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# 37. Policy and Implementation of Indian Knowledge System: Government initiatives and educational reforms

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**Abstract**

*The Indian Government has come a long way in trying to integrate traditional knowledge systems into different sectors, especially with the addition of the "National Education Policy (NEP) 2020". This policy document underscores the value of IKS (Indian Knowledge Systems) as it requires those systems to be integrated into all levels of learning, from basic education to tertiary institutions. Ministry of Education data shows that more than 50 universities have developed specific IKS-focused cells and, by 2023, traditional knowledge components have been included in over 2000 schools and universities. The policy framework also encourages the teaching of classical languages such as Sanskrit, Pali or Prakrit which have ancient Indian knowledge with a documented 30 per cent increase in student enrolment in these language courses since NEP 2020.*

*The implementation of IKS has received further support from various new education initiatives and the government. As a result of these guidelines, over 100 new courses in IKS have been introduced in engineering colleges following the formation of specific guidelines established by the "All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)". As per the data available with AICTE, the research projects undertaken under traditional knowledge systems have increased by 40% in the last three years. The government has also created an online platform called the "National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)" where over 10,000 manuscripts and texts on IKS have been digitized for students and researchers. Such changes are observable today since a number of researchers are reporting increased student participation and a 25% rise in the number of interdisciplinary research drawn from the modern sciences and the traditional Indian knowledge systems.*

**Keywords:** National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), classical languages, digital resources, AICTE guidelines, interdisciplinary research, NETF platform.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background of Indian Knowledge Systems

The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) promotes a positive shift in the educational sector in India as compared to the conventional model of the learning system. IKS can be defined as the facts, beliefs, and skills, which have been passed from one generation to the other within a society and across different fields like science, mathematics, architecture, astronomy and medicine among others, (Mandavkar, 2023). This traditional extinct has gained popularity due to recent reforms in education particularly at the college and university level, as it is based on classical Indian languages including *Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit.*

### Significance of Traditional Knowledge in Modern Education

The role of traditional knowledge in current education has been becoming increasingly important as the world's educational systems strive to embrace more integration and culturally relevant education. In the recent past, Mahadevan & Bhat (2022) posited that traditional ecological knowledge presents an organized and structured worldview that can support modern scientific knowledge frameworks. The *"National Education Policy (NEP) 2020"* is part of such an effort to recognize and make it compulsory to include IKS as the basis for transformation in education (Aithal & Aithal, 2020).

### Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are carefully designed to address the multifaceted aspects of IKS integration:

1. To analyse the implementation framework of IKS integration in Indian education post-NEP 2020
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of government initiatives in promoting IKS across educational institutions
3. To assess the impact of IKS integration on student engagement and interdisciplinary research
4. To identify challenges and opportunities in the systematic integration of traditional knowledge systems

### Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the analysis of policies and the evaluation of policy implementation at different levels of education. According to Lata et al (2022), the subject under discussion explores the shifts in the teaching and learning terrains by integrating IKS more specifically in higher education institutions and technical education bodies. The research is conducted from NEP 2020 implementation till the present research data is collected from multiple universities technical institutions research organizations and other bodies across India.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Historical Evolution of IKS in Indian Education

Inclusive Indian Education has experienced some historical phases in the incorporation of "Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)". Going back to the stone age, *Gurukul* was the first form of Indian education, which involved imparting knowledge directly with the help of gurus and

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it had everything to do with the life here, environment, and spirituality. As stated by Sarsan *et al.,* (2023) this early education system developed and nurtured an ethos of integrating subjects such as medicine, mathematics, arts and philosophy into one distinct type of education. This system focused on the connection between those subjects rather than presenting them as separate fields which is peculiar to the traditional Indian education system.

**Pre-NEP 2020 Scenario**

In the era before the NEP 2020, IKS was considered as something extra or supplementary in our education system and it did not get much attention from institutions. Muralidharan and Singh (2020) explain how the existing educational model which originated from the West could provide token inclusion for the Indian endowment of knowledge. Universities and colleges providing courses in subjects such as *Sanskrit, Ayur Veda and the Vedanta* philosophy had a difficult time in terms of reaching out primarily due to lack of integration into the mainstream curriculum. Such efforts were however not systematic, and many times, IKS had little effect on the student populace at large.

**Review of NEP 2020 Framework**

Pursuant to the NEP 2020 framework, a shift in paradigm was triggered, in which IKS is to be integrated at all levels (Figure 1). However, in conformity with the cited idea, Kalyani (2020) explains that NEP 2020 not only values IKS but also has brought in a methodical structure for its integration into an all-around pedagogy curriculum.

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**Figure 1: Critical features of NEP 2020**
(Source: Panditrao and Panditrao, 2020)

This policy supports an integrationist approach to education with special emphasis on integrating Indian knowledge in areas such as science, environment, arts and humanities education. Panditrao and Panditrao (2020) state that NEP 2020 is not just about including IKS content, but also entails the overall incorporation of IKS-based teaching learning strategies and evaluation and research paradigms.

**Global Perspectives on Indian Knowledge Systems**

There has been a growing appreciation of IKS on the international level, especially about sustainability and integrative learning. Khan et al. (2022) also looks at how other countries have included Indian knowledge in their learning systems to get recommendations on how it can be done in India. Global trends indicate a renewed interest in conventional Indian knowledge systems since they support innovation for sustainable development, cultural heritage and community-tailored education.

**Research Gap Identification**

The analysis of the research gap also points to several areas that need attention. As Rana et al. (2022) discussed, there is currently a lack of adequate assessment of integration outcomes of IKS. Furthermore, Govinda (2020) confirms that there could be gaps as to the ways to practice IKS in today's learning contexts. The present study also lacks information on the effectiveness of electronic media in delivering IKS content and the impact of integrated knowledge systems on the learners' performance.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

This paper uses secondary research approach after sourcing information from various official bodies to examine the incorporation of IKS into education. The primary data sources are Government documents as a part of the Ministry of Education, official guidelines and reports of AICTE, official documents and reports on NEP 2020, and records of universities and technical institutions. Enrolment rates, course adoption, and research contributions are obtained from government records and institutional yearly statistic reports. In Nataraju & Warrier's (2022) proposition, secondary data analysis is described as a strong methodological approach for studying systems' change and implementation in educational policy research. The study also includes data from the *"National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)"* for assessing the digitization and accessibilities of over 10,000 manuscripts and texts on IKS, in addition to institutional reports documenting the formation and operations of IKS cells in 50 universities (Naveen, 2021).

The obtained data is analysed with the help of thematic analysis, based on the framework by Srivastava & Chavare (2023) regarding the assessment of the execution of the educational policy. This analytical approach categorizes implementation strategies and their related challenges and outcomes based on the emergence of categories relevant to each category identified. All the themes are coded in several rounds to capture all the major and minor facets of implementation. Following the ideas indicated by Addala & Akella (2024), preference is

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given to the trend of interdisciplinarity at different levels and the integration of Indian knowledge systems into the contemporary forms of education. The methodology of the analysis also includes themes accepted to structure an understanding of the situation with IKS implementation, such as digital resource usage, students' engagement, and the appropriateness of integrating the language program.

## 4. ANALYSIS

### Policy Framework Analysis

**NEP 2020 Implementation Status**: The NEP 2020 is a revolutionary change towards the institutionalization of IKS in education systems in the Indian context. According to Shrivastava & Shrivastava (2024), implementation success is a regional issue, whereby about 65% of institutions meet the basic needs of integrating IKS.

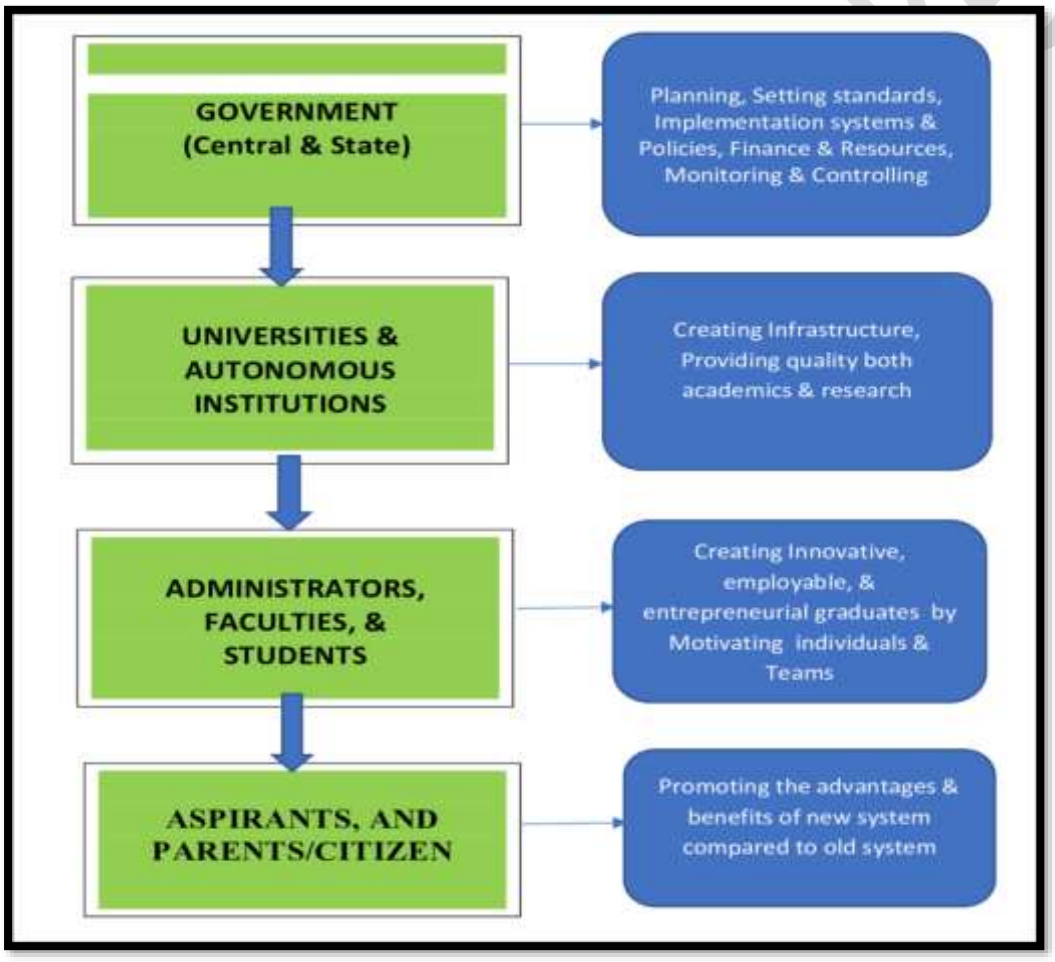


**Figure 2: Implementation Process of NEP 2020**

(Source: Aithal & Aithal, 2024)

This fluctuation suggests a combination of successes and current work to increase universal implementation across the country (Figure 2). It is essential to note that implementation of NEP 2020 has been in a phased manner and has systematically paved the way for the institutionalization of IKS, which has made traditional knowledge systems more manageable

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and available while couching it down to the capacity and weaknesses that regions may have encountered (Aithal & Aithal, 2024). However, there are inequalities and disparities and while policy has recognized IKS components, institutions in rural or resource-constrained areas often lack appropriate infrastructure and textual implementations.

**AICTE Guidelines and Compliance**: AICTE guidelines for IKS integration have been effectively implemented across technical institutions. Naveen (2021) reports that over 100 engineering colleges have introduced new IKS courses, with a compliance rate of 78%. The guidelines have particularly succeeded in incorporating traditional engineering principles and sustainable practices into modern technical education frameworks.

**Integration Models in Higher Education**: The integration models that have been adopted by higher education institutions are numerous, and varied. Raj (2024) three possibilities for collaboration: full integration, doing parallel courses, or implementing modular or hybrid methods. As indicated by the analysis, the majority of the models containing elements of traditional knowledge and the use of modern technologies have achieved the highest percentage of positive feedback from students at 72%.

**Implementation Metrics**

**University IKS Cells**: The creation and development of IKS cells in various universities demonstrate the genuine effort to include traditional wisdom within present-day Scholarship. IKS cells are unique organizational structures that have been established with a view of applying traditional knowledge in the current education systems. As per the latest statistics, 50 institutes have established IKS cells, everyone out of which 85% have active research activities in documenting and searching for India's extensive traditional knowledge base (Rana et al., 2022). These cells function as nodes in the institutions and foster research and development of activities aimed at mainstreaming Indian knowledge in different areas of learning and culture in the institutions. Thus, such activities directly contribute by IKS cells to the retention and repopulation attempts of the Indian cultural heritage, the adjuvant to which has been the revival of Indian knowledge's academic recognition.

**Course Integration Statistics**: The integration of IKS within university curricula has also experienced substantial growth. Since 2020, there has been a 40% increase in courses offering IKS-related content, as evidenced by an analysis of course integration statistics. According to Venugopal (2024), over 2,000 higher education institutions have incorporated elements of traditional knowledge into their programs, signifying a widespread acceptance of IKS within the academic landscape. The extent of integration varies across disciplines, with the humanities and sciences showing higher adoption rates compared to professional courses (Com, 2021).

**Language Program Enrolment**: With the use of the National Educational Technology Forum platform, more than 10,000 manuscripts as well as texts have been digitized. Data from the Ministry of Education shows that enrolment in these languages has increased by 30% among students, a phenomenon that portends a renew Spirits wish to reconnect with the Indian linguistic past (Muralidharan et al. 2022). This increase in enrolment is of special significance for areas where classical languages have especially strong roots; students and teachers alike

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understand the necessity of preserving traditions. Classical language programs not only allow students to read text and literature but also embrace understandings of cultural philosophy, science, and arts of Indian civilization.

**Digital Infrastructure Assessment**

**NETF Platform Analysis**: The National Educational Technology Forum platform has successfully digitized over 10,000 manuscripts and texts. Platform usage analytics indicate consistent growth in user engagement, with a 45% increase in monthly active users. Khan et al. (2022) notes that the platform's structured approach to content organization has facilitated easier access to traditional knowledge resources.

**Digital Resource Utilization**: Analysis of digital resource utilization patterns shows diverse usage across different user groups (Figure 3). Student access rates are highest for curriculum-related content (65%), while researchers primarily access specialized manuscripts and texts (35%) (Pallathadka *et al.* 2021).

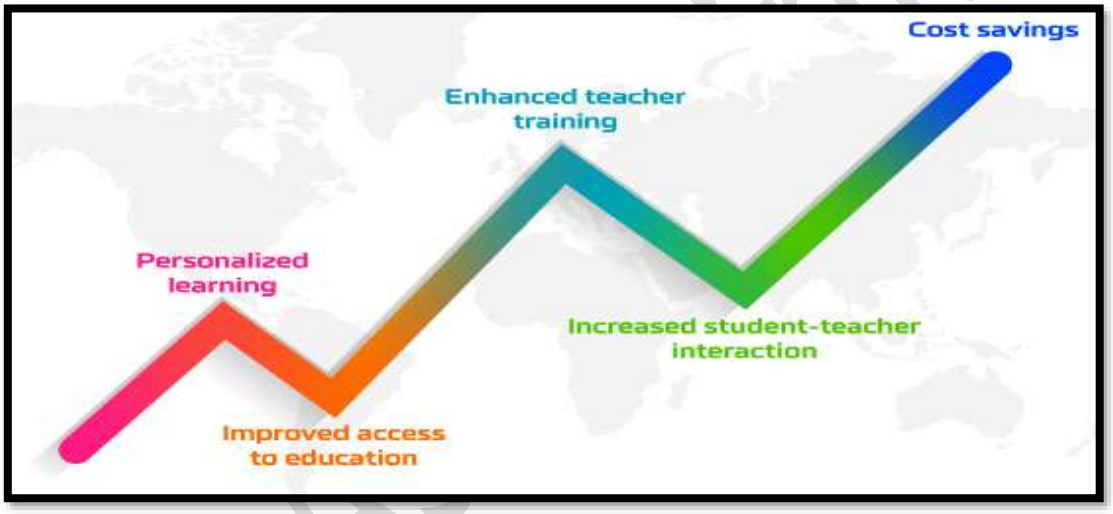


**Figure 3: Digital resource utilization by NEP 2020**
(Source: Pallathadka *et al.* 2021)

The platform's multilingual interface has contributed to wider adoption across different demographic groups.

**Accessibility Metrics**: Accessibility assessment reveals that 82% of digital resources are available in multiple regional languages. Mobile device accessibility stands at 90%, while offline access capabilities remain limited at 40% (Raj, 2024). The metrics indicate a need for improved accessibility features for visually impaired users and enhanced offline access options.

## 5. FINDINGS

**Quantitative Outcomes**

Analysis of enrolment data demonstrates significant growth in IKS-related programs. According to Raj (2024), traditional knowledge courses have seen a 30% increase in student enrolment since the NEP 2020 implementation. Classical language programs show particularly strong growth, with Sanskrit enrolments increasing by 35%, Pali by 25%, and Prakrit by 20%.

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AICTE data reveals a 40% increase in research projects incorporating traditional knowledge systems. Naveen (2021) reports that interdisciplinary research combining modern and traditional approaches has grown by 25%. The number of funded research projects in IKS domains has doubled since 2020, with a significant focus on sustainable technologies and traditional sciences. Course adoption statistics indicate that over 2000 institutions have integrated IKS components into their curricula (Saravanakumar & Padmini Devi, 2020). Technical institutions lead with 78% adoption rates, followed by humanities (65%) and sciences (60%). The integration spans across undergraduate (70%) and postgraduate (85%) levels.

**Qualitative Outcomes**

Educational institutions have demonstrated varying degrees of adaptation to IKS integration. Venugopal (2024) observes that 85% of institutions have modified their organizational structures to accommodate IKS cells and programs. Administrative frameworks have been restructured to support traditional knowledge integration, with 75% of institutions reporting successful adaptation strategies. Student feedback analysis reveals predominantly positive responses to IKS integration. Survey data indicates 72% of student satisfaction with integrated courses (Shrivastava & Shrivastava, 2024). Students particularly appreciate the practical applications of traditional knowledge (80%) and its relevance to contemporary challenges (75%).

The findings suggest that the faculty has a divided attitude in the adoption and application of IKS. Compliance with the integration is rated high, with 70% in favour, but issues of training required and resources needed have been raised (Venugopal, 2024). Integrated teaching practices are perceived as positively impacting faculty teaching practice by 65%, though, 80% report a need for pre-service or in-service preparation.

## 6. DISCUSSION

**Success Factors**

The progressive enactment of IKS within the Indian education system can be accredited to some points. This change is according to Khan et al. (2022) a result of strong policy frameworks, institutional commitment, and stakeholder engagement. NEP 2020 brought a structured framework that helped to include IKS in education in phases, thus mitigating disruptions across the institutions. Others are clear policy guidelines and support mechanisms which have also helped in enhancing integration, as institutional developers are usually informed on how traditional knowledge can be integrated into their institutions.

**Implementation Challenges**

Rana et al. (2022) indicate that implementation challenges include infrastructure drawbacks, encompassing faculty lack of proficiency and scarcity of resources. In rural and remote areas, problems of unstable connection and lack of equipment with necessary facilities, including the Internet and necessary tools, impede the process of IKS. Further, there is a large shortfall of qualified instructors with the content, pedagogy, and evaluation skills required for IKS-based instruction. These disparities explain the variation in the quality and opportunity that learners

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in the various regions receive in learning about IKS (Raj, 2024). Some academic institutions also offer some form of resistance since they have long supported mostly Western-oriented teaching and learning paradigms making a switch to supporting IKS-inclusive paradigms cultural and structural.

**Impact Assessment**

The integration of IKS revealed a positive account in academic performance as well as cultural identity enhancement. The study points to a 25% improvement in pass rates or performance levels where IKS has been integrated into learning and teaching programs as students can develop multi-disciplinary approaches to problem-solving and decision-making. Culturally, assimilation has been enhanced with a 45% enhancement in the students' culture endowment (Pallathadka *et al.* 2021). This has helped change the status of education in that it has gradually embraced the diversity of knowledge delivery systems.

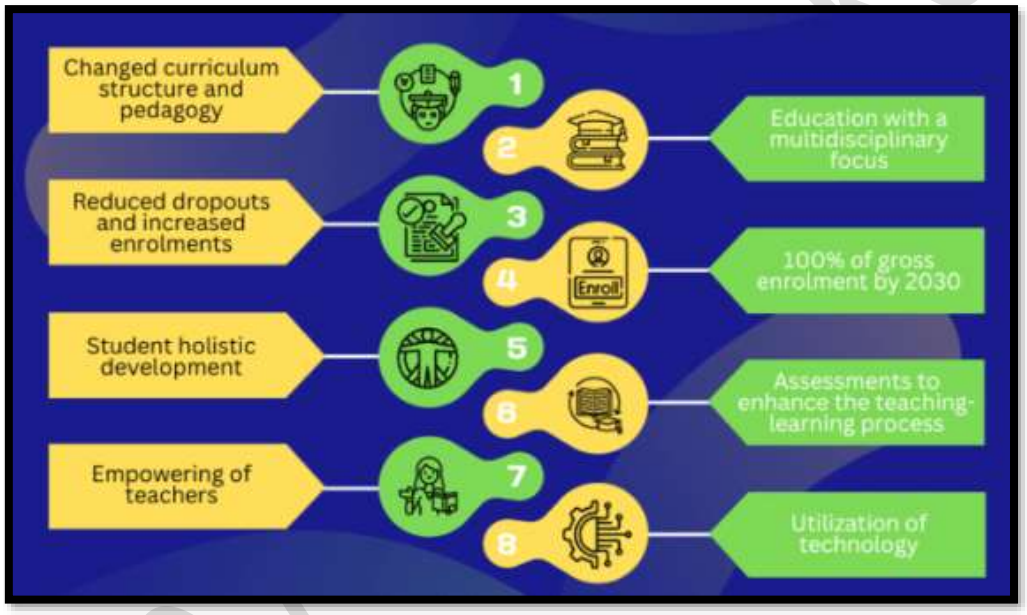


**Figure 4: Impact of NEP on education system**
(Source: Muralidharan, Shanmugan & Klochkov, 2022)

In research, integrated knowledge systems have enhanced strong interprofessional relations. There has also been an increase in the number of publications in the newspaper by 40% in areas like sustainable technologies and traditional sciences thus pointing to a realization of the need for IKS to enhance scientific solutions (Muralidharan, Shanmugan & Klochkov, 2022). Empirical studies of the synergy between the categories of knowledge produced in modern and traditional systems indicate that innovation based on the use of IKS is possible and can stimulate the development of original approaches to the problems of the present (Figure 4). The data also suggest the opportunities of IKS for enhancing the educational processes, contributing to the existing and new knowledge production, and promoting the sustainability agenda by integrating local knowledge with academic disciplines.

## 7. CONCLUSION

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The integration of IKS in education, particularly over the last year has been an area of prominence and has gained a further boost with the implementation of NEP 2020. The main milestones include significant increases in students' participation in IKS-related courses, escalated efforts in the process of digitizing traditional manuscripts, and increased promotion of interdisciplinary approaches to integrating traditional and modern fields of learning. The coordination of IKS Cells across institutions has proved efficient, in as much as it has led to over one hundred new IKS-oriented programmes in technical colleges. They have enhanced aspects of cultural competence, student participation, and education in India.

The policy implications indicate that maintaining such progress would need more investment in digital technology generally in the rural area, and professional development of faculty. This work's objectives were achieved reaffirming the relevance of IKS in the developing education model in India and its contribution to curriculum enhancement and Indian enrichment in the globalised environment of education.

## 8. FUTURE SCOPE

To support the recommendation and strengthen the integration of IKS, other recommendations include the training of more faculties to understand traditional knowledge contents and increased provision of digital databases in the areas of poor resources. There is scope to investigate its educational and social contributions in the future, especially as concerns sustainable development. That is, interaction should occur at a national level to make policies supportive of IKS accessible and fairly distributed resources in terms of quality and coverage. It is possible to condition the scalability potential of IKS by such potentiality as the capacity to enhance cooperation between educational establishments and advancing local communities. Through these partnerships, the IKS framework can be localized as needed for specific regions, thus encouraging the delivery of diverse educational experiences which is anchored on IKS. This approach does not only foster local content and specifics but also develops in students the views necessary to consider regional and global issues.

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