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Indian Knowledge System

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ABSTRACT: The Bhāratīya Jñāna Paramparā Vibhāga or Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) is a division of the^[1] Government of India's Ministry of Education which purports to promote indigenous Indian systems of knowledge.^[2] located in the AICTE Headquarters was established in Oct. 2020.

KEYWORDS: India, knowledge, system, government, education, ministry, AICTE

I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian National Education Policy (NEP), as enacted in 2020, emphasizes the inclusion of IKS into curriculums at all levels of education;^{[3][4][5]} in line with this, the National Credit Framework (NCF) has made it possible for students to earn credit in courses relating to ancient Indian sciences and arts.^[6] IKS is also being included under the Vision 2047 for Bharatiya Rasayanasastra initiative.^[7] In the 2022-2023 budget, IKS's financial allocation was doubled to ₹20 crore (US\$2.4 million).^[8]

Under University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines, it is advised that 5 per cent of a student's total credits should be in IKS courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.^[9] The UGC aims to train 1.5 million teachers in IKS by 2025,^[2] and has launched an online IKS MOOC course.^[10]

IKS has also spearheaded and funded certain research initiatives relating to traditional Indian knowledge,^[11] such as in relation to agriculture and architecture.^{[12][13][14]}

Topics

Vedic mathematics, various shastras such as the Arthashastra, and Indian astronomy will be taught under the IKS initiative.^{[15][16][17]} IKS topics for students taking UG medicine courses will include yoga, meditation, and ayurveda.^{[15][18][19]}

Initiatives

Bharatiya Khel^[1,2,3]



The game of seven stones, which is one of the 75 games featured by Bharatiya Khel. Bharatiya Khel (Hindi: भारतीय खेल, transl. Indian Games) is an initiative of the Indian government under the National Education Policy (NEP) and Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) policies to introduce 75 traditional Indian games into schools across the country. Interschool competitions will be held,^[20] with one seasonal game selected each month, and the best-performing schools and teachers will earn certificates of recognition.^[21]

Reactions

Support

The work of the IKS division has been interpreted by some as being guided by a mission to preserve Indian heritage,^[22] apply ancient knowledge to modern problems such as climate change,^{[23][24]} and decolonise Indian education in a way that reduces undue Western influences.^{[25][26][27]}



Criticism

Critics of the IKS division have asserted that its curricula peddle pseudoscience and pseudohistory, do not constitute a genuine scholarly "decolonisation" programme, are a tool of indoctrination by the Hindutva ideology of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and will economically and professionally disadvantage Indian graduates in the workforce.

Many critics argue that the IKS division promotes fringe pseudoscientific and pseudohistorical views. Writing for *The Wire*, Vasudevan Mukunth criticised the introduction of a new text under the auspices of IKS as a "Trojan horse of pseudoscience".^[28] The text in question dismisses as a myth the commonly accepted belief that "aeronautics was developed by Wright Brothers in 1903," asserting instead that 5,000 years before the Wright Brothers, "Maharshi Bhardwajan wrote an epic called Yantra Sarvasva and aeronautics is a part of the epic...Yantra Sarvasva is not available now but out of whatever we know about it, we can believe that planes were a reality in Vedic age." [4,5,6] The text also asserts that "It's a Myth that Theory of Gravity was discovered by Isaac Newton in 1666 AD; the truth is that thousands of years before Newton, a number of epics were written on the gravitational force and we can find the evidence in the Rig Veda".^[29]

Manasi Thapliyal Navani, a professor in the School of Education Studies at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University Delhi, has criticized the IKS curriculum as not being genuinely decolonial, stating that "Indigenous knowledge education or decolonisation projects begin with a critical dialogue with history and with the dominant forces that have shaped modern disciplines," and because IKS curricula lack such critical engagement, "the whole project essentially boils down to becoming one of indoctrination."^[30]

Critics have also asserted that the curriculum was introduced to further the political agenda and Hindutva ideology of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).^[31] Jaheer Mukthar, an assistant professor of economics at Kristu Jayanti College in Bangalore, asserted that "the government is clearly using the text as a tool for propagating the Hindutva agenda".^[30]

Another criticism is that the IKS curricula may deprive students of access to useful Western knowledge, or bias them against it.^[32] In his article for *The Wire*, Mukunth also warned that an IKS education "would render [Indian] graduates even more unemployable, or under-employed, than they already are".^[28] Some critics have urged that IKS courses be made optional so as to not create issues for students who want to take courses that are better for their employment prospects.^[33]

It has drawn criticism for promoting pseudoscience, pseudohistory and misinformation. Critics have also alleged that it serves to disseminate propaganda to further the political agenda of India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its far-right Hindutva/Hindu nationalist ideology

II. DISCUSSION

Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a generic phrase that encompasses the knowledge assets that have evolved in India. It includes mathematics, science and technology, medicine, astronomy, architecture, philosophy, arts, languages, literature, cultural and social practices, traditions, etc. Historically, IKS has its own corpora, methods and criteria for generating, validating, and propagating knowledge.[7,8,9]

One of the primary distinguishing factors of Chanakya University is its commitment to Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) as stated in the preamble of the CU Act, 'The concerns of India and Indian knowledge systems will deeply inform all the knowledge endeavours of the University including teaching, research and practice.' IKS in brief refers to the wisdom, insights and knowledge repository emerging from the rich civilizational experience of Bharat over thousands of years.

To bring this dream into reality Chanakya University has established a Centre for Excellence (CoE) in IKS to work as an engine for integrating IKS with University activities and culture. The CoE-IKS is a dedicated unit spearheading multi-disciplinary research in the field of Indian Knowledge Systems. The CoE is proactively working with other areas and disciplines to progressively integrate IKS within the disciplinary domains within the University and other institutions. The CoE seeks to address real-life problems in the areas of Sustainable Development, Leadership and Human Excellence from Indic perspectives. Further, the CoE will also act as a hub that networks with several other institutions to provide consultancy, mentoring, training and other services including dissemination through multiple modes of activities.



Vision

To pursue multi-disciplinary activities in IKS that can significantly contribute towards enabling our future generations to seek sustainable solutions in addressing individual and societal challenges.

Aims

- To carry out research and development in the identified areas that lead to impact-making findings.
- To integrate IKS with the academic mission of the University.
- To develop and offer innovative programmes and courses based on IKS.
- To publish working papers, monographs and books for wider circulation.
- To undertake translation, critical edition and publication of manuscripts and ancient texts.
- To build a digital library and an e-repository of valuable resources including books, manuscripts etc.
- To serve as a vibrant resource hub for all the students of IKS from India and abroad.
- To organize conferences, seminars, workshops, training, faculty development programmes etc. aiding in advancing the frontiers of knowledge and capacity building of stakeholders.

Ongoing Projects

Ongoing Projects	Expected date of completion	Grant (if any)
Project on "Political Concepts in Ramayana, Mahabharata and Arthashastra: An Analysis of Sovereignty, Kingship, Welfare, Market, Diplomacy and War" funded by IKS Division, AICTE.	December 2024	IKS Division 9.6 lakhs
Three MOOCs on Indian Knowledge Systems.	July 2023	
Monograph on Microbiology in Indian Scriptures.		
A MOOC (of 3 credits) on Avadhānam.	August 2023	CSU, Delhi 9 lakhs
Book on Avadhānam (in Sanskrit) - History, Components and Benefits.	March 2024	
A critical edition of a 15 th century manuscript Grahajñā Mukura with explanation in Sanskrit and English and mathematical analysis.	May 2023	
A monograph on Dhruva.	May 2023	
Texts on Indian Astronomy. (in two levels)	Dec 2023 (Level 1)	
A collaboration with CESS for a 6-month project sponsored under the Indian Traditional Knowledge Systems (Bharatiya Gnana Parampara) Division of the Ministry of Education (MoE) internship scheme. [10,11,12]		

India developed its knowledge system, tested it through practice, verified and improved it over thousands of years. As a result, the Indian Knowledge System is founded on the 'wellbeing of all'

सर्वे भवन्तु
वसुधैव
कृष्णं तो विश्वं आर्यं

सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु
कुटुम्बकम् एकम् सत्

निरामयाः
विप्राबहुधा वदन्ति



It is based on a deep understanding of human being as well as of nature and entire existence (Courtesy: IKS Initiative, GoI). A knowledge system which ensures right understanding and clarity of living in harmony at all levels of human existence can be called a holistic and humane knowledge system. Many cultures and civilisations over millennia have tried to evolve such knowledge systems. [13,14,15]

एकम्सत् विप्राबहुधावदन्ति

The Indian culture and civilisation is one such example

The National Educational Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) recommends the incorporation of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into the curriculum at all levels of education: “The heritage of ancient and eternal IKS and thought has been a guiding light for this Policy. The pursuit of Knowledge (Jñāna), wisdom (Prajñā), and truth (Satya) was always considered in Indian thought and philosophy as the highest human goal. The Indian education system produced great scholars such as Charaka, Susruta, Aryabhata, Varahamihira, Bhaskaracharya, Brahmagupta, Chanakya, Chakrapani Datta, Madhava, Panini, Patanjali, Nagarjuna, Gautama, Pingala, Sankardev, Maitreyi, Gargi and Thiruvalluvar, among numerous others, who made seminal contributions to world knowledge in diverse fields such as mathematics, astronomy, metallurgy, medical science and surgery, civil engineering, architecture, shipbuilding and navigation, yoga, fine arts, chess, and more. Indian culture and philosophy have had a strong influence on the world. These rich legacies to world heritage must be nurtured and preserved for posterity and researched, enhanced, and put to new uses through our education system” (NEP 2020, p.4. Emphasis added.) UGC provides guidelines for incorporating IKS into undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum.

Research on Indian Knowledge System should be among the mandated tasks to be undertaken by all our institutions of higher learning. Indian Knowledge System should form an essential part of the curricula taught in our schools, colleges and other institutions of higher learning.

- In view of the importance accorded in the NEP 2020 to rooting our curricula and pedagogy in the Indian context and in the corpus of Indian Knowledge System, every student enrolled in a UG or PG programme should be encouraged to take credit courses in IKS amounting in all to at least five per cent of the total mandated credits. It is envisioned that the interested students studying in UG and PG courses may be allowed to take a larger fraction of the total mandated credits in the fields of IKS.
- At least 50% of the credits apportioned to the IKS should be related to the major discipline and should be accounted for the credits assigned to the major discipline.
- All the students who are enrolled in the four-year UG programmes should be encouraged to take an adequate number of courses in IKS so that the total credits of the courses taken in IKS amount to at least five per cent of the total mandated credits. The students may be encouraged to take these courses, preferably during the first four semesters of the UG programme. At least half of these mandated credits should be in courses in disciplines which are part of IKS and are related to the major field of specialization that the student is pursuing in the UG programme.
- All students should be exposed to the common underlying philosophical foundation of the various disciplines that are part of IKS.
- At least one to two lectures on the fundamental vocabulary of IKS should be conducted to familiarize faculty with the common terms used in IKS.
- A strong emphasis should be placed on providing exposure to the primary texts of IKS, which is required for acquiring a deeper understanding. [16,17,18]

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is a transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next. It is a well-structured system and process of knowledge transfer, rather than just a tradition. The Vedic literature is considered the fountainhead of the India Knowledge Tradition. Upanishads, Vedas, and Upvedas are all part of the Indian Knowledge System. India talks about vasudhaiva kutumbakam-which is a phrase from the Hindu text the Maha Upanishad. We believe in ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सु खिनः ।सर्वे सन्तु ननरामयाः ।सर्वे भद्रानि पश्यन्तु ।मा कनित् दु ः ि भाग्भर्वे त् ॥ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥ .India has a very glorious past where we were rich in all aspects whether it's art and culture, science or medicine, astrology or mathematics. IKT's contribution is immense in almost all fields of intellectual inquiry and focused on sustainable development. Indian education system believes in the existence of life in all the things of the universe. Our Vedas treated nature as God where even plants like Neem, Tulsi, Peepel, and so on are worshipped and promote plantation. India is always been a hub of knowledge where the world's top universities like Nalanda ,Thachhshila, and Magadh University were set up and all the disciplines were taught here. The Indian Knowledge Systems comprising Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan have evolved out of experience, observation, experimentation, and rigorous analysis. This paper talks about the Indian knowledge system and how it focuses on sustainable



development so that we can serve the purpose of one earth one family and one future. Introduction Human being are inherently knowledge generating in nature with unique capabilities. The Indian Knowledge system is a generic phase that included everything like archeology ayurveda and medicine astrology ,astronomy public administration economics and so on. IKS is not all about knowing ansesteral knowledge only but also identifying the uniqueness of the IKS by utilizing for economic , social and global development. The Terms "Indian Knowledge" and "sustainable development" are correlated terms, with widely varying definitions and interpretations. till now we are following the macaulay's English education system. we have alienated ourselves from our root that become very problematic. In this paper I attempt to explore the notion set up by the Indian education system for sustainable development through avoiding overexploitation of natural resources and working for the welfare of earth.

III. RESULTS

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) also known as Bharatiya Gyan Parampara or Bharatiya Knowledge System, is a vibrant tapestry woven from millennia of ancestral wisdom. It's not just about ancient texts; it's a living, breathing treasure trove. From Ayurveda's healing touch to Yoga's mindful flow, IKS covers astronomy, agriculture, architecture, medicine, and more. Dive into Sanskrit's rich tapestry or learn about the folk and oral traditions that dot the countryside. Discover sustainable practices woven into traditional crafts and ecological wisdom guiding harmonious living. IKS, recognized by the National Education Policy, is a vibrant tapestry waiting to be rediscovered.[19,20]

The National Education Policy 2020 prescribes that knowledge of ancient India be integrated into education systems in India, both in school and higher education curricula. The Ministry of Education, Government of India, recognises it as an 'Indian way' of striving for a sustainable and welfare-based society. It is described as Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan that have evolved out of experience, observation, experimentation, and rigorous analysis that was put into practice in education, arts, administration, law, justice, health, manufacturing, and commerce. It influenced language systems, textual, oral, and artistic traditions and provided a Bhāratiya Drishti that is believed to provide solutions to emerging global challenges facing India and the world in contemporary times. The policy recognises that the knowledge of the rich diversity of India should be imbibed firsthand by learners in a scientific manner in school and higher education curricula. It identifies tribal knowledge and indigenous and traditional ways of learning that include mathematics, astronomy, philosophy, yoga, architecture, medicine, agriculture, engineering, linguistics, literature, sports, and games, as well as governance, polity, and conservation. In the aspiration to fulfil the vision of Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat, it prescribes experiential learning and lays down guidelines for incorporating Indian knowledge in higher education curricula, training/orientation of faculty, empanelment of artists/artisans-in-residence in higher educational institutions, guidelines for the introduction of courses based on Indian heritage and culture (such as Universal human values, Vedic Maths, Yoga, Ayurveda, Sanskrit, Indian Languages, sacrosanct religious regions located in the Indian subcontinent, Archaeological sites and monuments, Heritage of India, Indian Literature, Indian Sculpture, Indian Music and dance forms, Drama, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Crafts and Craftsmanship), awarding of research grants and establishing Indian knowledge systems (IKS) centres to catalyse original research, education, and dissemination of IKS and documenting a roadmap for establishing thriving Bhāratiyī a Gnana Paramparā.[1] This effort to restore, re-evolve, and integrate the knowledge of India with contemporary knowledge systems is an important moment in the making of contemporary India and in the new imaginations of the nation-state. While there is much debate about what constitutes Indian/Indian-ness/Bharat/Bhartiya, the growing tendency to define it through the lens of the religious majoritarianism has much threatened the secular fabric of the nation. Critics argue that the Indian Knowledge Systems is an enterprise that is an extension of the same, worse as it also fringes on pseudoscientific and pseudohistoric opinionsthat challenge rationally established truth claims. In sprit it is neither an attempt to decolonise education as it lacks a critical dialogue with the past, neither does it challenge dominant forces of oppression that continue to plague the democratic fabric of the nation. Nationalism, as the aspiration of svaraj, was central to the imagination of postcolonial India. Central to the idea of svaraj was the aspiration to gain freedom from institutions that were dehumanising, as well as constructing systems that restored the dignity and capabilities of the postcolonial subject. Ensuring education for every citizen, irrespective of class, caste, religion, creed, or gender, was a fundamental right and one of the core duties of the modern nation. Modern university education brought with it new forms of political and economic consciousness to build a nation that could rebuild its cultural, economic, and political identity to dialogue as equals in the rapidly changing technological world. Liberalisation and globalisation brought with them demands on education systems to make their graduates skilled with global competencies that can cater to the world labour markets. It has simultaneously deepened existing inequalities (caused by class, caste, gender, disabilities, and religion, to name a few) as education came to be privatised, profit-driven, and inaccessible. High levels of illiteracy, poor quality of education, shortage of qualified teachers, proliferation of courses that emphasise commerce and industry-relevant education, downsizing or diluting humanities-based education, and unemployment are some of the most prominent challenges facing Indian education and Indian democratic society in general. The extent to which NEP 2020 and introduction of compulsory study of Indian Knowledge Systems is committed to addressing these



challenges remains a matter of grave concern. It lacks what is essential to all education, the spirit of Ānvīkī śikī, that is, it denotes an argumentative mind, the art of critical thinking, and a relentless pursuit of knowledge and wisdom through intellectual inquiry and study; thus extending beyond logical thinking for problem solving. While Jnan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan are identified as crucial components, an important philosophical component that is side lined is the spirit of Ānvīkī śikī. It was ubiquitous as a principle and a method across all Vedic and non-Vedic philosophical thought (and its practices). There being no imperative of any one given truth, the Indian ways of thinking make room for a plurality of truths as well as multiple paths of truth. An immense variety of world views, ontologies, and epistemologies allow dialoguing, non-assimilation, and non-conformity to any single principle. While recognising a certain unity and oneness, it involves transcending the opposition between the self and the other(s) towards seeking liberation from all forces of domination that devalue spiritual, economic, social, moral, and political independence. Hence, knowledge systems in India have always been imbricated with ethics and the quest for justice. Not only is it vital to frame an understanding of India's intellectual and political heritage, but it is also important for the success of democracy and its politics. Such an approach would be intrinsic to understanding the highly charged deliberations surrounding the subject of knowledge systems that have come to be categorised as Indian knowledge (and what gets left out as non-Indian)[18,19]

IV. CONCLUSION

It also brings into conversation the nature and unequal power relations that have violently come to be recognised as 'Indian' traditions, 'Indian' identities, and 'Indian' nationalism in the context of its current place in the world. Interventions and deliberations in the form of papers are invited on the mentioned issues, as well as extended to topics surrounding the following themes: 1. Indian Knowledge System and Indian Education 2. Knowledge and Politics of Indian Traditions in Education 3. Indian Knowledge System and Majoritarian Nationalism 4. Building Global Competencies through the Indian Knowledge System Indian Knowledge System and Its Contemporary Relevance: Social/Economic/Political/Philosophical/Scientific/Industry/Cultural/Historical/Physical Education/Technological/Artistic Perspectives 5. 6. Gender Rights and the Indian Knowledge System 7. Caste and Indian knowledge systems 8. Defining Indian Knowledge Systems: Nature, Scope, and Methodologies 9. Challenges of Secularism and Indian Knowledge Systems 10. Pedagogies of the Indian Knowledge Systems 11. Promotion of Indian Languages and Indian Knowledge Systems 12. Indian Knowledge Systems and Challenges of Innovation 13. Indian Knowledge Systems and Employment Prospects 14. Ethics and Indian Knowledge Systems 15. Scientific temper and Indian knowledge systems 16. Indian Knowledge Systems: Disability and Inclusion Perspectives 17. Subaltern Studies and Indian Knowledge Systems 18. Indian knowledge systems and diasporic contexts 19. Spiritualism and Indian Knowledge Systems 20. Environment, Sustainability, Urbanism, and Indian Knowledge Systems 21. Indigenous Knowledge Systems Or Indian Knowledge Systems? 22. The politics of exclusion and Indian Knowledge Systems[20]

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