



## Indian Knowledge System and Local Knowledge: A Study

**Dr. Megha Dadsena**

Assistant Professor, Pt.Harishankar Shukla Smriti Mahavidyalya, Raipur (C.G.)

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### ABSTRACT

The *Indian Knowledge System (IKS)* is a holistic and multidimensional system of traditional Indian knowledge, encompassing philosophy, science, art, culture, language, health, and other aspects of life. It has evolved through observation, experience, and traditions. The aim of the Indian Knowledge System and local knowledge is to integrate this ancient wisdom into modern education, preserve it, and utilize it for solving contemporary problems — thereby enabling sustainable, equitable, and holistic human development. Local knowledge refers to the wisdom that emerges from the local experiences and traditional practices of a specific community. It can be observed and integrated within the IKS framework. This local wisdom is often expressed in traditional crafts, agricultural practices, water management systems, and indigenous healing methods. It is considered a part of the Indian Knowledge System, focusing on the development and application of knowledge within specific local contexts.

### 1. Introduction:

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) encompasses India's philosophical, scientific, and cultural heritage. It provides a comprehensive overview of India's rich intellectual traditions, including Vedic thought, Yoga, Ayurveda, and Indian arts. The Upanishads are the primary source of the Indian knowledge tradition.

If one wants to understand and know India, one must study the Upanishads. Through the Indian knowledge tradition, we aim to inculcate character-building in students. The self-



confidence of future generations is empowered through our traditions. These traditions have evolved through experience, observation, experimentation, and rigorous analysis.

The main goal of the Indian Knowledge System is to learn from the past and to integrate Indian knowledge systems, which are characterized by an unbroken tradition of knowledge transmission and a unique worldview, to study and address the emerging challenges of India and the world.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To study the emerging challenges of India and the world through the lens of the Indian Knowledge System.
2. To understand the Indian Knowledge System and local knowledge.
3. To study the rich heritage and traditions of Indian knowledge systems.

Indian Knowledge System (IKS)

#### *Ancient Indian Knowledge Tradition*

The ancient Indian knowledge tradition is a powerful and profound system that integrates knowledge and science, material and spiritual understanding, action and ethics, as well as devotion and renunciation into a unified worldview. Since the time of the Vedas, the educational system focused on moral, physical, intellectual, and spiritual values, nurturing virtues like self-restraint, truthfulness, discipline, non-attachment, and respect for all.

In the Vedas, knowledge is seen as the foundation of humanity's greatness. The education system emphasized both learning and physical development. Right action was that which was free from attachment, and true knowledge was the path to liberation. Beyond this, any action devoid of higher purpose was considered insignificant.

This educational philosophy was integral to Indian tradition and was reflected in global centers of learning such as universities and monasteries, where holistic education was imparted. Homes, temples, schools, and monasteries provided value-rich education. The ancient systems promoted humaneness and discouraged utilitarianism. In ancient times, knowledge was not commodified.

Acharya Yaska mentions:

**“Na ashnah pratigrahitavyam yatha lokaah”** (Nirukta 13.12)



*Translation:* "One who has not realized the meaning or essence should not accept or teach it to others."

This implies that only those who have internalized knowledge through self-discipline and realization are fit to teach it.

Just as understanding the past requires delving deep into history, similarly, understanding deep philosophical principles and great masters requires a meditative and focused mind.

Fundamental Principles of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)

The **IKS Division** works on three core principles when conducting any activity:

*1. Tradition:*

IKS aims to preserve and promote the rich legacy of Indian knowledge that has been passed down through generations. It seeks to bring to light the timeless and continuous traditions of Indian wisdom.

*2. Vision:*

Indian Knowledge Systems offer a unique perspective that makes them distinctly 'Indian'. These perspectives are valuable in addressing both contemporary and emerging challenges. By integrating traditional and modern knowledge, holistic solutions can be developed that transcend the limitations of both systems.

*3. Practical Purpose:*

IKS focuses on demonstrating the practical utility of Indian knowledge in solving current and future challenges in India and globally. Projects under IKS focus on socially relevant areas such as health, technology, and welfare to bring Indian Knowledge Systems into the mainstream and make a meaningful impact.

Vision of the IKS Division

The vision of the IKS Division is to **revive and mainstream Indian Knowledge Systems for the contemporary world. It aims to instill interest and a healthy, critical reverence toward India's continuous traditions and free Indian minds from colonial hangovers.**

Objectives of the IKS Division



- Create a **database** of individuals and organizations contributing to the study, teaching, publishing, and preservation of ancient and modern Indian knowledge across disciplines such as:
  - Arts, music, dance, drama
  - Mathematics, astronomy, science, technology, life sciences, environment, health care
  - Yoga, law, jurisprudence, economics, social sciences, psychology, philosophy, management, linguistics
  - Indian oral traditions in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Tamil, Pali, and others
- Develop a **dynamic and open-access portal** (like a wiki) in PPP mode for collecting and disseminating this rich knowledge.
- Encourage **research addressing societal challenges** in health, neuroscience, psychology, nature, environment, and sustainable development.
- **Identify scholars and institutions** working in various IKS fields and categorize key areas of focus.
- **Collect reports** on work done by contributors to IKS and **publish regularly**.
- Promote interdisciplinary research in IKS to provide **evidence**, generate **new knowledge**, and address **societal needs**.
- Create fellowships for **researchers, visiting professors, scientists, and scholars**, including:
  - Sanskrit professors at IITs/IISERs/IIMs/universities
  - Science and technology professors at Sanskrit universities
- Provide **financial assistance** for research activities, workshops, seminars, and publications aligned with IKS goals.
- Suggest ways to **integrate IKS** into modern subjects in **school and higher education curricula**.
- Establish **IKS cells** in general universities, Sanskrit universities, and other institutions under the Ministry of Education.



- Facilitate **collaboration and coordination** among educational institutions, ministries, independent scholars, NGOs, and private institutions for interdisciplinary research in IKS.

### Spiritual and Scientific Synthesis of IKS

Ancient Indian ethical knowledge systems were deeply spiritual and aimed at synthesizing material desires with spiritual goals. While the world was steeped in ignorance, Indian seers spread knowledge, guiding humanity toward enlightenment and the realization of human potential. As mentioned in the Rigveda:

**"Sangachchhadhwam samvadadhvam sam vo manamsi janatam..."**

*(Rigveda 10.191.2)*

*Translation:* "Let us move together, speak together, and let our minds be in harmony."

Such a society, united in thought and speech, can truly shape its era and envision a better present and future for all.

### Geo-Cultural Relevance of IKS

India's knowledge tradition is intimately tied to its geography and culture. The origin and evolution of this knowledge occurred on Indian soil, making geographical understanding of the land critical. In ancient times, India shared natural borders with Afghanistan and Burma. Although these political boundaries weren't emphasized in ancient times, geographical diversity led to distinct but unified worldviews and lifestyles.

### Ancient Indian Knowledge and History

Since ancient times, India has been the land of **human values and diverse scientific traditions**. Its culture sees the entire world as one family:

**"Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"** – "The world is one family."

This emphasizes a holistic vision, not a territorial superiority. Unfortunately, due to misunderstandings, this capability was wrongly seen as political weakness, while it was rooted in knowledge and consciousness.



With increasing interest in Indian knowledge, countries around the world are now recognizing the depth of Indian traditions. There is a growing demand for research institutions to explore texts, rituals, and practices from India's heritage. Indian knowledge systems are being embraced globally, and Indian youth must also realize their value.

To do so, it is essential to **identify and validate** Indian knowledge and values with clarity and correctness. This knowledge system has continued for millennia, focusing on harmony between humans, nature, and the divine.

### Modern Relevance of Indian Knowledge Systems

India has played a key role in shaping the world through its unique **knowledge framework** and **scientific innovations**. Now is the time to reflect on and reintroduce its significance.

This is not merely about past knowledge—it concerns the **intellectual preservation, cultural revival, and national spirit** of India. While IKS does not reject truth from other systems, it must navigate the overuse of terms like "disruption", "tension", "anxiety", and "mental trauma" prevalent in modern discourse.

### Conclusion:

The Indian knowledge system is an incredibly rich and diverse collection of ancient wisdom and practices that have stood the test of time. It is a system that emphasizes the holistic understanding of the self, nature, and the universe, and seeks to create harmony and balance in all aspects of life. From the early Vedic period to the modern era, Indian knowledge has evolved and adapted to the changing times, but its core principles remain deeply ingrained in the culture and society of India. Its teachings have influenced not only the development of India but also the world at large, through its spread and adoption by © 2024 JETIR February 2024, Volume 11, Issue 2 [www.jetir.org](http://www.jetir.org) (ISSN-2349-5162) JETIR2402475 Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR) [www.jetir.org](http://www.jetir.org) e526 other civilizations. One of the most remarkable aspects of the Indian knowledge system is its inclusivity and universality. It is not limited to a specific religion, belief system, or social class. Instead, it is open to all, making it accessible and relevant to people from all walks of life. Furthermore, the Indian knowledge system is not just theoretical but deeply practical. It not only imparts knowledge and understanding but also provides practical tools and techniques for personal growth and development. Through practices such as yoga, meditation, and Ayurveda, it offers ways to achieve physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Moreover, the Indian knowledge system is deeply rooted in a reverence for nature and a deep understanding of the



interconnectedness of all living beings. It promotes sustainable living practices, mindful consumption, and a harmonious relationship with the environment. Despite its immense contributions and relevance, the Indian knowledge system has faced challenges and criticism in recent times. However, there has been a revival of interest in this ancient knowledge, both within India and globally, as people recognize the value and applicability of its teachings in today's world. Thus, the Indian knowledge system is a treasure trove of wisdom that continues to inspire and guide countless individuals. As we move towards a more interconnected and fast-paced world, the principles and practices of this ancient system can serve as a guiding light for a more conscious and balanced way of living. Let us continue to embrace and celebrate this rich legacy and use it to create a better and more enlightened future for ourselves and generations to come.

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