The Academic
International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

An Online Peer Reviewed / Refereed Journal
Volume 4 | Issue 10 | October 2026
ISSN: 2583-973X (Online), SJIF IF(2026): 5.6
Website: www.theacademic.in

Reimagining Contemporary Education through Indian Knowledge Systems: Integrating Cognitive, Ethical, and Social Perspectives

Sananda Roy

Assistant Professor, Department of Education (ITEP), Moridhal College, Assam

Ruchira Ray

Assistant Professor, Vidyasagar College of Education, Phansidewa, Darjeeling, West Bengal, India

DOI : https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24462608

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Received: 31-10-2026

Accepted: 05-11-2026

Published: 20-11-2026

Keywords:

Indian Knowledge Systems; cognitive learning; ethical reasoning; social participation; culturally responsive education; curriculum integration

ABSTRACT

Contemporary education works to integrate the acquisition of knowledge, moral judgment and social participation. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) provide historically situated resources to achieve this. Their educational potential, however, needs to be judged case by case. This paper provides a catalog of 250 IKS resources, including 126 research projects and 124 resource centers, by using a cognitive-ethical-social perspective. Descriptive analysis of the resources provided insights into classifications and focus areas. The location and administrative status of the resources were also recorded. Of 250 resources 88 (35.2%) contain social components, 80 (32.0%) contain cognitive components, 39 (15.6%) contain ethical components and 30 (12.0%) contain educational components. These components are integrated and describe what the resources touch upon, not what is taught or learned. Based on the titles, the resources cover a broad range of thematic areas, especially social and cognitive components, and educational and ethical components are less apparent. To cover cognitive, social, ethical and educational components, explain an integrated framework, which consists of community engagement, ethical

Disclaimer: The opinions, interpretations, conclusions, recommendations, analyses, and statements expressed in this research article are solely those of the author(s) and do not reflect the views, policies, or positions of the Publisher, Chief Editor, Editors, Editorial Board, Reviewers, or their affiliated institutions. The author(s) are solely responsible for ensuring the originality, authenticity, and integrity of the manuscript and for ensuring that it is free from plagiarism, AI-generated content, copyright infringement, data falsification, and any other form of academic misconduct.

dialogue and reflection, along with use of multiple languages. Evidence from the field suggests that even though institutional documents don't prove the effectiveness of teaching or learning, the components and methods presented have potential. Assessment of these methods and components requires evidence from the classroom.

1. Introduction

Critics of contemporary education have argued that curriculum frameworks should connect disciplinary knowledge with the linguistic worlds and collectives of learners, and with their moral responsibilities to others.

In India, the inclusion of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in education has gained momentum in recent years. The aim has been to incorporate India's indigenous philosophies, sciences and technologies, and other areas of cultural and intellectual heritage, within the ambit of school education. This is not a revivalist attempt to reinstate an idealized, mythical past. Nor does it mean the dismissal or rejection of science and scholarship of the day, and contemporary knowledge (Kumar 2024; Babbar & Johannsdottir 2024). Rather, it raises the issue of what can be examined, evaluated and/or taught critically, within the domain of the possible, in the classrooms of today.

It is well acknowledged that learning is an interactive process. The cognitive, moral and social dimensions of education are inseparable. Research focusing on emotional and social learning, and household knowledge points to the fact that numerous informal learning resources remain untapped by educational systems, especially in developing countries (Durlak et al., 2011; Moll et al., 1992).

What IKS demonstrates in terms of this interdependence is exemplified in the bridging of boundaries between different disciplines and fields of various institutions. For instance, where traditional water management is concerned, different programmes may involve testing ecological claims, considering shared resources, and collaborating with local knowledge holders. Where working with literature is concerned, programmes may involve identification of inconsistent moral positions and analysis of group interpretation. Referencing a particular tradition may or may not lead to any of the aforementioned outcomes. It is important to note that, the outcomes discussed above require a set of questions that are formulated in a clear language, adequate sources, and appropriate participation, as well as teaching and learning activities that are relevant to the target group and the learning context (Paris, 2012; Kumar, 2024).

An institutional focus outlines what an organization is primarily concerned with, but does not provide any information about learner's experiences. Equating institutional growth with educational transformation neglects the role of teaching. So, it is justified to analyze curricular connections, e.g. how they are assessed through the student work, and what role the teacher plays as an observer and a feedback provider. This differentiates the focus and interpretation of the paper.

The present inquiry asks three related questions: What are the broad knowledge themes in institutional IKS? To what extent do the described titles appear to address cognitive, ethical, social and pedagogical concerns? What are the defensible implications for curriculum and teacher education? The aim of the paper is to describe 250 entries from institutional IKS and to identify pedagogical concerns embedded in the resources described; and, in the light of curriculum and teacher education, interpret the descriptions. It will not compare student groups or test a teaching intervention. After reviewing the relevant literature, it will develop an integrated framework and consider the prospective implications of the resource and research priorities.

Image 1: National policy framing of Indian knowledge, languages and values



Source: Adapted from Ministry of Education, Government of India, Shikshak Parv: NEP 2020 campaign poster. [Source link]

Explanation: The education poster places languages, cultural awareness and traditional arts in the same policy frame. The poster provides an illustration for the argument presented in the paper. The argument states educational integration must involve cognitive engagement and cultural participation and ethical reflection. Educational integration should not result in the segregation of the heritage content.

2. Review of Literature and Research Gap

2.1 Indigenous knowledge, culturally sustaining pedagogy and holistic education

Culturally relevant pedagogy holds that vigorous academic study need not require the obliteration of students' community identities. Ladson-Billings (1995) relates achievement to cultural competency and critical consciousness and extends the discourse toward sustaining linguistic and cultural diversity. These strands of theory do not explain Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) initiatives in India; however, they frame insightsful questions on representing whose knowledge, distributing classroom authority, and allowing students to interrogate inherent assumptions. In contexts of multilingual education, these are legitimate considerations since the inclusion of community perspectives in education can be meaningful only if learners are afforded opportunities to interpret, investigate and reimagine what is presented before them.

Likewise, the assumption that educational expertise is embodied only in bookish or institutional knowledge is challenged by the funds-of-knowledge approach. Moll and his colleagues (1992) explain how teachers' knowledge of students' actual practices outside school can help build home-school partnerships to design teaching that extends students' learning. If applied judiciously in the Indian context, this can include indigenous knowledge and techniques in agriculture, the arts, performing arts, linguistic diversity, and ecological and environmental documentation. These should be mutual-partnership-based projects; a community member cannot be an aide to a teacher. Kinch et al. (2022) working with Cherokee Ecological knowledge narratives highlight the potential of Indigenous Story-telling to enrich and inform education. They underscore that cultural knowledge is anchored in time and place and thus not fungible.

A vocabulary is emerging for integrating the cognitive, emotional, ethical and social aspects of people, and Indian philosophies can contribute to this vocabulary (Babbar & Johannsdottir, 2024). There are limits to this. Doctrines differ internally and change over time, and not every historical statement is an empirically verified proposition. Relative absence of certain languages, institutions or religious traditions can result in exclusion, and programs designed to address this may help, but their effects are uncertain. The true quality of a curriculum is often judged more on cultural authenticity than on the ability of the learners to understand and evaluate the authenticity of the curriculum and determine the many ways in which it could be interpreted.

Of more concern should be the question of how academic standards can integrate the context and potential interdisciplinarity of local knowledge.

2.2 Cognitive, ethical and social learning: convergences and unresolved questions

Recent discussions of contemplative education include concepts of attention, introspection and reflective self-regulation. Zajonc (2013) discusses pedagogy as structured reflection and intellectual inquiry. Ergas and Hadar (2019) describe the emerging research on mindfulness in education. All of these accounts elaborate why certain reflective practices might be pedagogically relevant to aspects of cognition, but they cannot be construed to prove that practices or techniques from the field of IKS would enhance memory, reasoning or academic attainment. The characteristics of the intervention, the duration and length, the setting and the outcome assessed make a difference.

Similarly measured interpretations are called for in other empirical reviews. Evidence for aspects of psychological well-being has been more consistent in school-based mindfulness research than evidence for specific cognitive or learning gains (Weare, 2019). Additionally, McCaw (2020) cautions against narrowly instrumentalizing complicated contemplative traditions. When translating spiritual or philosophical ideas into a secular education system voluntary participation and informed explanation should always be considered and judiciously applied, especially when dealing with students of different ages. Discussing reflective attention as a proposed learning mechanism should not be construed as a broad pedagogical panacea.

Learning does not end with displaying exemplary values. Students should have the opportunity to identify reasons from assertions and deal with competing demands and disagreements. Structured discussion, cooperative problem solving and reflection may be placed in the context of the reviewed literature on social and emotional learning, including the school-based programs evaluated by Durlak et al. (2011). However, those evaluations cannot be associated with untested IKS modules. The research gap is one of translation and evidence. Institutional descriptions of IKS rarely demonstrate how a thematic interest is converted to an integrated lesson sequence, an objective rubric or a documented cognitive, ethical and social outcome (Kumar, 2024; Barratt, 2025).

There are gaps in assessment design. Recognizing philosophical terms may not be indicative of ethical reasoning; engaging in a group may not result in dialogue; performing a contemplative exercise may not lead to enhanced attention. Wordy phrases may mislead. Without stated, specific educational targets and goals, integrated learning claims cannot be validated.

3. Integrated Cognitive–Ethical–Social Framework

3.1 Three complementary dimensions and their possible educational mechanisms

The cognitive-ethical-social framework comprises three complementary processes and interacting dimensions. The cognitive process/dimension comprises elements such as close reading, reasoning, and classification. Learners should be able to ascertain the source of a claim, consider evidence that would count for or against a claim, and identify possible alternative explanations. The ethical process/dimension encompasses various elements including judgment on equity and consequences, and considerations of care and obligation. Its goal is not to endorse a particular moral answer, but to facilitate reasoned judgment. The social process/dimension encompasses various elements, including dialogue, cooperative production and educating communities (Durlak et al., 2011; Zajonc, 2013).

Take, for example, a module that explores how different cultures and communities address the problem of water scarcity. Students may reflect on the degree to which documentation (oral or written) captures knowledge about water scarcity (or other scarcities) compared to measurement and observation. Students may debate a case about how to equitably distribute water between multiple users. Finally, students may synthesize research findings and present the findings to the public. Each step of the process above fosters engagement across the disciplines. The example provided is not prescriptive, and is meant to illustrate what integration across the dimensions of learning may look like. Integration may mean making connections, rather than fostering agreement. This is especially true in literature. Examples from other cultures may be more helpful in some instances than examples from students' own cultures.

3.2 Principles for inclusive curriculum design and assessment

The framework is applied through four principles. First, each knowledge claim (assertion) must be critically assessed, and verified in relation to the discipline. Historical claims must include contextual evidence, and scientific claims must be tested or observed. Second, during instruction, learners must have the opportunity to engage in dialogue and have the materials presented in their languages, and not necessitate one classical or regional language as the means of instruction and participation. Third, respectful and non-coercive engagement must allow students to critically assess and engage with philosophical or religiously-based materials without necessitating belief or practice. Fourth, the assessment of learning must be clearly defined and related to the intended learning outcome, and not assumed positive cultural impact (Ladson-Billings, 1995; McCaw, 2020).

Image 2: Locally rooted art practice in an Indian classroom



Source: PM SHRI Kendriya Vidyalaya No. 1, Cuttack: Art & Craft gallery (Madhubani classroom activity).[Source link]

Explanation: Students that have a heritage of regional painting provide concrete cultural examples in the classroom. While the photograph illustrates examples of student's creative expression, collaboration and other dimensions of school discipline, it cannot be used as evidence for measurable improvement in cognitive, moral and educational outcomes.

The rubric should assess evidence accuracy, reasoning strength, fairness, clarity and the quality of explanation of the overall contribution to the collective work. Students may submit reflective commentaries and annotated sources while teachers assess visible work as opposed to invisible. The views of members of the community must be identified and acknowledged. If a member of the community is unable to participate in an activity, the reasoning must be provided and examples should be offered. This applies to teachers as well, and teacher development must take place to manage disagreements and to evaluate and distinguish the work of students, as well as to address unequal access to resources. The framework requires testing, and teachers must interpret it. It is not itself an established intervention. The aim is to preserve the line between philosophical inspiration and educational work, highlighted by Weare (2019) and Babbar and Johannsdottir (2024), and Roy and Banerjee (2025).

Rubrics must be flexible, and students should be allowed to, and encouraged, to submit supported reasons that challenge traditional interpretations of an assignment. This may protect intellectual independence, and care must be taken to distinguish between cultural conformity and academic participation, and academic care in the classroom.

4. Materials and Analytical Method

The unit of analysis is an institutional listing of IKS, not an individual student or teacher. There are 250 entries, of which 126 are research projects and 124 are centres. Each entry has a unique identifier and fields denoting type of listing, published title, named lead or organization, state and reported status. An analytical register contains standardized state name, one title based thematic category and four binary indicators regarding the presence of cognitive, ethical, social or educations concerns. Analyses therefore cover the title and other administrative fields of the record. They do not assess reach of the program, or teaching practices or student experience.

The descriptive work involved verifying identifier uniqueness and totals, cross-checking category totals, constructing frequency distributions and calculating percentages with the relevant base. Overall title indicator percentages are based on 250 entries. Within type comparisons are based on 126 projects or 124 centres. Of the seven thematic categories, one is assigned per entry, while for the mention indicators, more than one may appear in a single title. Cross-tabling of status frequencies by record type was done. State comparisons were made using the standardized geographical field rather than variations in spelling in the original listing.

The indicator titles were coded at the time this analysis was performed. No independent coder agreement statistics or validation exercises accompany the classifications. Ambiguous titles may be associated with multiple themes. For example, an entry coded “Other IKS Themes” may be too broad to definitively classify. Therefore, frequencies are shown for illustrative purposes to demonstrate what is foregrounded in the sampled titles. The data do not warrant hypothesis tests, or nationally representative estimates. Likewise, it does not warrant causal inferences.

The IKS public directories document 126 research projects and 124 centers, consistent with the totals in these aggregate records. Not all of the research projects and centers in the IKS directories are necessarily captured at the time of the observation. This may be due to a variety of reasons such as timing of extraction, or existence of multiple URLs per source. The absence of these constraints should not be inferred to reflect

lack of effort on our part to ensure national coverage. The constraints should be retained to prevent incorrect interpretations of administrative classifications as research outcomes.

In order to distinguish programs for descriptive purposes, numbers reported for programs were not used as proxies for (measuring) access, (financial) resources, participation, and/or outcome. Administrative counts can not be used to draw inferences for which there is insufficient evidence. Reclassifying Centers based on age and publicly described activities was not performed. Descriptive outputs were compared to tables and charts. Numbers of programs reported were used to illustrate the presence or absence of programs, and not to measure participation, outcome, access, and resources.

Table 1: Administrative composition of 250 IKS entries

Record type	Completed	In progress	Total
Research projects	68	58	126
IKS centres	13	111	124
Total	81	169	250

Explanation: The material comprises 126 project listings and 124 centre listings. A large difference in administrative status exists, with 68 projects but only 13 centres marked as completed. These labels indicate the position of a project or centre within the program and are not indicative of educational impact of either record type.

5. Descriptive Findings

5.1 Theme distribution and cognitive–ethical–social visibility

Seventeen principal themes illustrate the breadth of the institution. The largest category is Other IKS themes, with 79 entries (31.6%). Cognitive, linguistic and philosophical themes follow, with 50 entries (20.0%). These are followed by cultural, communal and heritage themes, with 42 entries (16.8%). Science, technology and sustainability themes follow, with 31 entries (12.4%). These are followed by education and pedagogy, with 23 entries (9.2%). Next are health and wellbeing themes, with 13 entries (5.2%). Finally, ethics, governance and public life themes follow, with 12 entries (4.8%). These themes total 250. Each entry receives one principal theme. It is interpretively challenging to classify title-level text. Diverse and specific offerings in instruction cannot be fully captured.

Another way to look at the data is to use four title indicators. Using social language, 88 entries (35.2%) were identified. Using cognitive language, 80 entries (32.0%) were identified. Using ethical language, 39 entries (15.6%) were identified. Lastly, using educational language, 30 entries (12.0%) were identified. A single title may allude to more than one indicator. A title may, for example, include cognitive inquiry and refer to a community, and consequently receive both the cognitive and social indicators. An absence of a key word is not evidence that an institution does not include the focus area in its teaching. The indicators provide the ways in which an institution has framed its programs to the public. They do not illustrate the programs' content or what students are expected to accomplish.

There are important distinctions in the planning of education. Cognitive and social challenges are particularly clear within the defined areas of the institution, and pedagogical design and ethical reasoning are not. This may be due to the naming of projects and centers, rather than any substantial omissions. It points, however, to a need for clarity in the descriptions of programs, to show teaching goals and design. The presence of thematic topics does not mean that a particular classroom teaching and learning is taking place, and the same applies to ethical topics. It cannot be presumed that teaching and learning or design to teach and facilitate learning is occurring without evidence (Kumar, 2024; Babbar & Johannsdottir, 2024).

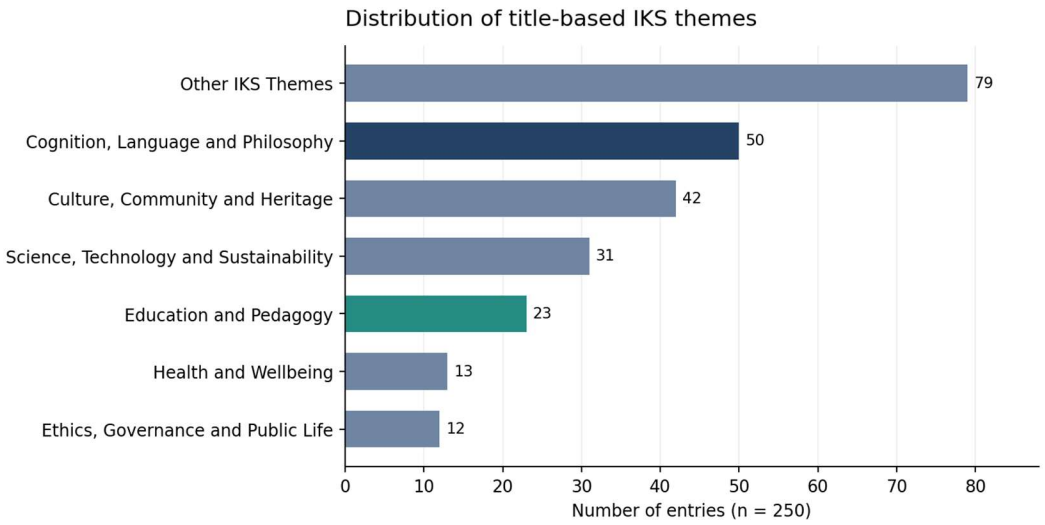
There is, however, some consistency and coherence in the classification and description of themes and indicators. A principal theme is assigned to an entry only once, but mention flags register titles across thematic boundaries. A sustainability theme may encompass community collaboration, while a philosophical theme may include ethical judgment. A theme in the field of education may encompass preparation and assessment of teachers. Lower numbers in education do not always encompass all the challenges in the field. A more thorough description of programs would help identify cross-cutting themes across programs, and address gaps in the instructional levels.

Table 2: Explicit dimensions coded from listing titles

Title indicator	Count	Share of 250
Cognitive	80	32.0%
Ethical	39	15.6%
Social	88	35.2%
Education	30	12.0%

Explanation: Seventy-eight entries (88 if we include reference to social dimensions) include social and cognitive indicators. Eighty entries include ethical and educational indicators. Because a title can receive multiple indicators, the frequencies shown above represent overlapping mentions, not exclusive categories of programmes.

Graph 1: Distribution of title-based IKS themes



Explanation: The largest group comprises 79 entries in other categories of IKS, followed by 50 entries for cognition, language and philosophy, and 23 entries for education and pedagogy. The distribution shows the range of institutional topics, as opposed to the methods that have been shown to work in the teaching of IKS.

5.2 Institutional and geographic patterns

Record type further sub-classifies these patterns. In 126 research projects, the mentions of the cognitive are 44 (34.9%), ethical 29 (23.0%), social 48 (38.1%) and educational 13 (10.3%). In 124 centers, the counts are 36 (29.0%), 10 (8.1%), 40 (32.3%) and 17 (13.7%), respectively. Ethics is thus mentioned more in project titles and education more in center titles. The chart is kept as is, because apparent differences in counts may mislead to conclusions regarding priorities in organisation. The data doesn't indicate the frequency of ethics or pedagogy in the elements it documents.

The same imbalance occurs with recorded geography. Karnataka records 39 (15.6%), Maharashtra 24 (9.6%), Kerala 22 (8.8%), Tamil Nadu 22 (8.8%), Uttar Pradesh 19 (7.6%), and Delhi 17 (6.8%). The six states above account for 143 (57.2%), and the remaining 107 (42.8%) entries are accounted for by other

listed states and territories. The data doesn't show where all indigenous knowledge systems are located; the data neither shows educational levels and standards.

Administrative status shows different contrasts. Of the projects, 68 (54.0%) are completed and 58 (46.0%) in progress. Of the centers, 13 (10.5%) are completed and 111 (89.5%) in progress. A completed status doesn't necessarily signify a legitimate instructional product and an in progress center may be already doing valuable work. Taken together, theme, status and geographic indicators show potential for priority setting for transparency in reporting and possibly collaboration: more definition in description of the curriculum, more extensive regional partnerships and reporting of learning activities. How such collaboration might be designed is suggested by the community-linked pedagogy, but doesn't allow for generalisation to unserved areas (Moll et al., 1992; Paris, 2012).

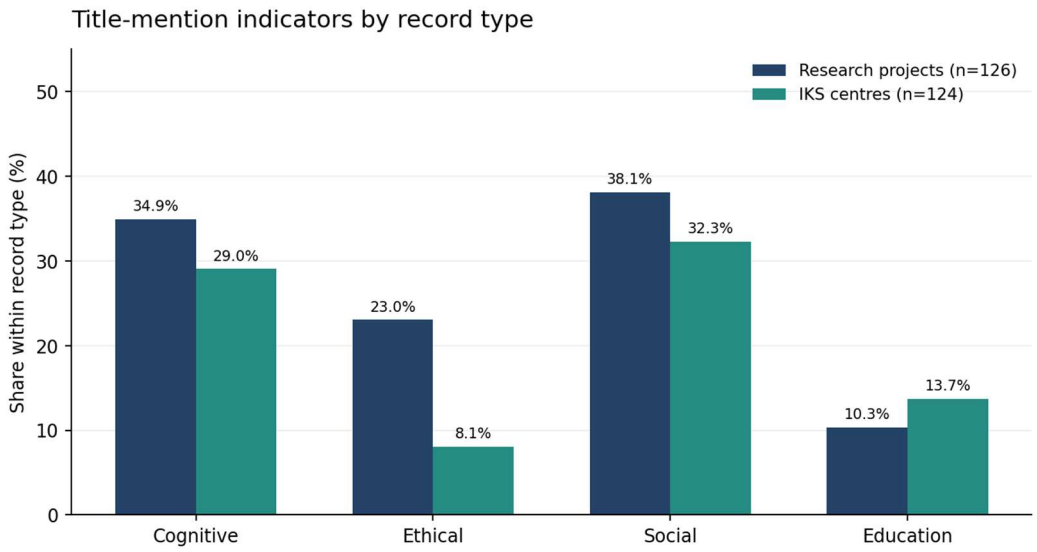
The six leading states comprise institutions differing in purposing, discipline and scale. State grouping reveals where entries cluster and conceals differences among universities, teaching organizations and specialised centres. Heterogeneous locations are also found in the 'remaining-state' category. Therefore, state level statistics are of value for planning transnational collaboration and not for explaining why a state has more programs or for projecting where students might benefit.

Table 3: Leading states by recorded institutional entries

State / grouping	Entries	Share
Karnataka	39	15.6%
Maharashtra	24	9.6%
Kerala	22	8.8%
Tamil Nadu	22	8.8%
Uttar Pradesh	19	7.6%
Delhi	17	6.8%
All other listed states / UTs	107	42.8%

Explanation: Karnataka has the most listings (39) followed by Maharashtra (24) and Kerala and Tamil Nadu (22 each). The six locations together represent 143 listings. The geographical clustering of schools in the list should not be construed as an indication of relative quality of education.

Graph 2: Cognitive, ethical, social and education mentions by record type



Explanation: Projects show more ethical mentions than centres, and centres show more education mentions than projects. The chart shows title coding patterns, and it is not able to show differences in pedagogy and learning outcomes.

6. Discussion and Educational Implications

6.1 Evidence boundaries and routes to implementation

The administrative profile should inform cautious implementation rather than judgments about performance. A significant number of projects have been closed, while a majority of centres have been identified as work in progress. These labels impact when teaching and learning resources, and/or evaluation plans are made available. However, they do not reflect if/when a programme has been implemented in the schools. Similarly, thematic counts show the prominence of certain concerns in the titles of staff. These counts do not reflect the level of analysis or instructional quality of the concerns. Curriculum planners need to evaluate these forms of evidence to allocate the time, resources or the institutional prestige.

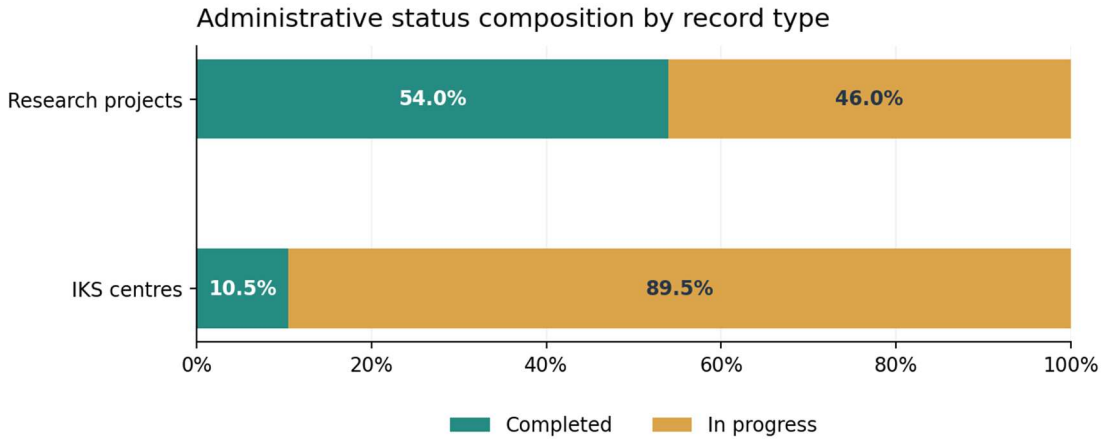
A staged implementation pathway can begin with a community-context audit. This identifies local practices, intellectual traditions and appropriate collaborators in the community. The next step can involve teachers and subject specialists co-designing a unit of instruction with predetermined learning objectives. Activities

incorporated in the unit should help students differentiate claims, and preferably disagree with each other in a respectful manner. Activities should be designed to help students express their opinion using the most appropriate method. Activities should promote constructive communication among the students. Short formative assessments should be implemented to gauge the level of understanding, justify their point of view and express it in an appropriate manner. This approach is inclusive of both, culturally relevant pedagogy and evaluated social-emotional programs. However, it does not make untested IKS intervention claims. (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Durlak et al, 2011).

Further evaluation should collect classroom observations and student work, use common tasks across comparable groups where possible, and share assessment criteria before outcomes are reviewed. Cognitive indicators may concern how students interpret different sources and transfer their reasoning to new situations; ethical indicators may evaluate students' expression of justified positions in dilemmas; social indicators may concern students' inclusive dialogue and how they work and interact with peers. When claims of intervention effects are made, prospective designs, reporting and using transparent assessment tools would be necessary. Review of mindfulness-based education demonstrate the importance of implementing and defining outcomes (Weare, 2019; McCaw, 2020).

Evaluation must distinguish the assessed activities done in the classroom from endorsing the philosophical underpinnings of the activities in an institutional setting.

Graph 3: Reported completion and progress status by record type



Explanation: Completed status is recorded for 54.0% of projects and 10.5% of centers. Generally, the centers are classified as in progress. These classifications are purely administrative. The graphics make no

judgement about the institution's readiness, or effectiveness to be taught in the classroom, or the projected benefits for teaching and learning.

6.2 Social inclusion, ethical safeguards and practical curriculum choices

In multicultural contexts, creative approaches need to be taken to determine whose cultural resources are represented and who can speak for them. IKS should not be shown as a single, timeless intellectual system. A lesson dealing with a local technology, tale or activity should consider the voices of the practitioners, historians, and scientists and students. Prior consultation with knowledge holders ought to address permission, acknowledgement and an opportunity to review representation. Multilingual and interpretive resources can increase participation and alternative tasks can be given to students who don't identify with the presented tradition. (Moll et al., 1992; Kinch et al. 2022).

Image 3: Multilingual and community-responsive classroom learning



Source: UNICEF India, "Language of the Heart: Transforming Education in Chhattisgarh."[Source link]

Explanation: This classroom photograph demonstrates how language-rich learning environments can culturally adapt schooling. The image could be used to illustrate inclusion and communication; as well as community knowledge; however, it does not provide evidence for learning outcomes among the 250 entries in the institution.

Where philosophy and spirituality overlap with religion, ethical safeguards are of special importance. Publicly funded schools are not allowed to require adherence to any belief, ritual, or metaphysical claim. Reflective exercises should serve an educational purpose and be voluntary. Statements about health or natural phenomena should be subject to peer review, regardless of their historic significance. Students are entitled to encounter historical and cultural accomplishments as well as the contested and changing expressions of cultural and intellectual heritage. These safeguards protect pluralism, and lessen the risks of sentimentality, inappropriate spiritual appropriation, and the exclusion of the experiences of minorities (Paris, 2012; McCaw, 2020).

The curriculum should incorporate as broad a range of philosophies and religious traditions as practically possible, and provide students the opportunity to develop the skills to evaluate ethical issues and provide evidence to support a point of view and communicate ideas with sensitivity across differences. These should be undertaken only with proper peer review. Examples of contemplative education and the use of moral and ethical values in the Indian philosophical and religious tradition are presented by Barratt (2025), and Roy and Banerjee (2025), respectively. Neither of these provide direct assessment of the particular educational program, and therefore the main value of the framework is organizational. It provides educators with a structure to generate broad and inclusive teaching and learning activities.

These safeguards are to be found within planned teaching.

7. Conclusion and Future Research

Mapping of 250 IKS institutional entries shows considerable thematic and geographic diversity with unequal representation of four educationally relevant dimensions. Social (88) and cognitive (80) indicators are more prominent than ethical (39) and educational (30) indicators. The entry also shows 126 projects and 124 centers with significantly different administrative status. These are more description of institutional presentation. They do not show pedagogical effectiveness, social inclusion, or an improvement in students' learning.

An integrated response to contemporary education should be of the interdisciplinary nature and assessable. IKS themes can serve as starting points for rational ethical discourse, based on evidence and multilingual community engagement, and help learners interrogate and appreciate values, beliefs and knowledge systems they inherit. The authors provide a framework through which teachers can bring together the above dimensions of knowledge in the same educational unit. The quality of its use, however, remains to be empirically tested (Kumar, 2024; Babbar and Johannsdottir, 2024).

Future studies should review the language of program descriptions and decision coding and teach school and university cases in detail. They should also look at learning outcomes with collected evidence and responsible (supportive) research. They should also consider teacher training and ownership of the community, and define the limits of research. It is important to understand that the historical presence of IKS does not always guarantee improvement in education. This is especially true when we apply a high level of intellectual scrutiny and transparent, evidence-based evaluation to test what IKS may contribute to education (Durlak et al., 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

References

1. Babbar, S. K., & Johannsdottir, L. (2024). India's ancient philosophy on holistic education and its relevance for target 4.7 of the United Nations sustainable development goals. Discover Sustainability, 5, Article 51. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43621-024-00225-2

2. Kumar, M. J. (2024). Forging connections: Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems in higher education. IETE Technical Review, 41(3), 271–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/02564602.2024.2342625

3. Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. American Educational Research Journal, 32(3), 465–491. https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312032003465

4. Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. Educational Researcher, 41(3), 93–97. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X12441244

5. Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & González, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. Theory Into Practice, 31(2), 132–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534

6. Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development, 82(1), 405–432. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

7. Weare, K. (2019). Mindfulness and contemplative approaches in education. Current Opinion in Psychology, 28, 321–326. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2019.06.001

8. Zajonc, A. (2013). Contemplative pedagogy: A quiet revolution in higher education. New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 2013(134), 83–94. https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20057

9. Ergas, O., & Hadar, L. L. (2019). Mindfulness in and as education: A map of a developing academic discourse from 2002 to 2017. Review of Education, 7(3), 757–797. https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3169

10. McCaw, C. T. (2020). Mindfulness "thick" and "thin"—A critical review of the uses of mindfulness in education. Oxford Review of Education, 46(2), 257–278. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2019.1667759

11. Kinch, R. A., Bobilya, A. J., Daniel, B., & Duncan, S. (2022). Indigenous storytelling, Cherokee traditional ecological knowledge, and place-based education. Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership, 14(4). https://doi.org/10.18666/JOREL-2022-11601

12. Barratt, S. S. (2025). Enaction, relevance realisation and wisdom: Establishing a theoretical framework for contemplative education. Frontiers in Education, 10, Article 1613780. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2025.1613780

13. Roy, P. B., & Banerjee, M. (2025). Integrating Indian philosophical thought into contemporary value education: A pedagogical approach. Archives, Value Education in Modern Teaching Practice. https://doi.org/10.25215/9358796995.25