

INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM IN STRENGTHENING THE VALUE SYSTEM

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Abstract:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) represents a comprehensive and holistic tradition of knowledge that integrates ethics, philosophy, spirituality, and practical life. Rooted in classical texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita, IKS emphasizes moral values, self-discipline, and social responsibility. In the modern era, where ethical degradation and materialism are increasingly prevalent, the relevance of IKS has grown significantly. This paper examines how IKS contributes to strengthening the value system by promoting principles such as Dharma (righteousness), Karma (action), and Ahimsa (non-violence). It also explores the role of IKS in education, leadership, and social harmony, while highlighting its relevance in addressing contemporary challenges.

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Introduction:

In the contemporary globalized world, rapid technological advancement and economic growth have led to significant changes in human lifestyles. However, these changes have also resulted in a gradual decline in moral and ethical values. Issues such as corruption, environmental degradation, social inequality, and lack of empathy highlight the urgent need for a strong value system.

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) offers a time-tested framework for ethical living and holistic development. Unlike modern knowledge systems that often separate knowledge from values, IKS integrates intellectual growth with moral and spiritual development. Ancient Indian scholars emphasized that knowledge without values is incomplete and potentially harmful (Radhakrishnan, 2008).

There is an Indian way that is both sustainable and strives for the welfare of all. The grand vision for the IKS Division of Ministry of Education is to initiate a process of training generations of scholars who will show the 'Indian way' to the world. If we want to become the Knowledge Leader in this century and be the 'Vishvaguru', it is imperative that we regain a comprehensive knowledge of our heritage and demonstrate the 'Indian way' of doing things to the entire world. Therefore, the IKS Division of Ministry of Education has been established with a vision to promote interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research on all aspects of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), update and disseminate IKS knowledge for further innovations and societal applications.

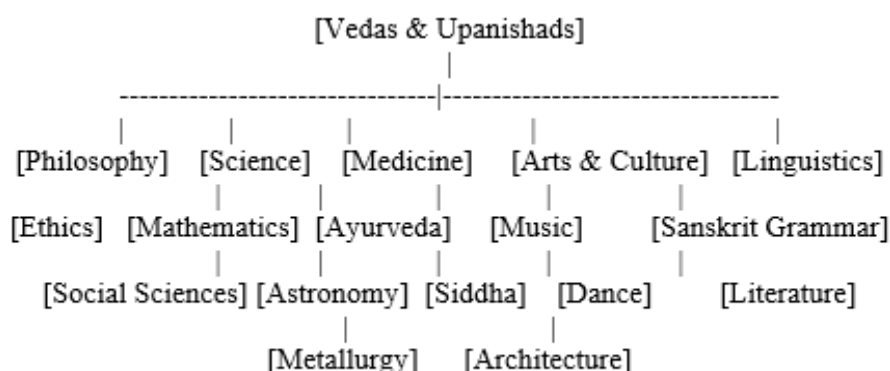
Literature Survey:

Understanding the Indian Knowledge System

IKS encompasses diverse fields including philosophy, science, medicine, mathematics, governance, and arts. It is rooted in ancient scriptures and texts such as the Vedas, which are considered the earliest sources of

knowledge, and the Upanishads, which explore metaphysical concepts such as the nature of reality and the self. The epics Ramayana and Mahabharata provide practical insights into ethical dilemmas and human behavior. Similarly, the Arthashastra offers guidance on governance, economics, and statecraft with a strong ethical foundation.

IKS is characterized by its holistic approach, emphasizing harmony between individuals, society, and nature. It promotes experiential learning, self-realization, and ethical conduct as essential components of knowledge (Sharma, 2019).



Core Ethical Values in IKS:

1. Dharma (Righteousness and Duty)

Dharma is one of the most significant concepts in IKS. It refers to moral duty, ethical conduct, and social responsibility. In the Bhagavad Gita, Dharma is presented as the guiding principle for human action. Individuals are encouraged to perform their duties selflessly and in accordance with ethical principles (Radhakrishnan, 2008).

2. Karma (Law of Action and Consequence)

The principle of Karma emphasizes that every action has consequences. This belief encourages individuals to act responsibly and ethically, knowing that their actions will shape their future. It fosters accountability and moral discipline.

3. Ahimsa (Non-violence)

Ahimsa, or non-violence, is a central value in Indian philosophy. It promotes compassion, tolerance, and respect for all living beings. This principle was widely popularized by Mahatma Gandhi, who used it as a foundation for social and political change (Gandhi, 1927).

4. Satya (Truthfulness)

Truth is regarded as the highest virtue in Indian philosophy. Satya emphasizes honesty, integrity, and transparency in thought and action. It forms the basis of trust and ethical relationships.

5. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (Universal Brotherhood)

This concept, meaning “the world is one family,” promotes global unity and inclusiveness. It encourages individuals to transcend narrow identities and work towards the welfare of all humanity.

Role of IKS in Strengthening the Value System:

1. Moral and Ethical Development

IKS plays a crucial role in shaping moral character. The narratives in the Ramayana and Mahabharata present complex moral dilemmas that help individuals understand ethical decision-making. For example, the character of Rama represents ideal conduct, while the dilemmas faced by Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita highlight the importance of duty and righteousness.

2. Character Building

The traditional Gurukul system emphasized discipline, humility, and respect for teachers and elders. Education was not limited to intellectual development but included moral and spiritual growth. This holistic approach contributed to the development of strong character and ethical behavior.

3. Social Harmony and Unity

Values such as Ahimsa and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam promote peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. These principles are particularly relevant in multicultural societies, where diversity can sometimes lead to conflict. IKS provides a framework for fostering unity and harmony.

4. Environmental Sustainability

IKS emphasizes harmony with nature. Ancient texts advocate respect for natural resources and sustainable living practices. The concept of “Prakriti” (nature) is considered sacred, and humans are seen as an integral part of the ecosystem. This perspective is crucial in addressing contemporary environmental challenges (Sharma, 2019).

5. Ethical Leadership and Governance

The Arthashastra provides insights into ethical governance and leadership. It emphasizes the responsibility of rulers to ensure the welfare of their subjects and maintain justice and fairness in administration. These principles remain relevant in modern governance systems.

Relevance of IKS in Modern Education:

1. Value-Based Education

Modern education systems often focus on technical skills and career development, neglecting moral values. Integrating IKS into education can help address this gap by promoting ethical awareness and social responsibility (NCERT, 2022).

2. Holistic Development

IKS emphasizes the development of the mind, body, and spirit. Practices such as yoga and meditation enhance emotional well-being, concentration, and self-awareness, contributing to overall development.

3. Critical Thinking and Self-Reflection

Philosophical teachings in the Upanishads encourage introspection and critical thinking. Students learn to

question, analyze, and understand deeper aspects of life.

4. Cultural Awareness and Identity

Studying IKS helps individuals connect with their cultural heritage and develop a sense of identity. It fosters respect for tradition while promoting openness to global perspectives.

Challenges in Integrating IKS:

Despite its significance, the integration of IKS into modern systems faces several challenges:

- Lack of awareness and understanding among educators and policymakers
- Misinterpretation of IKS as purely religious rather than philosophical
- Difficulty in adapting ancient knowledge to modern contexts
- Resistance to change in existing educational frameworks

Addressing these challenges requires a balanced and inclusive approach that respects both tradition and modernity. Key challenges for the future include overcoming the dominance of Western paradigms, ensuring the authenticity of knowledge, and training educators to teach IKS, with calls for a more structured curriculum

1. Future of IKS :

IKS is being positioned as a solution to global issues like climate change, mental health, and ethical crises, offering sustainable, eco-friendly models rooted in Indian philosophy

2. Use of Technology

Digital platforms and online resources can facilitate the dissemination of IKS to a wider audience, making it accessible to learners worldwide.

IKS Research Centre Proposals Program 2026-27

The charge of the IKS is to support research in Indian Knowledge Systems that will make meaningful contributions to the furtherance of IKS.

1. To see what qualifies as an IKS project. Please refer to the IKS Website for a list of projects that have been supported.
2. A good proposal will emphasize how the proposed research is intended to contribute towards the IKS's mission either in the near future (applied) or by leading to developments further in the future (basic). Simply satisfying curiosity or compiling data for a refereed paper will not be in the interest of the IKS Division and will not impress the reviewers.
3. The Centres must strictly be related to IKS themes. Proposals which are not within the scope of this solicitation will be rejected in Phase-I review without any further communication in this regard. Proposals must have a reasonable set of activities that can be completed in two years. The proposals must have clear quantifiable deliverables. A sustainability plan after the end of the IKS Division support must also be included.
4. Clear communication is the key: Proposals that clearly specify the contribution of the research will be considered

Conclusion:

Integrating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into modern education strengthens the value system by fostering ethical awareness, holistic well-being, and cultural identity. It bridges timeless principles of dharma, empathy, and ecological sustainability with contemporary learning, cultivating compassionate and ethically grounded individuals. As a key finding from and shows, combining IKS with modern pedagogy allows for a comprehensive, forward-looking education that is anchored in local wisdom while being globally relevant. Its integration into education and society serves to rejuvenate Indian culture and provide ethical, innovative solutions for future generations.

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