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Council for Teacher Education Foundation (CTEF, Gujarat Chapter)

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Chief Editor: Prof. Jignesh B. Patel

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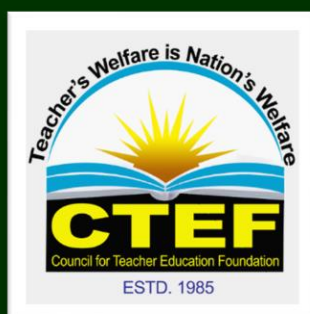
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Incorporation of Indian Knowledge System: A Way to Make Teacher Education Programme Qualitative

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Abstract

Education has enough potential to shape the destiny of nation. It provides desired direction with structured momentum for development and prosperity. That's why every nation has its own education system according to its social, cultural, political and geographical needs. Our ancestors were well understood about the importance of education in very beginning of civilization. That is why, when other people of the world were struggling for survival, at that time our sages were composing great Vedas in India. The texts of Vedic and Post-Vedic literature, even today, highlight the glory of ancient Indian knowledge system. But due to thousands of years slavery our education system was destroyed and foreign education system was imposed. To change in this scenario and ensure indigenous quality education, the Government of India has suggested a solution in the form of National Education Policy 2020. Indianization of entire education system is an important aspect of this education policy. This policy also well recognized the role of competent teachers to ensure qualitative education. This paper has been written to address this issue. Through this paper, the concept and importance of Indian knowledge system has been discussed. Along with this, the strategy to make Indian knowledge system an integral part of teacher education is also discussed in detail.

Keywords: Education, Teacher Education, Indian Knowledge System

Introduction

Education has enough potential to shape the destiny of nation. It provides desired direction with structured momentum for development and prosperity. That's why every nation has its

own education system according to its social, cultural, political and geographical needs. Our ancestors were well understood the important of Knowledge in very beginning of civilization. That is why, when other people of the world were struggling for survival, at that time our sages were composing great Vedas in India. The texts of Vedic and Post-Vedic literature, even today, highlighting the glory of the Indian knowledge system. India was established as a world leader due to its contribution in all field of knowledge e.g. art, social science, politics, law, culture, architecture, finance, science, medicine, and spirituality etc.

Due to world class knowledge, culture and prosperity of India, many businessmen, politicians and scholars came from all over the world for business and education. This glorious knowledge system and economic prosperity of India has attracted not only people with positive outlook but also invaders and cruel rulers from thousands of kilometres away of different parts of the world. Due to these attacks, both India's prosperity and culture were destroyed and India became slave. This thousands of years slavery caused great damage to the identity and dignity of India. In a country, whose education is cut off from the basic roots of its social, geographical, and cultural needs, its citizens feel lack of self-respect and self-confidence.

We accept the imposed education system of Macaulay and still today we are careering its burden at our shoulders. British colonialism disrupted traditional Indian education systems, replacing indigenous curricula and languages with introducing Western curricula and English language. This led to a marginalization of traditional knowledge (Kumar and Bisht, 2024). Consequently, Indian education system is facing several severe problems and quality of education has been disrobed. Even after independence, many commissions, committees, and sub-committees have tried to do Indianization of education system by addressing its historical, social, cultural, economic and geographical needs. But unfortunately, we could not get success in this concern as expectation.

To overcome these difficulties hindering quality education, the Government of India has suggested a solution in the form of National Education Policy 2020. Indianization of entire education system is an important aspect of this education policy. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 provides the most significant policy impetus for incorporating IKS into education. NEP 2020 (MoE, 2020) emphasizes integrating India's rich knowledge traditions—including Yoga, Ayurveda, arts, local wisdom, ecological ethics, classical languages, and traditional learning systems—into curricula to foster holistic, value-based education. Following NEP 2020, the University Grants Commission issued *Guidelines for*

Incorporating Indian Knowledge in Higher Education Curricula (UGC, 2023), providing a national framework for embedding IKS in different disciplines, including teacher education.

Several researches have been carried out to explore the field of Indian knowledge system. Das (2024) emphasizes the relevance of IKS in achieving the aims of NEP 2020 and argues for promoting cultural literacy. Kumar & Bisht (2024) argue that post-colonial educational reforms must reclaim indigenous epistemologies to overcome cultural dislocation. In the same way Vaz (2024) discusses how traditional Indian sciences, arts, and philosophies can enrich modern education with ethical and cultural depth. IKS can be treated as an epistemic resource that supports experiential, value-based, and contextually relevant teacher education (Puri, 2025). Collectively, these works establish the theoretical significance of IKS integration. These researches highlight its potential to strengthen teacher identity, ethical orientation, cultural rootedness, and pedagogical relevance.

These studies are predominantly conceptual. Action oriented, empirical and practice-based studies remain limited, especially in the field of teacher education. There is insufficient research on curriculum redesign, implementation pathways, assessment tools, faculty readiness, student-teacher experiences and proposed strategies to implement IKS in teacher education programme. Thus, there is a need for a structured, action-oriented framework for integrating IKS into teacher education to enhance quality and relevance.

This paper is written to address this issue. Through this paper, the concept, importance and strategy to make Indian knowledge system an integral part of teacher education, has been described in detail.

Nature and objectives of the paper: This is a theme-based paper. It is **qualitative in nature, and follows a conceptual analytical narration of the theme.** This is written with following objectives:

1. To explain the concept, and nature of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS),
2. To discuss the importance of IKS in teacher education in the context of NEP2020.
3. To propose a systematic and actionable strategy for incorporating IKS into teacher education that can make teacher education programmes qualitative and culturally rooted.

Meaning of Indian Knowledge System:

There are three words in the IKS; Indian, Knowledge and System. Indian stands for something originated from the land of Bharat (India), such as cuisine, art, literature, culture, music, citizen or any other thing. Second word. 'knowledge' stands for information, understanding, skill and awareness that a person acquired through imitation, experience, or education. It is visible in the form of three levels – Gyanam, Vijnanam and Pragyanam

respectively in Indian context. The third word ‘system’ can be narrated as a structured process or a particular way of doing something; Which answers questions like why, what, how, where and when in a particular context. The knowledge generated, assimilated, and extended in the Indian sub-continent can be called Indian knowledge system.

NEP-2020 in its para 4.27 narrates that “Knowledge of India” will include knowledge from ancient India and its contributions to modern India and its successes and challenges, and a clear sense of India’s future aspirations with regard to education, health, environment, etc. The Indian Knowledge System embodies the ancient and rich intellectual, cultural, and spiritual traditions of India. This system has been going on for thousands of years and encompasses various forms of knowledge, like science, art, philosophy, medicine, astrology, yoga, language, literature and many more.

Indian Knowledge system aspired to know everything that the mind can comprehend from tiny atoms to the universe and it has a glorious system of spirituality propagated by a long line of rishis (Ranjit, Kumar, Das. 2024). It is a holistic approach of knowledge system, in which the universe, human life, and knowledge itself as interconnected and interdependent. Knowledge is considered very important for human life in Indian knowledge system. Alteker (1968. p no. 3) pointing this thing with the narration of a shloka that was picked from Subhashit Ratn Sangraha that-

ज्ञानं तृतीयं मनुजस्य नेत्रम् समस्ततात्त्वर्थविलोकि दक्षम्।

तेजोऽनपेक्षम् विगतांतारायं प्रवृत्तिमसर्वजगत्त्रयोपि (सुभाषित रत्न संग्रह , पृ 169).

Means Knowledge is the third eye of human being which enables them to make good judgment in all works of life.

The concept of the Indian knowledge system (IKS) is deeply rooted in ancient Indian philosophy, spirituality, culture and vocational activity that include key essence of above three theories. IKS encompasses all of the systematized disciplines of Knowledge which were developed to a high degree of sophistication in India from ancient times and all of the traditions and practises that the various communities of India—including the tribal communities—have evolved, refined and preserved over generations (UGC, 2023). This system is open enough to gather knowledge from all over the world as it says in it’s very famous mantra of Rigveda- “आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ... (ऋग्वेद 1.89.1) means, good thoughts which are beneficial should come to us from all sides.).

Rational behind embedding IKS to ensure quality teacher education:

The quality of teacher education can be improved by systematically integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into curriculum, teaching methods, and institutional practices. IKS is not just ancient knowledge, but a holistic, value-based and practice-oriented system that helps develop teachers' cognitive, emotional, and ethical abilities. This view is supported by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which promotes the inclusion of Indian knowledge traditions such as Yoga, Ayurveda, environmental ethics, local and traditional learning systems, arts, languages, and community-based practices to create well-rounded and multidisciplinary teacher education programmes.

India is being recognized by new identities like young nation and largest democracy in the world. Despite being established as the fifth largest economy in the world, India is still recognizing as a developing country too. Though there is a hope to be developed due to its young energy and intellect. But these young energy and intellects only work in full capacity if they are educated and skilled for it. And this venture is directly linked with teacher education programme. Only a profound teacher can do this task. Therefore, the teacher education programme must be qualitative, effective and rooted in IKS.

But unfortunately, teacher education programme is at the radar of worst criticism in India. There are several challenges and problems in present teacher education programme. Lack of responsibility towards teaching, incompetency, lack of life skill, apathy towards student's development and teaching profession, lack of orientation towards Indian heritage and knowledge system and attitudinal barriers etc. are some basic problems that want rectification immediately. Orientation towards Indian knowledge system will make our pre- and in-service teachers more responsible, equipped with life skill, and generate a positive attitude towards teaching profession.

Keeping these things in mind, National Education Policy-2020 is clearly saying in its para 15.1 that teacher must be grounded in Indian values, languages, knowledge, ethos, and traditions including tribal traditions, while also being well-versed in the latest advances in education and pedagogy. To do this marathon task, experts, teachers, and teacher educators are needed. To aware and make them enable to teach IKS at school level it is important to make pre-service teacher education curriculum embedded with IKS.

Incorporating Indian Knowledge Systems into teacher education is an attempt to enrich modern education with Indian cultural, ethical and intellectual perspectives. This step not only connects teachers to traditional knowledge but also enables them to provide a holistic, relevant and value-based education. Study of Sanskrit, ancient Indian literature (Vedas, Upanishads, Mahabharata, Ramayana) helps teachers to understand the depth of Indian

knowledge system. It also encourages linguistic skills. Research conducted in the fields of mathematics, astrology, astronomy, and medicine in ancient India provides teachers with the opportunity to teach the rich Indian tradition of science and arithmetic like the invention of zero, Aryabhata's astronomy, and Charaka-Sushruta's medical texts as well as other disciplines to prospective teachers.

Interdisciplinary approach in teaching learning process is the prime concern of NEP2020. The interrelationship of art, science, philosophy, sociology and ethics is clear in the Indian knowledge system. Adoption of this approach in teacher education can make teaching more effective and comprehensive.

Value-based education is key feature of IKS. Orientation towards value-based education enables prospective teachers to teach morality and coexistence. It provides a way to incorporate regional and cultural knowledge into the curriculum keeping in mind the diversity of India too. Ancient Indian principles are helpful in addressing issues such as the environmental crisis, mental health, and social stress. The inclusion of Indian knowledge system and teacher education not only connects teachers to their cultural heritage but also enables them to provide a holistic and value-based education.

This initiative helps to be proud as Indian and global outlook among the students. This makes the teaching process more effective, relevant and life-oriented. Integration of IKS helps preserve India's rich cultural heritage and traditional knowledge systems and provide a platform to promote cultural diversity of India. In short, incorporation of IKS in Teacher programme, is an initiative which surely make teacher education programme qualitative and impactful.

Strategy to incorporate IKS in teacher education programme (TEP)

A sound strategy to incorporate IKS in teacher education programme (TEP) is very important and need to be developed. Here, action-oriented strategy to incorporate IKS in TEP is proposed. This action framework represents the key point and related action with implementing stakeholders.

Table 1: Strategy to incorporate IKS in TEP

Sr. No.	Key point	Related action for incorporation IKS in TEP	Related Stakeholder
1	Development of booklet to identify IKS	A booklet is needed to evaluate present curriculum with the lance of IKS. It should be decided first, which curricular and co-curricular content and activity will be considered under the preview of IKS	Policy makers and Institutions like NCTE

		particularly in the context of TEP.	
2	Evaluation of the current curriculum	There are several universities and autonomous colleges that run pre and in service TEP and they have their own vision, mission and curriculum. With the lance of developed parameter and booklet each and every curriculum of TEP must be evaluated to find out the incorporated IKS points and gaps.	Institutions' head along with curriculum development team like Board of studies (BOS) academic council, team of experts etc.
3	Integration of IKS in curriculum	<p>IKS can be integrated in unite of suitable courses of curriculum as theory or practical portion.</p> <p>Provide as a special 4 to 2 credit core courses in the curriculum of TEP.</p> <p>Make a provision for 4 credit advance course as optional paper.</p> <p>Opportunity for supplementary reading/practicum about IKS.</p> <p>Integrate modules on Indian philosophy, traditional sciences, and arts into the teacher education curriculum</p>	Curriculum developer, Teacher Educator. And Experts of this matter
4	Co-curricular activities	Co-curricular activities such as yoga, meditation, and traditional crafts, music, heritage field trip, etc. are some activities that to help students experience IKS principles firsthand.	Teacher Educators, member of management
5	Teaching and learning experiences	<p>Teacher educators are directed to embed IKS related examples during their teaching.</p> <p>Relate IKS concepts to contemporary issues and challenges, making them more relevant and applicable.</p> <p>Use storytelling and narratives to convey IKS concepts and values, making them more engaging and memorable for prospective teacher that will be</p>	Teacher Educators, In service and pre service teachers

		definitely pass on to the next generation. Reflective practices should be encouraged, such as journaling and self-inquiry, to help students integrate IKS concepts into their personal and professional lives.	
6	Resource development	Create textbooks and educational resources that incorporate IKS concepts and perspectives. Digital resources, such as online courses, videos, and podcasts, to support IKS-based teaching and learning must be developed. Research work to explore the hidden useful content and facts of IKS to enhance TEP.	Teacher Educators, IT professionals having teaching experience
7	Creation of learning environment	Ensuring Environment like Gurukuls of ancient India in formal schooling. Environment like Gurukul is the best example of IKS that has potential to transform our today's school environment where emotional attachment, respect, discipline, pride of heritage and ethical conduct etc. will be nurtured automatically.	Management committee of institute
8	Evaluation system	Develop evaluation frameworks for prospective teachers to judge their own progress in acquirement of IKS related competencies. Self-assessment and reflective practices during learning process are the core elements of IKS. Encouraging this behaviour among prospective teachers will be helpful to incorporate IKS principles of evaluation and guidance that automatically pass on to their students.	Teacher educators, Prospective teachers
9	Faculty Development	Offer faculty development programs that focus on IKS concepts, pedagogies, and resources. Provide mentorship and coaching opportunities for faculty members to develop their expertise in teaching IKS. Encourage collaborative research projects that explore the integration of IKS into teacher education programs.	Teacher educators, Prospective teachers, administrative bodies

Table containing strategies to incorporate IKS in teacher education programme shows that integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into Teacher Education Programmes requires collective efforts across policy, curriculum, pedagogy, and institutional routine activities and in its working culture. By revising curriculum, enriching teaching–learning processes, promoting experiential co-curricular activities, developing relevant resources, and strengthening faculty capacities, IKS can be meaningfully incorporated in teacher education programme. When institutions create supportive learning environments and adopt reflective evaluation practices, prospective teachers can internalize IKS values and transmit them to future generations. Overall, this multi-dimensional approach ensures that teacher education becomes more holistic, culturally rooted, and aligned with the vision of NEP 2020. In short, by incorporating these strategies, teacher education programs can effectively integrate Indian Knowledge System, enriching the educational experience for both students and teachers.

Conclusion: Integrating Indian knowledge systems into teacher education is not just about preserving the past; it is about empowering future generations with the wisdom and insights needed to navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Incorporation of IKS into teacher education programme can make our prospective teachers more responsible, equipped with life skill, and generate a positive attitude towards teaching profession. Incorporation of IKS into teacher education is a challenging task and need proper determination as well as action plan. Action-plan provided by this paper, definitely would be beneficial to make our teacher education programme qualitative. To make this action plan functional at ground, it is important to all stakeholders of education to discharge their duties with honesty and full of determination.

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