

CHALLENGES OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF NEP 2020

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ABSTRACT

Education and technology are both interconnected and technology plays a vital role in providing education in challenging circumstances as evident during the COVID-19 crisis period. This policy proposes revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure including its regulation and governance to create a new system that aligns with the aspirational goals of education including the Sustainable Development Goals while building on India's traditions and value systems. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has been launched to transform the Indian education system using the holistic development of learners. The global crisis of the COVID-19 virus and the lockdown imposed by the government to keep the situation under control have forced people to stay indoors, which has greatly impacted the education sector. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in educational institutions has taken education to new heights. However, students from different backgrounds, especially those from economically backward sections of the society, are still facing considerable challenges in continuing the learning process with the help of online learning systems. With the help of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) educational institutions are constantly putting their best efforts to cope with the situation around the world. We need to continuously improve our skills to keep pace with the current trend of globalization. IKS covers knowledge assets from prehistoric to the current period. NEP promotes the creation of language resources and technology to facilitate IKS as it recognizes its importance for the dissemination of indigenous knowledge. Integration of IKS with NEP will help in understanding contemporary social issues and to pursue further research. It will promote the development and understanding of rich and diverse indigenous knowledge among various stakeholders and revitalize traditional knowledge with the help of modern technology. Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is one of the important aspects of NEP curriculum. Hence IKS encompasses the diverse and rich heritage knowledge of India which covers various fields like science and technology literature philosophy culture medicine and yoga. NEP focuses on interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary knowledge and can integrate contemporary knowledge contained in IKS to address current and future challenges.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System, NEP 2020, Challenges, Implementation

1. INTRODUCTION

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) consists of three words: Indian, knowledge and system. In 2020, India unveiled its first and most comprehensive education policy of the 21st century. As the first all-encompassing policy since 1986, the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has the difficult task of addressing many of the crises facing India's education system. India is a country whose history of civilization is very old and whose practices are known to mankind. It is expected to have accumulated some knowledge during its existence. This ancient knowledge was preserved on palm trees and was orally transmitted from generation to generation. But over time there were sudden changes in the knowledge transformation process and this indigenous

knowledge was lost. The newly introduced education system has attempted to make this knowledge available as per the demand of the society. Addressing the completion of one year of NEP, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "We are entering the 75th year of Independence. In a way, the implementation of NEP has become an important part of this occasion. It will play a key role in building a new India and future-ready youth." Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan called NEP 2020 a visionary education policy for the 21st century through which India is harnessing the potential of each student, making education universal, building capacities and transforming the learning landscape in the country. The Indian knowledge system suggests several thematic areas where a lot of research and study is needed. This includes the study of health and well-being and consciousness of arts and culture, mathematics and astronomy. NEP 2020 is truly a path-breaking document in every sense. Among other things, this policy aims to address pedagogical issues, structural inequalities, widening access, besides preparing learners for the future while meeting the demands of 21st century India. Community well-being and quality of life are very important for any individual, especially in a fast-changing and technology-driven society and world. This ancient knowledge was preserved on trees and passed on from generation to generation. But over time, the knowledge transformation process changed and this indigenous knowledge got lost. The newly introduced education system has attempted to impart this knowledge as per the demand of the society. As the first education policy since 1986, the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to

address many of the crises facing India's education system. India refers to the undivided Indian subcontinent. It covers an area stretching from Burma in the east to modern Afghanistan in the west, the Himalayas in the north and the Indian Ocean in the south. Ancient Indian education consisted of education in eighteen Vidya Sthals or schools of learning, which were imparted in famous centers like Nalanda and Takshila. India's global reputation is derived from its contribution in the field of art architecture science technology crafts engineering philosophy and practices. Since most of the foreigners at that time came to India for knowledge and disseminated this knowledge to the West and other parts of the world respectively. Chanakya who played a vital role in the establishment of the Maurya Empire and Panini who wrote Sanskrit grammar received his education at Takshila University in ancient India. Knowledge refers to tacit knowledge and it lies in the intellect of the knowledge seekers. It is gained by insight into personal experiences through observation of facing real life problems and solving them. Similarly system means a well-organized methodology and classification scheme used to access a body of knowledge. This will help them gain insight from the overall knowledge and know how those different knowledge components logically complement each other. Codification and classification are based on the need, interest and ability of the knowledge seeker to access the underlying knowledge.

Challenges of Indian Knowledge System

With the advent of globalization, there is a race to replace the traditional education system and make it a global standard through modernization. The teaching methodology, curriculum and medium of instruction have changed dramatically. This has greatly changed the social dynamics. This has led to social imperialism and cultural imperialism. In cultural imperialism, countries with higher social status dominate the societies and cultures of countries with lower social status. While the NEP has started to gain momentum to a large extent, India remains the second largest education system in the world with over 15 lakh schools, 25 crore students and 89 lakh teachers. The size of the higher education system is also very large. According to the

AISHE 2019 report, India's higher education sector has 3.74 crore students in about 1,000 universities, 39,931 colleges and 10,725 independent institutions. Thus, the nationwide implementation of this mega education policy is going to be a huge exercise involving multiple stakeholders at the state, district, sub-district and block levels. Thousands of schools and colleges will require capacity building and restructuring with respect to the operational aspects of implementing a mega programme having multiple experiential goals. In short, massive changes will have to be made to the existing organisational structure of the Ministry and its ecosystem. While it is encouraging that the NEP document has laid out a comprehensive roadmap to overhaul the existing regulatory system, and the Ministry of Education is in the process of bringing in a law that will facilitate the establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (in place of the existing regulatory bodies, primarily the UGC, AICTE and the National Council for Teacher Education), the new institutional architecture emerging from the legislative initiatives will have to await the principles of cooperative federalism and decentralisation while implementing key initiatives. And this is not an easy task to do, given the sharpness of political polarisation in recent years and the apparent breakdown of trust between the Centre and the states. Several opposition-ruled states are strongly objecting to many key provisions of the NEP and the manner in which they are being implemented. More worryingly, the recent decision of the Tamil Nadu government not to implement the NEP may encourage other opposition-ruled states to follow a similar path. Thus, managing the federal calculus is crucial to realising the NEP. The internal capacities within the education ministries (Centre and State) and other regulatory bodies are completely inadequate to govern the enormity of the changes envisaged in the NEP. For example, moving from a rigid content-based rote learning education system to one of experiential learning and critical thinking will require a radical change in the attitudes of those running the education system, let alone a change in attitudes among teachers, students and parents. This means that thousands of schools and colleges will require capacity building and restructuring with respect to the operational aspects of implementing a large programme with multiple experiential goals. In short, the existing organisational structure of the Ministry and its ecosystem will have to undergo massive changes. While it is encouraging that the NEP document lays out a comprehensive roadmap for reforming the existing regulatory system, and the Ministry of Education is in the process of introducing a legislation that will facilitate the establishment of the Higher Education Commission of India (in place of the existing regulatory bodies, primarily the UGC, AICTE and the National Council for Teacher Education), the new institutional structure emerging from the legislative initiative will have to wait. Creating shared responsibility and ownership among key stakeholders, including the private sector, at the state and district levels with extraordinary diversity is going to be a major challenge for education leadership. The ultimate implementation of the NEP is critically linked to the state's capacity. As correctly pointed out by the NEP drafting committee led by K. Kasturirangan, India's education system is underfunded, bureaucratic and lacks the capacity to innovate and expand. There are a few challenges when it comes to integrating IKS with the NEP. There is a lack of awareness among the community and stakeholders about the

importance of IKS. IKS generally exists in non-literary form and has been passed on orally from one generation to the next ("Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS): Challenges in Implementing it", n.d.). This makes it difficult to develop and implement IKS-based curriculum and programs in educational institutions. There is no clear curriculum about IKS and this is puzzling academics ("State autonomous colleges face challenges in implementing IKS", n.d.). Many stakeholders may consider it irrelevant or

outdated. Since IKS is available in various languages, it can create barriers for those who are not well versed in these languages. Furthermore, the colonial system of education has created a bias against IKS in the Indian education system. The Indian education system is largely focused on the Western knowledge system and this can create difficulty in adjusting to this system. There is also a lack of qualified teachers to teach IKS, as it has not yet been widely adopted. Culture is closely linked to identity, such as how people view themselves and others. Diverse cultures give rise to diverse identities which bring both opportunities and challenges to education and society. Nowadays people from different cultural, racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds are joining workplaces and schools in different countries. People need to have a level of understanding about each other so that they can live together and cooperate with each other for which learning about other cultures and identities is essential. Cultural diversity brings both opportunities and challenges for the achievement of this goal. Although many great terms such as equality and social justice have been widely used in relation to cultural diversity and adopted in policies around the world as a politically correct way to deal with cultural diversity and people of different backgrounds. Cultural diversity is a controversial open term that generally refers to the reality of the coexistence of diverse knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, religions, languages, abilities and disabilities, gender, ethnicity, race, nationality, human sexual orientation. This can extend to the way people react to this reality and the way people choose to live with this reality. People are divided by many imaginary categories and divisions, such as identity politics around the world, where all cultural groups feel that their members are being discriminated against to some degree. Whether people admit it or not and whether the government hides it or not, it is a fact that people are diverse in terms of gender, social class, ethnicity, race, language, ability and disability, religion, orientation, need, nationality, political ideology, citizenship, status, family structure, cultural background, income and occupation. Lack of awareness and understanding of IKS: Many people, including college administrators and teachers, are not aware of IKS or its importance. This lack of awareness and understanding can make it difficult to implement IKS in colleges. IKS is often unwritten and passed down orally from generation to generation. This makes it difficult to develop and implement IKS-based curriculum and programs in colleges. Additionally, there is a lack of funding for IKS research and education in India. Colonial legacy: The British colonial education system in India was designed to replace Indian knowledge systems with Western knowledge systems. This legacy has created a bias against IKS in the Indian education system. The Indian education system is still largely focused on Western knowledge systems. This can make it difficult to accommodate IKS into the curriculum. Lack of qualified teachers. There is a shortage of qualified teachers to teach IKS curriculum in colleges. This is because IKS is not widely taught in universities in India. The implementation of IKS in colleges in India can provide many benefits. IKS can help students learn about their cultural heritage and develop a deeper understanding of the environment. Additionally, IKS can provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to tackle 21st century challenges such as climate change and food insecurity. Some people may be resistant to the idea of implementing IKS in colleges. They may view IKS as outdated or irrelevant. Additionally, some faculty members may be reluctant to change their teaching methods and curriculum to accommodate IKS. IKS is often disseminated in Indian languages. This can create language barriers for students and teachers who do not speak these languages.

Implementation of Indian Knowledge System

The successful integration of Indian knowledge traditions into contemporary society requires dedicated scholars, experts, educators, and consultants. The challenge lies in presenting ancient knowledge in a modern format and conducting extensive research on texts such as the Bhagavad Gita. By effectively studying and presenting Indian knowledge systems, India can provide valuable insights not only for its citizens but also for the entire world. Bhashma School of Indian Knowledge Systems (BSIKS) is actively contributing to this cause by providing various courses and resources to promote Indian knowledge. There is no clear curriculum about IKS, and this is confusing to academics as many stakeholders may consider it irrelevant or outdated. Since IKS is available in various languages, it may create a barrier for those who are not well versed in these languages. Moreover, the colonial system of education has created a bias against IKS in the Indian education system. The Indian education system is largely focused on the Western knowledge system, and this may create difficulty in adjusting to this system. There is also a lack of well-qualified teachers to teach IKS as it has not been widely adopted yet. There are some challenges when it comes to integrating IKS with NEP. There is a lack of awareness among the community and stakeholders about the importance of IKS. IKS generally exists in non-literary form, and it is passed on orally from one generation to the other. This makes it difficult

to develop and implement IKS-based courses and programs in educational institutions. The multilingual formula will cover aspects of constitutional provisions and it will create unity and integrity across the country ("National Education Policy 2020", n.d.). It will be easy to include the history of Indian mathematics in general mathematics classes. The same can be done for architecture, philosophy, and Ayurveda. This is the goal of the NEP, but it has to be done gradually. NEP 2020 has emphasized that IKS will be part of the curriculum and will be incorporated scientifically. IKS along with tribal knowledge will be incorporated in mathematics, engineering, philosophy, yoga, medicine, sports, sports literature, language, and various other fields. NEP has focused on specific courses in tribal ethnographic practices, forest management, and organic and natural farming. Under NEP, IKS will be taught as an optional course for secondary school students. Under NEP, students will be taught the curriculum in their native languages and the most ancient language Sanskrit will be taught to all. Learning different languages will enable them to know the rich and diverse culture of the country.

2. DISCUSSION

This will be changed gradually over time. In the context of implementation of the key activities of NEP, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Financial Literacy have been incorporated in the school curriculum. NEP gives priority to mother tongue or regional language, this has been started on a pilot basis in several states. The policy clearly supports and envisages a substantial increase in public investment in education by the Central Government and all State Governments to achieve the goal of quality education and bring multiple benefits to this nation and its economy. With the help of information technology, the available data on IKS should be organized and made available according to the needs and capacity of the stakeholders. This cannot be done overnight as indigenous knowledge systems have evolved over thousands of years in India. An in-depth literature study was done on the approach to integration of IKS in the curriculum and its implications for changes in the basic education curriculum. There is an urgent need for proper training of teachers, so that they have a proper knowledge of IKS and can present it in a meaningful way. The Centre and States will work together to increase public investment in the education sector to reach 6% of GDP as soon as possible. This is considered

extremely important for achieving a high quality and equitable public education system, which is indeed essential for India's future economic, social, cultural, intellectual and technological progress and development. Education is the act of transmitting the ideal heritage of the people from one generation to the other. Their sentiments were found to be similar to the attitudes of teachers from one province, with the findings of the special study showing that teachers did not consider IKS important, while indigenous ways of knowing were not recognized by some teachers. Incorporating IKS in India can help stakeholders know their cultural heritage and develop a deeper understanding of the environment. Since IKS is based on tacit knowledge, it can help students face and deal with challenges they face in their real lives, such as climate change and food security challenges. But there are some challenges in this inclusion of IKS and these challenges must be addressed before inclusion. The Indian government has taken a step under NEP to integrate IKS into the curriculum. Education provides the student with new skills and knowledge that enable him to function in modern society. Education has an emancipatory role, wherein it is considered as a tool to expose structures of oppression and equip learners with tools to change those oppressive structures in society.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The Indian Knowledge Systems seeks to encourage and enable more studies in a number of areas, including holistic health, psychology, neuroscience, nature, environment and sustainable development, to address current societal problems. The main goal of learning from the past and integrating Indian knowledge systems is to use our ancient knowledge systems, characterized by an unbroken tradition of knowledge transfer and a distinctive approach, to solve current and emerging problems in India and the world. To promote interdisciplinary research on all aspects of Indian knowledge systems, to preserve and disseminate "Indian Knowledge Systems" for further research and societal applications. At the same time, the NEP has the most challenging task of addressing several crises in the education system. Its effective implementation is crucial if India wants to reap the demographic dividend and capitalize on the opportunities from the rapidly growing knowledge economy. Given its transformative potential, the Centre has shown a sense of urgency and purpose by launching several initiatives in recent months despite the challenges of the pandemic. Several states have officially launched the policy and many others are in the process of doing so. Still, the NEP has a long way ahead. Given its scale and the complexity involved in its implementation, especially achieving coordination and collaboration across diverse stakeholders across the state, district, private sector and others, makes it a difficult exercise. Internal capacities within education and other regulatory bodies are inadequate to handle the magnitude of changes envisaged in the NEP. For example, moving from a rigid content-driven rote learning education system to experiential learning and critical thinking will require a radical change in the attitudes of those running the education

system, not to mention a change in attitudes among teachers, students and parents. This means that thousands of schools and colleges will require capacity building and restructuring with respect to the operational aspects of implementing a large programme with multiple experiential goals. In short, NEP 2020 is truly a path-breaking document in every sense. Among other things, the policy aims to address educational issues, structural inequalities, widening access, besides making academics future-ready to meet the demands of 21st century India.

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