

# Integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into Teacher Education: A Transformative Approach under NEP 2020

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**Abstract**— The integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into teacher education, as envisioned by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and guided by the University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines, marks a significant step toward transforming India's educational landscape. NEP 2020 advocates for a holistic, multidisciplinary approach that embraces cultural heritage, contextual learning, and mother tongue instruction. By embedding India's rich intellectual traditions into teacher education, the system can offer a more inclusive, engaging, and culturally responsive learning experience. The present paper examines how IKS integration can enhance teacher education through curriculum design, pedagogical practices, cultural competence, interdisciplinary teaching, research and innovation, and continuous professional development. By bridging traditional wisdom with modern educational practices, teacher education programs can enrich learning content, cultivate a deeper appreciation of India's heritage, and equip educators to address diverse student needs. Ultimately, this aligns with NEP 2020's broader vision of an inclusive and culturally enriched education system.

**Keywords:** Indian Knowledge System, National Education Policy 2020, Teacher education

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, introduced by the Government of India, aims to transform the educational landscape of the country. One of the key highlights of NEP 2020 is the emphasis on the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), which encompasses traditional wisdom, scientific insights, and cultural practices developed over millennia (NEP, 2020). The University Grants Commission (UGC) has provided guidelines to integrate IKS into the curriculum, emphasizing its relevance in modern education (UGC, 2023; Mandavkar, 2023). The present paper explores the key points of NEP 2020 and the UGC guidelines on IKS, focusing on their implications for teacher education.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 plays a crucial role in promoting the integration of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into teacher education, aiming to incorporate rich cultural heritage and traditional wisdom into the curriculum, thereby providing teachers with a deeper understanding of India's diverse knowledge traditions and enabling them to deliver more culturally relevant and holistic education to students (Patel, n.d.; Sharma et al., 2023; Surabhi, 2024).

NEP 2020 presents an opportunity for a paradigm shift in teacher education by integrating the rich wisdom of Indian Knowledge Systems into the educational framework. This integration will not only help preserve traditional knowledge but will also create more well-rounded, culturally aware educators capable of engaging students in a more meaningful way (NEP, 2020; Abbasi, 2024). Embracing a balanced approach to teaching that blends the ancient with the modern will help build a future where students are connected to their heritage while being equipped with skills for the globalized world.

## II. KEY ASPECTS OF INTEGRATING IKS IN TEACHER EDUCATION AS PER NEP 2020

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education means actively incorporating traditional Indian knowledge like Ayurveda, Yoga, classical arts, and philosophy into teacher training programs, aiming to equip educators with the ability 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, dedicated teacher training programs, and research initiatives focused on IKS (Abbasi, 2024; Mandavkar, 2025).

According to the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, teacher education should significantly incorporate the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) by integrating traditional Indian pedagogies, philosophies, and cultural practices into the curriculum, aiming to foster a holistic understanding of education while equipping teachers to contextualize learning for diverse student backgrounds; key insights include: emphasizing experiential learning, incorporating local knowledge, promoting multilingualism, developing cultural competence, and utilizing technology to disseminate information while respecting regional

languages; essentially, teachers should be trained to seamlessly weave traditional wisdom into modern teaching practices to create a richer and more inclusive learning environment for students.

Overall, the NEP 2020 vision is to create a teacher education system that not only imparts academic knowledge but also nurtures a deep understanding of Indian cultural heritage, enabling teachers to provide a more relevant and meaningful learning experience for students rooted in their own cultural context.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into education. For teacher education, this integration can be transformative, fostering a deeper connection to India's rich cultural, historical, and philosophical traditions while preparing teachers for a globally competitive, locally grounded education system (Thakar & Desai, 2023; Pandey, 2024). Below are some key aspects of integrating IKS in teacher education as per NEP 2020:

## II.I. REVITALIZING CURRICULUM FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

- **Inclusion of IKS in Curriculum:** Teacher education programs should include modules on Indian philosophy, history, Indian art and crafts, science, Ayurveda, yoga, and ancient mathematical systems (Timane & Wandhe, (n.d.); Fatima et al., 2023).
- **Contextual Learning:** Teacher education Equip teachers to draw parallels between IKS and contemporary global knowledge systems, creating relatable and interdisciplinary learning experiences for students (Das, 2024; Khan & Sharma, 2024).

## II.II. PEDAGOGICAL REFORMS

- **Experiential Learning:** The NEP 2020 encourages teachers to use experiential and holistic learning methods inspired by IKS, such as storytelling (katha), dialogue (samvaad), and community engagement (Chatterjee et al., 2023).
- **Multilingual Approaches:** The NEP 2020 promotes teaching in regional languages while respecting India's linguistic diversity, as many IKS texts are in classical and vernacular languages.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** The policy encourages teachers to connect multidisciplinary approach to IKS, facilitating connections between different subjects like science, mathematics and humanities and demonstrating how traditional knowledge can be applied in contemporary contexts (Vaz, 2024; Amani, 2024).

## II.III. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

- **Focus on IKS-Based Research:** NEP 2020 develop research projects in teacher education to explore and revive ancient practices, focusing on sustainability, health, ethics, and education.
- **Documentation and Dissemination:** NEP emphasizes on training teachers to document local knowledge systems, traditions, and practices, making IKS accessible to future generations.
- **Research and Innovation:** NEP promotes research initiatives that explore the potential of IKS in education, including developing new teaching methods and curriculum materials based on traditional knowledge. The policy encourages teachers to explore and document traditional knowledge, and integrate findings into their teaching practices (Kottapalle, n.d.; Kumar, 2024).

## II.IV. VALUES AND ETHICS

- **Ethical Framework:** Teacher education programs should encourage adoption of ethical practices rooted in ancient Indian texts like the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and others (Jana et al., 2024). By inculcating respect for Indian cultural practices and knowledge systems, it helps teachers to inspire to embed these values in their teaching (Guidelines for Incorporating Indian Knowledge in Higher Education Curricula, 2023; Gaur, 2024).
- **Cultural Competence Development:** Teacher education programs are encouraged to foster cultural sensitivity and awareness among teachers, enabling them to effectively incorporate IKS while respecting diverse perspectives (Sharma et al., 2023; Waris & Shaheen, 2024). It helps the teachers to instill respect for India's cultural heritage and inspire teachers to promote inclusivity in the classroom (Guidelines for Incorporating Indian Knowledge in Higher Education Curricula 2023; Gaur, 2024).

## II.V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Teacher Training Programs:** NEP emphasizes the need for dedicated teacher training programs focused on IKS, including workshops, seminars, and faculty development initiatives. It helps teachers to equip with the necessary skills to integrate it into their subject areas, and develop pedagogical approaches that respect and value traditional knowledge (Fatima et al., 2023; Pandey, 2024).

## II.VI. INTEGRATION WITH MODERN KNOWLEDGE

- Blending Traditional and Modern: NEP emphasizes the need for training teachers to balance traditional knowledge with modern scientific advances, fostering a nuanced and integrated approach (Mishra et al., 2024; Mandavkar, 2025; Hans, & Hans, 2022).
- Technology for Dissemination: Teacher education programs should be encouraged to use digital platforms to provide access to translated and simplified IKS resources, aiding teachers in integrating this knowledge effectively (Biswas, 2021; Chatterjee et al., 2023; Hans & Hans, 2022).

## II.VII. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

- Redefining Success Metrics: NEP encourages the teacher training programs to shift from rote learning to assessments that measure critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and application of knowledge drawn from IKS.
- Local Contextual Evaluation: NEP emphasizes on including case studies and projects based on local contexts and traditions as part of teacher assessments in the teacher education curriculum and teacher education programs.

## II.VIII. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Learning from Communities: NEP encourages teachers to collaborate with local communities to understand and incorporate indigenous knowledge systems into their pedagogy.
- Service-Based Learning: NEP promotes practices like gurukul-inspired mentoring, emphasizing teacher-student relationships and community service in the teacher education programs.

## III. NEP 2020 INSIGHTS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION BASED ON INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM (IKS)

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes revitalizing teacher education in India, integrating aspects of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into curricula, pedagogy, and professional development. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places significant emphasis on integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the education framework, including teacher education. Below are some key insights and actionable points for teacher education based on the NEP 2020's vision for IKS:

### III.I. HOLISTIC AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 advocates for a holistic education system rooted in multidisciplinary approaches, integrating ancient Indian wisdom with modern pedagogy.
  - NEP 2020 envisions teacher education as a multidisciplinary and integrated program, emphasizing holistic development. Teachers are expected to: Understand and integrate India's rich cultural and historical heritage into their teaching.
  - Promote an appreciation of IKS, which encompasses ancient Indian philosophies, literature, sciences, arts, and traditional knowledge systems like Ayurveda, yoga, and local environmental practices.
- Action Points:
  - Include courses on Indian philosophy, art forms, languages, and sciences in teacher training programs.
  - Highlight the contributions of Indian scholars like Panini, Aryabhata, Charaka, and Sushruta in STEM and humanities education.
  - Train teachers to use storytelling techniques rooted in ancient traditions, such as Panchatantra and Jataka tales, to enhance moral and ethical education.
  - Introduce foundational courses on Indian philosophy, ethics, and value systems (e.g., Vedanta, Buddhist philosophy).
  - Train teachers to incorporate multidisciplinary perspectives, drawing on IKS for subjects like science (e.g., metallurgy from ancient India) or sustainable living practices (e.g., water conservation methods like stepwells).

### III.II. PROMOTING YOGA, MEDITATION, AND WELLNESS

- Insight:
  - Yoga and meditation are essential elements of IKS that NEP 2020 highlights for physical and mental well-being.
- Action Points:
  - Mandatory training in yoga and meditation for teacher trainees, enabling them to incorporate these practices into classroom routines.
  - Emphasize the scientific benefits of yoga and its relevance for stress management and holistic health.

### III.III. ETHICS AND VALUES-BASED EDUCATION

- Insight:
  - Indian Knowledge Systems emphasize values like empathy, self-discipline, harmony with nature, and respect for diversity.
  - IKS emphasizes harmonious living with nature, sustainable practices, and ethical principles, aligning with NEP 2020's focus on value-based education.
- Action Points:
  - Develop modules that focus on teaching values through ancient texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Buddhist teachings.
  - Introduce reflective practices like yoga, meditation, and mindfulness into teacher training programs to foster emotional intelligence.
  - Introduce courses on environmental ethics and traditional practices like organic farming, water management, and architecture (e.g., Vaastu Shastra).
  - Train teachers to impart values of sustainability and community responsibility drawn from Indian traditions.

### III.V. USE OF REGIONAL LANGUAGES

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 underscores the importance of mother tongue and regional languages in education, resonating with the linguistic diversity promoted in ancient India.
- Action Points:
  - Train teachers in multilingual teaching methodologies.
  - Incorporate classical languages such as Sanskrit, Tamil, and Pali in curricula for cultural literacy.
  - Encourage teaching-learning resources in local and regional languages.

### III.VI. CONTEXTUALIZED LEARNING

- Insight:
  - IKS is deeply rooted in local knowledge systems, sustainable practices, and community-driven innovations.
- Action Points:
  - Develop teacher training modules focusing on local environmental, agricultural, and healthcare practices.
  - Introduce case studies from IKS that align with global sustainable development goals.
  - Encourage project-based learning that draws from local traditions, crafts, and cultural practices.

### III.VII. INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 calls for reimagining teacher education with a research focus, drawing from ancient India's interdisciplinary traditions.
- Action Points:
  - Establish IKS-focused research centers in teacher education institutions.
  - Encourage action research projects integrating modern and traditional knowledge.
  - Provide teachers with exposure to indigenous methodologies and tools for innovative teaching.

### III.VIII. INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 stresses the importance of research-based teacher education. Teachers must explore and integrate IKS through interdisciplinary approaches.
- Action Points:
  - Promote research projects on IKS-related themes, such as Ayurveda's role in modern medicine or India's contributions to mathematics and astronomy.
  - Collaborate with institutions specializing in IKS to design curricula and teaching resources.

### III.IX. EXPERIENTIAL AND LIFELONG LEARNING

- Insight:
  - Gurukul traditions emphasized experiential learning and life skills, which align with NEP 2020's goals for skill development.
- Action Points:

- Create experiential learning modules that integrate fieldwork, heritage walks, and interaction with local artisans.
- Use traditional Indian games, arts, and festivals as teaching tools to promote experiential learning.
- Equip teachers to design lifelong learning programs for their students.

### **III.X. CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH TEACHER EDUCATION**

- Insight:
  - Teachers are envisioned as key drivers of educational reform under NEP 2020.
- Action Points:
  - Develop continuous professional development programs rooted in IKS themes.
  - Incorporate training on using indigenous technologies, traditional practices, and natural resources effectively.
  - Foster a sense of pride in India's cultural and intellectual heritage among educators.

### **III.XI GLOBAL RELEVANCE OF IKS**

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 emphasizes showcasing India's knowledge heritage globally.
- Action Points:
  - Train teachers to contextualize IKS for modern global challenges, such as climate change, health, and ethics in AI.
  - Encourage collaborative projects with international educators to share and co-create resources based on IKS.

### **III.XII. RECOGNITION AND INTEGRATION OF IKS IN CURRICULA**

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 equip teachers with knowledge and pedagogical approaches to incorporate IKS into modern education.
- Action Points:
  - Include modules on IKS in teacher education programs, covering fields like ancient Indian mathematics, astronomy, medicine, literature, philosophy, and environmental sustainability.
  - Design interdisciplinary courses that connect IKS with modern scientific and technological advancements.

### **III.XIII. BILINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL COMPETENCE**

- Insight:
  - IKS exists in diverse regional languages and dialects. NEP 2020 promotes bilingual or multilingual teaching approaches, fostering inclusivity.
- Action Points:
  - Develop language proficiency programs for pre-service and in-service teachers.
  - Train teachers in using local languages to teach traditional knowledge, thereby connecting students to their cultural roots.
  - Encourage the use of Sanskrit and other classical languages to access original IKS texts.

### **III.XIV. DEVELOPMENT OF PEDAGOGICAL TOOLS**

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 provide teachers with resources to teach IKS in engaging and relatable ways.
- Action Points:
  - Encourage Gurukula systems of mentorship
  - Create lesson plans, teaching aids, and digital content on IKS.
  - Equip teachers with tools to design experiential and project-based lessons like that reflect Indian values and traditions moral reasoning.
  - Emphasize inquiry-based learning which align with NEP 2020's goals of active learning methodologies.
  - Revive storytelling and case-study methods to instil ethics and problem-solving abilities in students.

### **III.XV. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN IKS**

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 encourage research in IKS to develop contemporary relevance.
- Action Points:
  - Establish research centers in teacher education institutions for the study of IKS.
  - Promote collaborative research between traditional knowledge holders and modern academia.

### III.XVI. VALUE-BASED EDUCATION

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 instill values rooted in Indian culture, such as empathy, respect for nature, and community living.
- Action Points:
  - Incorporate yoga, meditation, and ethical teachings from Indian philosophies into teacher training.
  - Encourage teachers to foster a holistic approach to education, focusing on physical, emotional, and spiritual development.

### III.XVII. TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL INTEGRATION

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 use modern tools to make IKS accessible and appealing to the digital generation.
- Action Points:
  - Develop digital repositories of IKS resources for teachers.
  - Use AI and AR/VR technologies to create immersive experiences around IKS topics like ancient architecture, Ayurveda, or Vedic mathematics.

### III.XVIII. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND LOCAL CONTEXT

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 make education contextually relevant by incorporating local IKS traditions.
- Action Points:
  - Train teachers to identify and integrate region-specific knowledge systems into their teaching.
  - Equip teachers to acknowledge and celebrate India's diverse cultural heritage.
  - Engage with local artisans, historians, and knowledge keepers to enhance teacher understanding of localized IKS.
  - Design culturally responsive teaching materials that reflect regional IKS traditions.
  - Encourage the inclusion of folk art, music, and craft forms in the curriculum.

### III.XIX. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 ensure teachers stay updated with the evolving understanding of IKS.
- Action Points:
  - Organize regular workshops and seminars on IKS for in-service teachers.
  - Introduce certification programs focused on specific aspects of IKS.

### III.XX. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 strengthen the bond between education and society by linking schools with community knowledge.
- Action Points:
  - Facilitate teacher interactions with traditional knowledge practitioners like Ayurvedic healers, weavers, and folk artists.
  - Encourage teachers to involve students in community projects that explore IKS.

### III.XXI. REVITALIZING TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (TEIS)

- Insight:
  - NEP 2020 advocates for the restructuring of TEIs to foster excellence and promote IKS.
- Action Points:
  - Establish specialized centers within TEIs to focus on Indian Knowledge Systems.
  - Encourage partnerships between traditional knowledge practitioners and teacher education programs.

By integrating these insights, teacher education programs can not only honour India's rich heritage but also empower educators to create innovative, inclusive, and culturally rooted learning environments. This approach will align with NEP 2020's vision of transforming the education landscape for the 21st century.

## IV. CONCLUSION

NEP 2020 envisions a comprehensive approach to teacher education that integrates Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) while also embracing modern educational methodologies. By fostering an understanding of Indian traditions, languages, and values, teacher education can help create educators who are well-equipped to nurture students' intellectual, emotional, and moral growth in a way that is both globally competitive and deeply rooted in Indian culture (NEP, 2020; UGC, 2023).

Overall, the NEP plays a significant role in promoting the integration of the Indian Knowledge System into teacher education, aiming to create a more culturally relevant and holistic learning experience for students by empowering teachers with knowledge of their rich heritage.

By equipping teachers with a deep understanding of the Indian Knowledge System, NEP 2020 envisions a well-rounded education that respects India's rich heritage while embracing global advancements. Teacher education institutions must play a pivotal role in this transformative journey. By embedding the Indian Knowledge System in teacher education, NEP 2020 not only preserves India's rich intellectual traditions but also equips educators to foster a generation of learners deeply connected to their heritage while being globally competent.

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