

Preserving and Promoting Heritage: Impact of Bhartiya Knowledge System on Present and Future Generation

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Abstract: *Bhartiya*'s health system (herbal system), health wellness system (yoga), and sustainable development (worship of nature) were essential in Ancient Bharat. In the Twentieth century, many universities in India have introduced IKS syllabi to acquaint the present and future generations with the *Bhartiya* knowledge system to make them understand the universal laws of action, duties, and equilibrium between man and nature. By introducing IKS *Bhartiya Darshans*, it will acquaint students with the six schools of thought, the six Vedangas, the four Purushsarth, the Chaturvern system, and the Ancient Indian scriptures, which contain the *Bhartiya* knowledge system in totality. The present paper delves into how, after drafting NEP 2020, the Government of India has taken an important initiative to preserve and promote the Indian knowledge system and cultural heritage to amalgamate ancient and modern wisdom in the contemporary academic setup. *Bhartiya*'s knowledge system (BKS) states the geopolitics of the world, not in terms of imperialism and colonialism, but to maintain global peace as Vasuvadakutumbakam (the world as one family) and redefine the nature of Geopolitics. Additionally, this paper will also explore how the 'Dialogic System' in the *Bhartiya Gyan* Tradition has a long and rich legacy that determines the epistemological base of knowledge construction that contributes to human civilisation as the oldest human consciousness.

Keywords: Argumentation and Dialogue; Indian Context and History; Geopolitics and Global Peace; Consciousness on IKS

Introduction: The Indian knowledge system (IKS) and Bharatiya knowledge system (BKS) are very ambiguous for modern Indian academia, as to what to accept and what not (BKS or IKS). It requires profound contemplation from experts of the Indian education system. 'India' signifies only the geographical location, a continuation of Eurocentric narration and a relentless coloniality even after independence. The word 'India' isn't found in our ancient Vedic scriptures and does not relate to or embody BKS and its civilizational constituents. But the word 'Bharat' is found in the Rigveda, a Vedic scripture, and also represents knowledge, values, and perspective towards human beings and nature and presents the sustainability of life and nature. The name *Bharat* stands for true identity and comes from the sacrifice of King Bharat, which signifies life itself. In the renaissance of BKS, it becomes imperative to establish a discourse of BKS in the Indian academic fab-

ric. The discourse of BKS would develop an extraordinary length and breadth of consciousness of the Bharatiya Knowledge System that will play a significant role in preserving, promoting and disseminating BKS for present and future generations.

The rich tapestry of the Bhartiya Knowledge System (BKS) is still being passed through various scholarly research projects, surveys, research papers, and modern academic accreditation, regardless of whether the rich BKS existed. Suppose Bharat does not have this rich tapestry; why did Islamic invaders from the Middle East stay here for 1000 years and loot resources, decode and destroy cultural and academic repositories and European's control and loot all resources for 250 years through the philosophy of discourse and hegemony? After independence in 1947, Eurocentric perspectives and colonial narratives are still determining Bhartiya consciousness towards Sanskriti, Dharma and spirituality through the discourse of linguistic colonisation; translated scriptures by the body of invaders as a strategic colonial presentation, as rightly observed by the postcolonial scholars, particularly Edward Said in his book *Orientalism* (1978).

NEP 2020 extensively draws Indian intention towards decolonisation in the context of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara. It is the golden time to restore the Bhartiya consciousness of BKS (IKS) through the academic fabric. Traditional knowledge systems are a body of understanding, a great culture that is very profoundly rooted. They have their origins in the remote past. Their systematisation and canonisation gave rise to elite science. This knowledge and technology **will incorporate** the wisdom distilled through millennia of experimentation and trial and error. In the Indian context, there are diverse cultural contexts of scientific discovery and invention since ancient times. It is time to revise the conventional Eurocentric view of science and its origin.

Indian-Historical Context: The foundation of *Vishva-Guru* is not based on contemporary colonial cultural values and its societal conceptualisation, not even on foreign invasion of its cultural model, but on Bharatiya knowledge traditions. The continual invasions of India by different foreign forces tried to destroy Indian cultural, religious and intellectual heritage, which seems to have succeeded to some extent; even though the Bharatiya knowledge system has remained intact with its robust values. Geographical, cultural and historical narratives brutally attacked Indian heritage, but everlasting principles and values still resonate with the rest of the world.

The international community has sought to recognise and protect the traditional knowledge system. For instance, UNESCO has recently recognised forty-three heritage sites in India, including 35 cultural, 7 natural, and 1 Kanchenjunga National Park; all cultural heritage sites in India have a great amount of antiquity. It has been preserved and protected by the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. Implementation of NEP 2020 by the government of India is an important initiative to preserve and promote the Indian knowledge system and cultural heritage to amalgamate ancient and modern wisdom in the contemporary academic setup. Certain natural and human-caused disturbances threaten the world, such as climate change, global warming, wars, anthropocentrism, and the philosophy of extreme materialism and consumerism. Considering the rich travesty of the Bharatiya Knowledge System and its universal values, the entire human race can benefit from it. Dr Khan and Dr. Sharma rightly stressed the significance of preserving IKS for present and future generations:

The IKS actively commits to sharing the rich heritage and traditional wisdom of India, incorporating tribal, indigenous, and traditional learning methods. Encompassing diverse fields. The IKS not only boosts tourism but also fosters awareness and appreciation of India's diversity, culture, and traditions. It includes the propagation of knowledge in areas like archaeological sites, heritage, literature, sculpture, music etc. (46)

Bharatiya Knowledge systems have been developed through the Sanskrit language for thousands of years. As time progresses, development and scientific temperament are influenced by the Eurocentric narrative, especially the linguistic narrative of English as the language of civilisation. Lord Macaulay's Minute, 1835, shifted the medium of instruction from Sanskrit to English; Gurukul education to school education was the more systematic strategy towards the decline of India's cultural heritage and declaring Sanskrit as a dead language. After a long span of the colonial era and even after independence, successive governments should have taken the initiative to introduce BKS in academic institutions, but this did not happen. Consequently, students were uprooted from the rich heritage of their country, which had made them (India) a *Viswa-Guru* because of the sublimity of BKS. Now, many universities in India have introduced IKS syllabi to acquaint the present and future generations with the Indian knowledge System, which will undoubtedly have an impact on young minds and be visible in every sphere, including all professions.

By introducing IKS Indian Darshan, it will be well acquainted with students who have developed six schools of thought such as Gautama Rishi's Nyaya, Kanada Rishi's *Vaisheshika*, Kapila Muni's *Sankhya*, Patanjali Maharishi's *Yoga*, Mimamsa and Vyasa's *Vedanta* which reflect multiple ways of thinking: four *Purusharthas*: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kam*, and *Moksha*, also channelise their energy in four directions that also the objective of life as far as IKS is a concern. The social management of the Ashram system is four in number, where Academic, Household, *Vanaprastha*, and Salvation are equally important as they all complete the cycle of life as Vedic life patterns. In Vedic times, social systems were organised. Every employee was selected by merit, called the *chaturanga* system; intellectuals were known as *Brahmins*, warriors known as *Kshatriyas*, landowners or merchants as *vaishyas* and service sections (engineering field) as *Sudras*. The religious book Bhagavad Gita came into existence only when Arjuna forgot the philosophy and duty of karma and its consequences. The disequilibrium of the karmic equation in today's society also determines the problematization of social institutions.

The introduction of BKS in the NEP-2020 syllabus by different universities in India is a significant initiative to acquaint students with this universal law of karma. This paper investigates how rich the Bharatiya Knowledge system is and how it will impact the students' personal and professional lives. This paper also explores how Indian texts and epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata can be studied as historical texts from Ancient Bharat, not as they have been presented as myths by colonial narratives.

NEP 2020 has given the utmost space for IKS so that it can be studied in its context under the correct parameters. UGC has also added Hindu Studies and Ayurveda Biology as a subject in NTA- the NET examination to provide a scope for research in Higher education, where IKS can be understood in every discipline, such as political science, economics, English, Law, Sanskrit, Hindi, and Astrology.

By promoting the Indian knowledge system through various national and international seminars, conferences, workshops, and webinars, Bharat will develop a community of rich ancient wisdom of timelessness, acquaint students with the Indian knowledge system that will work as an ambassador for global peace, and redefine the geopolitics of the world. In 2023, India successfully conducted the G20 summit in New Delhi, where India's ancient heritage was a centre of attraction for its universal theme, *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. This paper also delves into how introducing the Indian knowledge system in the curriculum will establish global peace and redefine Geopolitics. The system of traditional knowledge of Bharat is a record of past human achievements, which helps us comprehend the complexities of human life and offers perspectives of multiple lifestyles, traditions, and cultural groups of a particular period.

NEP 2020 is a paradigm shift from colonial narratives on different perspectives towards the postcolonial tendency of Bharat, where the reader finds space for uncovering the antiquity of ancient wisdom and cultural construction and functionality. In a study of two National Policies on Education, NEP 1986 and NEP 2020, it was found that the latter is a more dynamic, flexible, and learner-centric approach that emphasises the holistic development of learners. Every system of knowledge has evolved through a long effort of human consciousness, where multiple minds work collectively to make human life more social and cultural in any social fabric.

Globalisation and Geo-politics: In the twenty-first century, there is a confluence of multiple ideologies, perspectives, narratives, and a collision of Eastern and Western civilisations. Still, the complexities of human life are multiplied. This is one of the core reasons why Bhartiya knowledge is necessary to preserve and promote for the welfare of humanity. It is observed that modern and ancient wisdom play a significant role in mitigating human suffering on a large scale. Culture and cultural imperialism through linguistic discourse succeeded in the institutionalisation of social and academic fabric by the introduction of IKS; Indian academia gets a counterattack to Western and colonial cultural thoughts. There had always been a clash among civilizations, such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Vedic Civilisation, and Chinese Civilisation. One civilisation always tried to dominate and replace the other when it came into power. The European civilisation always stood for the external expansion of geographical territories, as the Elizabethan Age (1558-1603) collection of extreme materialism, believed in the philosophy of consumerism, and also believed that knowledge is the power to conquer the external world. On the other hand, Vedic civilisation, as an embodiment of the Bharatiya Knowledge system, always believes in 'knowledge is the purifier of self' and the power to conquer 'oneself'. This is another reason to preserve and promote IKS. More effectively, however, it can be preserved and promoted when introduced into the academic curriculum, specifically from primary to higher education. Mrs Deepa Kumari, in her research article "Indian Knowledge for Sustainable Futures," focused on the need to preserve nature by implementing the Bharatiya Knowledge System, which always worships nature:

The Vedas gave reverence to the Sun, the Moon, the stars, planets, comets, etc, to flora and fauna around, to the forests, deserts, rivers, seas, and oceans, to the mountains, and so on. The Vedic people recognize the importance of mutual dependence and coexistence with nature and other living beings but today the world is facing the problem of natural calamity, famine, floods, mass migration,

etc. because of the overexploitation of resources. The world has understood the need to preserve nature... (262)

Legacy of Dialogic Tradition: Modern science is tracing the Indian *Vedic Shastras* as the *Smriti* and *Shruti Vedas*, *Unpaved*, *Vedanga darshan*, and it comprehensively covers all branches of knowledge, both material and spiritual. The dialogic system in the Bhartiya Gyan Tradition has a long, rich legacy placed at the centre of knowledge formation or in the process of knowledge emergence for contributing to human civilisation as the oldest human consciousness. Dialogic culture and tradition play essential roles in knowledge formation in the history of IKS. Various scriptures can exemplify it, such as Lord Krishna and Arjuna in the Bhagwat Gita, Rishi Ashtavakra and King Janak in the Ashtavakra Gita, and Sages and spiritual seekers in the Upanishads, which are examples of healthy traditions of dialogues. The tradition of dialogue and healthy discussions has paved the way for the tradition of action and knowledge, as it has been at the centre of India's cultural and intellectual history, as Lord Krishna enlightened Arjun before entering the battlefield of the Mahabharata. Dr Amartya Sen has discussed the spirit of India's argumentative tradition in his book *The Argumentative Indians* and presented how the various perspectives on multiple topics have been a part of the rich dialogic tradition of India, as he states, "A defeated argument that refuses to be obliterated can remain very alive" (6).

Primary classical scriptures of India, such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, the Historical Epics Ramayana and the Mahabharata, centre on the tradition of dialogue between Guru and Shishya Parampara, not to conquer external materialism or to conquer the arguments, but to get transformations from lower to higher consciousness, eventually leading to cosmic consciousness. Active dialogues like Yogeshwar Shri Krishna and Arjuna in the Bhagwad Gita, Guru and Shishyas in the Upanishads, and so on, the dialogic tradition of India plays a significant role in diagnosing the problem of extreme radicalism across the world, which will prepare the present generation for the establishment of present and future global peace.

In the present context, this dialogic policy is designed to shape India's foreign policy, where discussion, dialogue, and negotiations reflect India's soft power in the international community's geopolitics. NEP 2020 emphasises incorporating IKS to use Ancient civilizational components of societal functionalities to solve the complexities of the contemporary world and navigate future disasters. However, higher education in India has 83 subjects with a modern structure and nature, including IKS, which expands the scope and boundaries of subjects. The equation of social functionalities was solely based on the *chaturvarna* system, the four divisions of human society, for proper operationalisation, not based on birth but by virtues, actions, and nature that were genetically possessed by each category. As Lord Krishna rightly stated, '*Catur-varnyam maya srstam guna-karamvibhagasah: Tasya kartaram api mam viddhy akartaram avyayam*' (Bhagwad Gita, Ch.4., p.13). A structured society and skill-based categorisation of the worker as intellectuals, warriors, business class and technical class, ancient Bharat had that contributed 32.9% according to economic historian Angus Maddison before the Mughals. Furthermore, first-world countries determine the geopolitical charter of the world mostly based on imperialistic expansionism, economic hegemony, and the strength of weaponisation.

Promotion and Preservation of Heritage: Ramayana is a historical text and epic of India; there is also the philosophy of Geopolitics, as Lord Rama, who killed

Ravana, brought back his wife from the territory but did not claim even a single inch of Sri Lanka's territory. eventually, Ravan's younger brother Vibhishan was given accession to the throne. Therefore, not the policy of territory grabbing but the philosophy of renunciation of foreign possession was the base of Indian geopolitics in ancient Bharat, and it can contribute a good amount of assistance in the contemporary global crisis of expansionism in international communities for world peace. The govt. of India has made a paradigm transformation in the Indian education system by including India's knowledge system through NEP 2020 to preserve and promote India's cultural heritage through the academic fabric of India. IKS in NEP 2020 would be directive principles for the Indian education system. Preserving and promoting curriculum, classical languages, an interdisciplinary approach, and their amalgamation with the modern education system will enhance learning and employability.

The core philosophy of the Indian knowledge system is 'unity in diversity.' Unity among the living creatures is in terms of *the ataman level (soul consciousness)*, *diversity at the body compositional level*. In the light of the narrative of globalisation, multiple diversities are under threat and need to be promoted and preserved to understand present and ancient human efforts for human and societal progress. From preserving local narratives to master narratives, they always contribute much knowledge. The global narrative of allopathy disappeared in the Indian health system. That is why Arvada and yoga must be preserved along with the modern health system so that present and future generations can benefit extensively in health and knowledge.

The Government of India developed the Ministry of Ayush, which promotes India's traditional medicine system, research institutions, and alternative medicine system. The amalgamation of ancient and modern medical systems enriches the health department and increases the livelihoods of present and upcoming generations. Diverse branches of Indian traditional medicine are Ayush as it stands for (*Ayurveda, Yoga Unani, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Homeopathy*). One of the main objectives of NEP 2020 is the holistic development of learners, but that was already contained in the Indian education policy in Ancient India, called the four Purus Artha, as Dharma (righteous), Kam (sense pleasure), Arth (Materialism), *Mukti* (salvation). This philosophy of Ancient Bharat channelises the vitality of learners in holistic development. If the modern educational structure is meticulously scrutinised, it can be found that concentration is given only to materialism and a sense of pleasure. In contrast, Dharma and salvation are missed in modern educational policy.

Another reason for preserving and promoting Indian culture and heritage is to study and appreciate the temples of ancient India, which were not only centres of worship but also places of cultural preservation and promotion through regular visits. Other activities like marriage ceremonies, ritualism, and celebration of festivity in the temple were the main components. Temples were not simply a construction of four walls but were based on geometrical principles of the architecture of ancient Bharat. In the midst of modernisation, where young generations are its consumers on a grand scale, they need to understand and rationalise the cultural legacy of India and play a more significant role in keeping the Indian knowledge tradition alive. It is a hard fact that traditions do not construct overnight but take a long time, and the collective efforts of great minds of human civilisation need to be saved and propagated.

The National Educational Policy of India 2020's drafting committee knows that academic fabrics can transfer culture and heritage to present and future learners at minimal cost and effort. The subjects of Indian knowledge, in coordination with modern educational subjects, play a significant role in introducing ancient Indian wisdom to the contemporary social and academic fabric. The fundamental difference between the Indian knowledge system and the Western knowledge system is that the former (IKS) is based on the exploration of the internal self, then makes the perception about the external world; this is also the reason to call it (Santana Sanskriti) Whereas later Western Knowledge System (WKS) emphasizes on the external exploration of world through senses, mind and rationality eventually changes with nature time and lack timelessness. The ultimate aim and objectives of all civilisations, either east or west, south or north, are to establish peace not for themselves but for the whole world. The aim of global peace can be achieved through the preservation and upgradation of IKS. The true nature of Indian culture and patrimony is meant for human beings, irrespective of any social discrimination. There is no second thought regarding the global relevance of *Bhartiya Gyan Parampara*. It has universal acceptance due to its principles, timelessness and pinnacle of wisdom.

The Indian knowledge system is isolated from chemistry and its understanding, as it is rightly explained by Rishi Kanada, who first propounded the concept of the atom, an indestructible particle of matter. Modern chemistry has only found atoms and elements and their classification in the nineteenth century, when many technological advances were made. But Rishi Kanada discovered long ago that it is time to amalgamate modern and ancient knowledge systems so that new perspectives can be considered while studying modern knowledge systems. Western scholars have constructed many challenges and stereotypes regarding the Indian legacy. Indian ancient legacy of knowledge is based on a specific structure that Western educators and translators did not go through; consequently, wrong translation, misrepresentation, and heresy of paraphrase become a big challenge for the original content and context of IKS. It is the time when such a challenge can be overcome by conducting a detailed study of academic institutions in India.

Scope on BKS: External and internal extension are two philosophies of the Eastern and Western worlds. Yoga is a scientific and spiritual journey to the inner world. Indian philosophy is the confluence of external materialism (physical science) and internal disposition (spirituality), collectively called scientific spirituality. The ultimate aim of introducing the Bharatiya Knowledge System (BKS) in Indian academia is to explore the epistemology of Indian philosophy and its scholarly research-based studies. India has always been known for absolute knowledge, not in the context of rationalistic or emotional intelligence, but transcendental knowledge, known as non-dualistic philosophy.

India and the West possess diverse forms of knowledge. Still, for Indians, *Brahma Gyan* (pure knowledge) was always based for rest of knowledge that leads to ultimate truth, to the realization *Brahma* (internal universal consciousness and state of omnipotent) Bharatiya *Darshan* popularly recognized by pure spiritual economy such as transcendental faith beyond duality, cosmic *siddhi*, (spiritual attainment) *Mukti* such as complete liberation from carving and attachments, sufferings associated with the cycles of birth and death. New 2020 also aim to explore profound spiritual potentialities. Recognition of 'self in all beings and all beings in the self' to be happy, free from the ego and attachment to self, is the highest

achievement of the Indian Knowledge System. Like many knowledge systems, Aviation Technology in Ancient India was very prevalent. Historical epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata, are examples of this knowledge. References to deadly weapons in the form of arrows, spacecraft and others in Ancient India's scriptures are equivalent to modern advanced technologies. The historical epic Mahabharat is full of references to such advancements. Unfortunately, Europeans did not understand this knowledge because it was beyond their imagination. *Vaimanika Sastra* contained this knowledge system. For instance, to understand the ancient spacecraft system of knowledge, it is essential to amalgamate it with the current education system.

Conclusion:

The twenty-first century is the right time to revive the Bharatiya knowledge system because of its universal principles and values, like the oldest ancient scriptures that contain literary foundations for literature such as prose, poetry, storytelling traditions, and literary progression. Preserving and promoting Ayurveda and Yoga for health purposes, understanding sustainable development, and internal exploration of self through meditation, imitation, and experience are the needs of the hour. To conclude, regarding BKS and its preservation, promotion and dissemination in a rapidly expanding globalised world, the Indian academic structure, including BKS, plays a very significant role. Bharatiya *Darshan* towards all living creatures and its relationship with nature in a sustainable way draws global attention with the elements of hope, peace, and human values that are prominent for synthesizing human civilisation in the chain of great phrase *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (The World is One Family). Under the light of materialistic and consumeristic philosophy, world geopolitics is influenced by economic hegemony and imperialistic expansionism that has put the world on the table of nuclear war. Considering all the natural disequilibrium and human life threats, BKS can contribute to re-engineering human consciousness that promotes and preserves human peace and collective prosperity. Stating the grand heritage of Indian values, evolving confidence rooted in its cultural ethos and intellectual resurgence, Dr. Jaishankar has rightly said, "The legend of Hanuman could well be the story of India in the last decade. The more we do, the more we believe we can do. It is this self-discovery that has made India so different in recent years and set it on a course that has major implications for the global order" (181).

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