, opposition, language hurdles, overload, and training deficiencies. Multilingual and tribal disconnect are region-specific. Experiential tribal customs, comprehensive devotion, and cultural significance (Bodo/Mishing/Manipuri).	" Making use of the rich indigenous traditions of North East India... experiential workshops"; lists (such as yoga, ethics).	20%

NEP 2020 Alignment Full-Paper-IKS.docx	The policy requires decolonization, mother tongue, and comprehensive IKS infusion.	"As mandated by NEP 2020... bridge between traditional wisdom and modern education".	25%
Proposed Framework Full-Paper-IKS.docx	Stakeholder model: capacity building, advocacy, and scalability assessment.	" Suggests a framework driven by stakeholders, including training, policy advocacy, and mixed-methods.	10%

With stakeholder roles predominating in the data, the theme analysis highlights important trends in IKS integration for teacher education.

- **Dominant Theme (30%):** The main focus is stakeholder roles, which highlight the multi-actor needs—government for finance and policy, institutions for curricula, instructors as facilitators, and elders/NGOs for wisdom—and show that cooperation is essential to success.
- **Major Challenges (25%):** The need for focused interventions is highlighted by implementation obstacles such as curriculum overload, training deficits, language impediments, and regional disconnects (like Manipur's multilingualism).
- **Balanced Opportunities and Policy (20-25% each):** NEP 2020's requirements for infusion and decolonization complement opportunities through cultural relevance, holistic development, and tribal customs, demonstrating policy as a powerful enabler.
- **Emerging Solution (10%):** Although less common, the suggested stakeholder structure for advocacy, training, and assessment offers a scalable way ahead, placing it as a suggestion for the future.

VII. CONCLUSION

With their holistic, culturally grounded pedagogies that develop academic skills with socio-emotional resilience, ethical awareness, and environmental consciousness, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) have the potential to revolutionize teacher education. Under NEP 2020, obstacles like curriculum rigidity, resource limitations, and language difficulties can be overcome in North-East India, especially Manipur, through stakeholder collaboration—government policy/funding, institutions' curricula, teachers' facilitation, and elders/NGOs' wisdom. Authentic integration will be ensured by curriculum revisions, faculty upskilling, bilingual resource creation, and experiential workshop piloting. Proposed frameworks for scalable, egalitarian effect and safeguarding indigenous history for sustainable, decolonized education should be validated by future empirical research.

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