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INTEGRATING ANCIENT INDIAN WISDOM IN CONTEMPORARY TEACHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT: The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in teacher training encourages value-based teaching, ethical leadership, and professional growth. Indian education has traditionally emphasized integral learning, moral thinking, and self-discipline—skills essential for teachers—based on Shruti (revealed knowledge), Smriti (remembered traditions), Purāṇa (historical narratives), and Upadeśaḥ (ethical instructions).This research explores the applicability of Purāṇopadeśaḥ (Teachings & Ethical Guidance from the Purāṇas) to current teacher training, where it is contended to be compatible with value-based pedagogy, ethical teaching approaches, and ongoing professional development (CPD) as described in NEP 2020.By adopting a secondary research approach, this paper reviews ancient Indian texts with regards to the prevailing controversies in teacher education, distilling insights from ancient texts, policy reports, and scholarly journals. This study discusses the extent to which Dharma (duty), Satya (truthfulness), Ahimsa (non-violence), and Tyāga (self-denial) shape interactions between teachers and students, preparation of school curricula, and styles of school leadership. From the research, the incorporation of IKS into new pedagogy and e-learning materials provides some balance in training new teachers, integrating indigenous learning with contemporary pedagogical innovations.The research concludes that adopting Shruti-Smriti-Purāṇopadeśaḥ-based models in teacher education can develop ethically sound, culturally sensitive, and globally capable teachers, aligning with the holistic vision of NEP 2020. It emphasizes the importance of going back to India's ancient educational wisdom to enrich the professional development of teachers and the sustainability of value-based education.

KEYWORDS: ***Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Teacher Education, NEP 2020, Ethical Leadership, Value-Based Pedagogy, Yogic Education***.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian education system has historically been interwoven with ancient systems of knowledge focused on the moral and intellectual development of both pupils and educators. At the core of these Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) are Shruti (revelatory knowledge), Smriti (recollected traditions), Purāṇa (historical chronicles), and Upadeśaḥ (ethical teachings). They introduced holistic paradigms that shaped the Indian education sector for centuries, dictating the role of teachers as moral mentors and bearers of knowledge (Khan & Sharma, 2024). Shruti, which holds the Vedas and Upanishads, is preoccupied with self-control, self-knowledge, and pursuit of knowledge, constituting the base of values education. Smriti, including works like the Manusmriti and Dharmashastra, lays down the duties and obligations of the teachers, laying stress on righteousness in teaching (Amani, 2024). The Purāṇas, being filled with accounts of history and mythology, provide didactic tales that are used as moral teachings for students and teachers, upholding moral principles during the process of learning (Tikhe& Akhilesh, 2023). Upadeśaḥ consists of ethical precepts obtained from various scriptures, maintains the place of the teacher as far as leading the students to integrative intellectual and moral development is concerned (Maheshkumar &Soundarapandian, 2023). While the colonial education systems had at one point demanded significance, colonialism ultimately wore out the prominence of these

customary systems, prompting attention to shift towards Western models of schooling that in most instances reserved the values and ethics focus of education (G, A., & V, P., 2024).

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 offers an opportunity to incorporate these ancient systems of knowledge into modern teacher education. NEP 2020 envisions the coming together of age-old Indian values and the new pedagogy to achieve an ethically responsible and more culturally sensitive system of education, as proposed by Maheshkumar and Soundarapandian (2023).It understands that putting too much focus on technical know-how, but not ethical schooling, leads to an incomplete pedagogical apparatus (Bose, 2013). The NEP explicitly calls for a "value-based" teacher training approach, which urges education institutions to incorporate the moral wisdom of ancient Indian texts in an effort to develop leadership and integrity among teachers (Tikhe& Akhilesh, 2023). By integrating IKS into contemporary teacher education, teachers are not only educated as subject specialists but also as ethical mentors who shape the intellectual and moral growth of students. NEP also instigates knowledge acquisition from traditional Gurukula-type mentoring methodologies, where customized guidance and multi-dimensional development are emphasized, and adapting them into new classroom situations (Bhatnagar, 2009). Such integration can raise a generation of educators who are culturally rooted but more equipped to deal with the complexities of modern education systems (Kundu, 2019).

This research utilizes a secondary research method, tapping into ancient Indian literature, policy reports, and academic journals, to analyze the relevance of IKS to contemporary teacher training. The feasibility and advantages of incorporating Purāṇopadeśaḥ into teacher training programs are analyzed through comparative studies of ancient and contemporary pedagogical methods. Existing issues like change

resistance and the necessity for systematic implementation procedures need to be addressed to facilitate successful adoption of IKS-based training models.

Analysis of the impact of IKS in creating value-based pedagogy, its effectiveness in ethical pedagogy practice, and the effects of its impact on upholding professional growth and CPD is the focus in the research. Integrating the moral and ethical wisdom of Shruti-Smriti-Purāṇopadeśaḥ into teacher education, the current research develops a feasible model for value-based education. Such integration not only enhances pedagogical approaches but also creates a new generation of teachers who are ethically accountable, culturally competent, and globally conscious (Bhatnagar, 2009). The research emphasizes bringing back India's historical philosophy of education to devise better teacher training programs and help in developing a balanced, morally sound system of education.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN TEACHER TRAINING

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) have, over time, been at the core of the moral and intellectual foundation of education.Grounded in ancient scriptures such as the Vedas, Upanishads, and Purāṇas, IKS emphasize all-round development, with moral, philosophical, and scientific knowledge combined. The traditional Gurukula system is a model for the application of IKS in education, where students not only acquired knowledge but also absorbed values of discipline, respect, and self-discipline (Khan & Sharma, 2024). For G and V (2024), IKS fosters a values-based educational model in line with the present pedagogical needs. This is the opinion of Maheshkumar and Soundarapandian (2023), who affirm that IKS provides a framework for ethical education, emphasizing the role of the teacher in shaping the moral character of students. Shruti (revealed knowledge) is one of the most significant aspects of IKS, which includes sacred texts such as the Vedas and Upanishads.

These texts contain fundamental principles on education, emphasizing the importance of knowledge, truth, and self-discipline (Amani, 2024). Smriti (remembrances or customs), like texts the Manusmriti and Dharmashastra, provide advice on moral conduct and teachers' responsibilities (Tikhe& Akhilesh, 2023). The Purāṇas are repositories of historical and mythological narratives presenting moral and ethical teachings for use in education. Upadeśaḥ (ethical teachings) continues to establish the teacher's role in guiding students towards intellectual and moral growth (Maheshkumar & Soundarapandian,2023). The inclusion of IKS in modern teacher education aligns with the dreams of NEP 2020, which promotes an educational system which is based on culture but visionary in approach (Bose, 2013).

By incorporating such values as Dharma (responsibility), Satya (truth), Ahimsa (non-violence), and Tyāga (self-sacrifice), teachers are able to create classrooms where there exists a sense of ethical conscience and holistic learning (Kundu, 2019). Research shows that the revitalization of IKS-based pedagogies enhances

not only pedagogical quality but also inter-subjective relations among teachers and students, resulting in an equilibrium process of knowledge and value transfer (Amani, 2024). Despite being promising, incorporating IKS into teacher training is constrained by aspects like resistance, lack of a structured curriculum, and scarce training materials (Bhatnagar, 2009).

However, schools that have tested IKS-based teacher training programs have positive outcomes, with teachers showing greater participation in moral reasoning and ethical decision-making (Tikhe& Akhilesh, 2023). This shows the need for systematic incorporation of IKS into teacher training, combining indigenous wisdom along with contemporary education techniques to create effective and ethically grounded teachers.

IMPLEMENTATION OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in contemporary teacher education requires an organized method for harmonizing conventional wisdom and present-day pedagogy. Curriculum modification, teacher training, policy endorsement, and institutional buy-in are a few of these steps. According to research, IKS-based content integration facilitates the capacity of teachers to achieve both ethical and scholastic development, and therefore a well-rounded teaching philosophy (Khan & Sharma, 2024). The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 acknowledges the contribution of Indian traditions towards the development of teachers' character and integrity, reiterating the importance of integrating IKS into teacher education systems (Garg, 2024).

A foundational measure in the application of IKS is the establishment of specialized training institutes for teachers with an emphasis on ethics, overall development, and indigenous learning paradigms. Training institutes impart experiential learning in values-driven pedagogy through the incorporation of Shruti, Smriti, Purāṇa, and Upadeśaḥ into classroom approaches (Sharma, 2024). Digital platforms and e-learning modules also ease wider access to IKS-based materials to ensure that educators can incorporate traditional principles into contemporary learning environments (Garg, 2024).

Table 1:

ASPECT	TRADITIONAL INDIAN PEDAGOGY (IKS-BASED)	MODERN PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES
PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION	Rooted in spiritual and ethical teachings (Shruti, Smriti, Purāṇa, Upadeśaḥ)	Based on cognitive psychology and constructivist theories
TEACHING METHODOLOGY	Guru-Shishya (teacher-disciple) model, experiential learning	Student-centered, inquiry-based learning, technology-driven methods
ETHICAL INTEGRATION	Strong emphasis on Dharma (duty), Satya (truth), Ahimsa (non-violence), and Tyāga (self-discipline)	Ethical discussions are integrated but often secondary to academic performance
ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES	Oral transmission, memorization, real-life application-based evaluation	Standardized testing, formative and summative assessments
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT	Deep personal mentorship, character-building focus	Encourages collaboration, problem-solving, and self-directed learning

TECHNOLOGY UTILIZATION	Limited use of external tools; emphasis on oral tradition and manuscripts	Heavy reliance on digital tools, AI, and multimedia-based learning
CULTURAL SENSITIVITY	Strong emphasis on local traditions, rituals, and linguistic heritage	Globalized approach, but may lack indigenous cultural relevance
LIFELONG LEARNING	Emphasizes holistic personal growth and self-discipline	Encourages continuous professional development and skill acquisition

Table 1: Comparative Overview of Traditional and Modern Pedagogical Approaches **(**Source: Biswas & Mukherjee, 2024; Prabhakar, 2023; Yue, 2024).

The shift from traditional Indian pedagogy to modern educational frameworks reflects a broader evolution in teaching methodologies, emphasizing constructivist and student-centered approaches. Yue (2024) highlights that while modern pedagogical theories enhance cognitive engagement, they often lack the deep ethical and value-based grounding inherent in traditional systems. This reinforces the need for a balanced integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) to preserve both ethical instruction and academic development. While such advantages exist, there are still challenges. Change resistance is still a major obstacle among educators under Westernized training models who can see IKS as being old-fashioned or irrelevant (Narayanan, 2020). But evidence indicates that formal training on IKS-based pedagogy enhances teacher engagement, classroom management, and ethics (Sharma, 2024). This gap can be bridged only through transparent policies and interdiscipline convergence between IKS-specialized institutions and modern-day teacher training programs (Shilpa, 2024).

The mentorship and experiential pedagogy in the Gurukula tradition teaches us effective teaching. The learning process here revolves around one-on-one relationships of the student and teacher, while ethical aspects gain prominence in contrast to the imparting of educational knowledge (Manoj, 2024). Project-based methods, narrative teachings, and teaching by reflection proved successful in implementing IKS lessons in teacher preparation (Sharma & Rao, 2023). These measures boost teacher-student relationships and consolidate the moral and philosophical aspects of education, facilitating a well-rounded and values-oriented learning experience.

To be effectively adopted, policymakers and institutions must enact policy reforms requiring IKS content in the curricula for teacher training. Investment in staff development programs and the development of interdisciplinary courses merging traditional knowledge with contemporary methodologies are essential (Sharma, 2024). It requires coordination between government and private institutions to support research funding and resources for the study of IKS applications in education. In the long run, the inclusion of IKS in teacher education ensures teachers are academically competent, ethically sound, culturally sensitive, and can support students' integral development.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into teacher education has shown promising results in shaping educators with strong ethical values, cultural awareness, and holistic pedagogical skills. Research indicates that IKS-based training enhances teachers' ability to foster value-based learning and create inclusive educational environments (G & V, 2024). By integrating ancient Indian philosophies, teachers build a profound insight into ethical leadership and student participation, resulting in enhanced classroom management (Khan & Sharma, 2024). Moreover, research points out that teachers educated in IKS-based pedagogy experience enhanced job satisfaction, greater cultural competency, and better flexibility in meeting diverse student needs (Dwivedi, 2020).

One of the major effects of IKS on teacher training is the integration of experiential and inter-disciplinary learning. Researchers posit that the incorporation of traditional storytelling, reflective pedagogy, and project-based education enhances students' engagement and retention of content (Verma, Sachdeva, & Bajpai, 2023). In addition, the inclusion of Gurukula-inspired models of mentorship has been seen to improve teacher-student dynamics and moral classroom management (Sardar, 2021). These strategies resonate with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 vision of value-based and integral education, stressing the importance of an education system that integrates traditional knowledge with contemporary pedagogic innovations (Sharma, 2024).

Even with these advantages, challenges persist in accurately measuring the long-term effect of IKS in teacher education. Academics call for empirical research to quantify the behavioral and cognitive transformation of teachers undergoing IKS-based training (Akhilesh, 2023). Moreover, policymakers need to make sure that incorporating IKS does not generate inequalities in access to education, especially in urban and rural areas where means for conventional learning could be scarce (Kumar, 2021). Remediating these worries through systematic investigation and policy response will be indispensable in ascertaining the future of IKS in contemporary teacher training.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Though the inclusion of IKS in teacher education has many positive implications, the implementation is plagued by various obstacles. Resistance to change continues to be one of the major setbacks, as a large number of educators trained within Westernized pedagogical approaches perceive traditional knowledge as archaic or less significant compared to contemporary teaching methods (Garg, 2024). Furthermore, discrepancies in teacher training programs, absence of standard curricula, and inadequate institutional support also delay the smooth inclusion of IKS within mainstream education (Dwivedi, 2020).

A second challenge is achieving harmony between IKS and technology-based education. While education becomes more and more reliant on digital mediums and AI-learning platforms, preserving the intertwinement of conventional knowledge and technological developments poses a central problem (Kumar, 2021). Researchers opine that hybrid models based on fusion between IKS and digital tools can be formulated to meet this need, providing increased accessibility and versatility among both students and educators (Sharma, 2024).

In the future, the future of IKS in teacher education relies on visionary policy reforms and joint endeavors by academic institutions, government, and indigenous scholars. Scholars propose setting up dedicated centers for IKS-based teacher education to ensure teachers are given structured training in using these principles to their advantage (Verma et al., 2023). Moreover, the incorporation of IKS in interdisciplinary research can bridge the gap between the past and modern times of education, opening the door for more inclusive and culturally embedded learning (Akhilesh, 2023).

In order to succeed in the long term, policymakers should ensure that IKS is not merely an add-on but a fundamental part of teacher education programs. More research funding, teacher training programs, and international collaborations can also facilitate the incorporation of IKS in education. Overcoming these challenges and leveraging its strengths, IKS can revolutionize teacher education, empowering educators with the resources to develop ethically grounded, culturally sensitive, and globally engaged students.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Effective incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in teacher education needs focused policy measures that tackle structural issues, training deficits, and institutional constraints. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has laid the groundwork for the integration of IKS in education, but its implementation needs to be accompanied by transparent frameworks and specific resources (Sharma, Mittal, & Zayan, 2023). Researchers recommend IKS-based pedagogy must be integrated in teacher training through interdisciplinary courses synthesizing ancient principles and modern practices (Das, 2023).

A major suggestion is setting up special teacher training institutes and research centers specializing in IKS approaches. These centers can be used as anchor points for the formulation of systematic teacher training

programs, so that teachers get thorough exposure to conventional Indian pedagogy (Amani, 2024). Further, collaborations between native knowledge specialists and educational institutions can be used to localize IKS in contemporary classroom settings (Garg, 2024).

To facilitate the inclusion of IKS in the teacher education system, policymakers will have to launch fund incentives and grant schemes for curriculum development and research (Das, 2024). There must be partnerships between the government and private agencies for sponsoring initiatives centered on the digitalization of older texts, establishment of e-learning platforms, and design of materials for pedagogical processes including traditional instructional strategies (Karanwal& Singh, 2023). Such efforts can enhance accessibility and scalability, ensuring that IKS-based teacher training reaches a wider audience.

In addition, policy guidelines that require faculty development courses in IKS principles are needed. Periodic workshops, training sessions, and certification courses must be instituted to provide educators with the expertise required for the incorporation of conventional pedagogical approaches into contemporary classrooms (Mukherjee, 2024). This aligns with international best practices in teacher education, which prioritize ongoing professional development and cross-disciplinary learning (Sharma, 2024).

Lastly, monitoring and evaluation systems should be put in place to determine the efficacy of IKS-based training programs for teachers. Policymakers should come up with evaluation tools to determine the competency of educators in implementing traditional knowledge systems in learning environments, ensuring that implementation of IKS leads to enhanced learning results (Kakodkar, Rishipathak, & Sriranga, 2024). With organized implementation and long-term policy backing, IKS can enhance teacher training, building a generation of teachers who represent ethical leadership, cultural sensitivity, and integrated teaching practices.

CONCLUSION

The inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems in teacher training provides a revolutionary means of creating educators who are not just proficient in subject matter but also grounded in ethical principles and cultural sensitivity. Incorporating Shruti, Smriti, Purāṇa, and Upadeśaḥ into teacher training allows teachers to create a more complete learning environment that respects both traditional wisdom and contemporary education advancements. The results emphasize that IKS improves value-based pedagogy, ethical practice in teaching, and ongoing professional development, benefiting both students and teachers in the end (Sharma, 2024).

All challenges notwithstanding, in the form of institutional resistance, absence of curricula planning, and integration issues related to technology, strategic policy interventions and concerted actions may ensure seamless integration of IKS in teacher education. The development of research institutes, staff development programs, and economic incentives towards curriculum development will be important in maintaining this initiative (Mukherjee, 2024). Further, interdisciplinarity and online learning resources can make IKS relevant and accessible to teachers in various education contexts (Garg, 2024).

Looking forward, the future of IKS in teacher education hinges on continued policy support, institutional commitment, and ongoing research on its long-term effect. By adopting IKS-based pedagogical models, teacher education programs can develop a new generation of educators who are ethically sound, culturally aware, and globally competent. In the end, the successful incorporation of IKS can lead to a more balanced, inclusive, and values-based education system, realizing the vision enunciated by NEP 2020.

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