

## Indian Knowledge System and National Education Policy (Nep) 2020

Dr. Ranjit Kumar Das

Assistant Professor, Department of Education Fakiragram College, Fakiragram Kokrajhar BTR, Assam, INDIA.

Corresponding Author: [ranjitkrdas907@gmail.com](mailto:ranjitkrdas907@gmail.com)



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### ABSTRACT

Knowledge is the supreme value. Indian knowledge tradition is a perennial flow of the Ganga. Ganga is a symbol of purity and liberation as it descended from heaven to give moksha to the people of yogabhumi, Bharata. Indian Knowledge System aspired to know everything that the mind can comprehend from tiny atoms to the universe. India has a glorious tradition of spirituality propagated by a long line of rishis. The teachings of the sages have an eternal relevance and unleashed the creativity of the Indian culture over a wide spectrum—literature, medicine, music, dancing art, painting, sculpture, mythology, ethics, astronomy, mathematics, grammar, metaphysics, epistemology, ontology, yoga, philosophy, psychology and economics. This explosion of creativity has enriched Indian culture and uplifted the human soul. Vedas are the oldest and richest source of Indian Knowledge Systems based on spiritual knowledge. The Supreme Creator creates the cosmos, the creative potency descends among the created beings to assist the Supreme Creator in the manifestation of the material worlds. Universities are temples of knowledge where ideas, innovations, and skills are nurtured. The National Education Policy 2020 is the synthesis of knowledge and education and from the teaching of humanity and values, India is Vishwaguru.

**Keywords-** Knowledge, Veda, philosophy, Humanity, Education.

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Indian Knowledge System is a rich and ancient treasure trove of wisdom that encompasses diverse fields such as Philosophy, Science, art, and literature. It is rooted in the Veda, Upanishads and other ancient scriptures, providing profound insights into the nature of reality, human existence and the universe. This knowledge system has deeply influenced various aspects of Indian culture and continues to inspire people globally with its timeless teachings and holistic approach to life. The Indian civilization being one of the oldest in the world has contributed immensely to the indigenous knowledge base which is slowly being recognized the world over. India is the birthplace of various religions.

Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, were born in India and followed by 25% of the world's population. 62 new religions emerged during 600 BC. This knowledge system has played a significant role in the advancement of various fields be it, Science, Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine, Philosophy,

Education, Cosmology, Architecture, Metallurgy, Visual Arts and Performing art and Agriculture. India is the most ancient nation with a continuity of great culture. The greatness of our culture, due to which India was known as "Vishwaguru" lies in Vedic philosophical values. Vedas played a great role in developing the spiritual wealth of India. The contribution of sages in building this unique nation through Indian Knowledge Systems is well known. The vedas are origin of the vast and rich Indian Knowledge Systems. Indian Knowledge Systems are rich sources of evolving knowledge, comprising six main Darshans (philosophies) fourteen Vidyas (sources of knowledge) and 64 kalas (specialised art and skill). Six sets of Darshanas offer various points of view as open knowledge systems for mature proposition and sophisticated logic for understanding and experiencing. 14 Vidyas includes 4 vedas, 4 upavedas and 6 vedangas. Kala means performing art in Sanskrit. Kala means specialised skills. In ancient India, these skills were considered to be important for the holistic development of a cultured individual. The

diversity of Kalas is astonishing. Several Vidyas and Kalas remain very precious in the current context as diverse dimensions of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which is the era of information knowledge. India is well-equipped with a critical outlook to discover its contemporary relevance in the global milieu from its own intellectual and cultural traditions. Knowledge is a deep seated treasure and education helps in its manifestations as the perfection which is already within an individual, with greater depth, greater critical thinking, greater attention of life aspiration and greater flexibility (such as seva, ahimsa, satya, niskkam karma, shanti sacrifice, tolerance, diversity, pluralism, righteous conduct, gender sensitivity, respect for elders, respect for all people and inherent capabilities regardless of background, respect for environment, courtesy, patience, forgiveness, empathy, patriotism, democratic outlook, integrity, responsibility, justice, liberty, equality and fraternity) will be developed in all students. Indian knowledge tradition is a perennial flow of the Ganga. Indian Knowledge System comprising Jnan, Vijnan and Jeevan Darshan have evolved out of experience, observation, experimentation and rigorous analysis. Philosophy of values is the philosophy of life too. Indian Knowledge Systems are essentially the philosophies of values. So they naturally suggest a way of life. National Education Policy 2020 suggests to make Education "Learner Centred", so the consciousness of learner must be first of all enlivened. Expressing the importance of Consciousness HH Maharishi Mahesh Yogiji always stated that "Consciousness is prime mover of life", Knowledge is structured in Consciousness. In the prevailing system of education all the emphasis is on different ways of providing the objective information without doing much to develop and evolve the consciousness of the learner and sharpening the receptors of knowledge, the intellect and senses with greater mind body coordination. The vision of the policy is to instill among the learners a deep rooted pride in being Indian, not only in thought, but also in spirit, intellect, and deeds, as well as to develop knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that support responsible commitment to human rights, sustainable development and living and global well-being, thereby reflecting a truly global citizen." Rapid economic developments after 1991, the year when India opened economically, have triggered a high demand for knowledge and specialised skills. The National Education Policy -2020, released on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 is an ambitious document. With an eye on the future, it speaks to all aspects of education during our times. Higher education is to produce knowledge resources through which all education takes place, resources used by society to chart out its progress over time.

**1.1 Objectives of the Study:-** The study is conducted with the following objectives-

1. To study the ancient Indian knowledge system.

2. To study various sources like Veda, Upanishad, Gita etc.
3. To study the measures to inculcate Indian Knowledge System in Higher Education.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A study of related literature involves locating, analysing, and evaluating reports of research as well as casual observation and opinions that are related to the study. The related literature forms the foundation upon which all work can be built. One can not develop an insight into the problem to be investigated into unless and until one has learnt what others have done in a particular area of his own interest. The review of related literature helps the author to define the limit of his field. Review according to Webster's Dictionary (1987) is to examine again, study critically, general survey, critique.

In the words of Walter, R. Borg (1965) "The literature in any field forms the foundation upon which all work will be built".

Various study was conducted by the Saints and they have given their view regarding the knowledge.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak in *Arctic Home in the Vedas*, (Poona, Tilak Bros, 1925) said, For all practical purposes the vedic religion can be shown to be beginningless even on strict scientific grounds.

Swami Vivekananda's message is remembered here as 'Be a man' As he said, his religion was man making. According to him, all religion teaches us the same thing, so in essence, there are one. Different religions are merely different ways of teaching the same reality.

Saint Jnaneshwar and Saint Tukaram have accepted the final authoritativeness and divine origin of Vedas. Jnaneshwar called Vedas the Mother Vedas and Saint Tukaram called-that only men like him know the the true importance of the Vedas, others merely carry the burden on their heads. Therefore Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan said, The Marathi Saints, Tukaram and Jneneshwar are great devotees of Vedantic philosophy. They say, Vedic and Vedantic philosophy is for those who are lost in ignorance and desire.

## III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

For any study proper methodology is very important. It gives the author to plan as per his own way of study and helps the author to complete the writings of his subject. Methodology is called as the blue print of any study. The present study employed descriptive method. It is designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena. Descriptive study involves description, analysis and interpretation of existing condition. Secondary Data has been collected from various book, journal, and references.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

##### *Bharatiya Jnan Parampara- (Indian Knowledge System)*

The ancient Indian education was prevailing in Gurukul. In those days, the wards were sent to Gurukuls or the homes of "Acharayas" for education, just after the Upanayan ritual. Then they were called Shishyas and follow the ideals of Guru. There they led the life of chastity and purity, served the Acharaya and gained knowledge. The Gurukuls were fully free from government control and influence. The shishyas had to study the Vedas, Upanishad, the Epic-Ramayan and Mahabharata, The shishyas had to perform some duty with the study. They (students) had to serve the Guru and keep the Gurukul in clean condition. The Guru took the classes in morning and evening under the tree and taught many sloka of Veda and thus developed their spirituality. Ancient Indian University campuses such as Takshashila or Nalanda were essentially multidisciplinary hubs with several spokes for specialised studies. The depth, diversity and rigor of education in ancient Indian universities were exemplary. The blended pedagogy was based on inquisitiveness, inquiry dialogue, discourses, debates, critical thinking, rationality, and evidence based approach.

Charaka introduced systematic perspectives for understanding biological change, cause and effect relationships and evidence based approach to medicine. Sushruta is the pioneer of surgical tradition all over the world. Kautilya was an Indian Teacher, Philosopher, Economist, Jurist and Royal Advisor whose Arthashastra is considered a classic in political economy. Panini wrote Astadhayee which even today recognised to carry the most ambiguous rules of grammar for machine translation. Aryabhata's most significant and well known contribution is the concept of zero. These are merely but glimpses indicating the intellectual legacy of Indian civilization.

The Vedas are the oldest and the richest source of Indian Knowledge Systems based on spiritual knowledge. The Vedas are four in number. They are; Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sam Veda and Atharva Veda.

Vedas were not written by anybody-that they are ageless and authorless. When we say Rig is Veda, or Yajur is a Veda, we donot mean Rig is a book or yajur is a book. Actually a Veda contains so much material that each of them can fill a library. There is no power other than the power of Vedas that can take us close to the heart of God and connect us to him in ways that we cannot even imagine. The love of the Divine, Beauty, Truth and Goodness is inherent in all human soul, and the desire to attain it too. The sage's life is the spiritual embodiment that inspires them in their endeavours. Bishop Thomas Dabre delivered a lecture on "Education for Peace" January 2005—Sant Tukaram says, Holy people live for the welfare of the world. They spend themselves laboriously with an intense sense of charity.

Compassion for the beings is their wealth. They do not care for themselves. They rejoice with those who rejoice. Devotees of God see God in the world. For them discrimination is unholy. Let there be no contempt for any living being. This is the secret of worship of God. We are all members of one body.

Upanishads are the seeds of Indian philosophy. Therefore Indian philosophers have written commentaries on various Upanishads. Some philosophers consider Upanishads as Vedant. Upanishad means that knowledge which dispels ignorance and takes the persons desirous of emancipation near God. Upanishad is that knowledge which destroys ignorance of man and frees him from worldly bondage and leads him to the ultimate stage of heavenly bliss. According to Shankaracharya the knowledge of God is the subject of Upanishads. By this knowledge (Brahmagyan) any person can achieve salvation by knowing about birth and death. The knowledge of Brahma is the knowledge of emancipation. It has also been called as Secret Knowledge. That, it is for this reason Upanishads have been called Vedant.

**The Concept of God:-** According to Upanishads the Brahma is the supreme truth, knowledge and eternity. There is no existence other than Brahma. According to Kathopnishad one who sees Brahma in the entire creation is a true seer (Gyani). Brahma is the creator of the universe. Brahma is the supreme light. The sun, moon and planets are not illuminated by themselves but by the Brahma alone.

**Concept of Soul:-** In Upanishads soul has been considered as immortal. It is fearless. It does not decay. Soul is different from life and the destructible world. It is also different from mind, intellect and ego. It is beyond this world, all-pervading, eternal and free from all bondages. It must be remembered that it is the soul that enables the tongue, mind, eyes and ears to perform their respective functions. The soul is completely peaceful, eternal and free. The soul pervades from nail to the top of the head. All the sense organs follow the dictates of soul.

Gita is a form of vedic culture and literature. It is an epitome of all our religious work. It can be said that Gita incorporate all the scriptures. It is a unique treasure of limitness ideas and feelings. Shankaracharya advocates Bhaktiyoga of the Gita. For Lokmanya Tilak the Gita is mainly Karmayoga.

Sankhya philosophy has been propounded by the sage Kapil. Perhaps it is one of the oldest philosophies of India as its references are found in Shruti, Smriti, Ramayana, Mahabharata and other ancient literary creations. In our ancient literature Kapil has been honoured as incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Scholars have interpreted Sankhya in two ways- first as number and the second as knowledge. Some scholars say that Sankhya is concerned with the number of 25 elements. The other meaning of Sankhya is divine knowledge. According to Sankhya philosophy the human body is composed of sense organs and physical

organs. The inner self of man is a harmonious organisation of mind (Manas), ego (Ahankar) or self – consciousness and intellect.

Yoga philosophy was propounded by Maharshi Patanjali. Some people call it Patanjali philosophy also. It is a very scientific philosophy. All the philosophies recognises its importance. This philosophy believes that a sound mind(soul) resides in a sound body only. Purity of mind makes the mental attitude pious. The aim of Yoga is to control one's desires and aspirations. The state of Yoga can be achieved only by controlling one's desires and lust. Yoga meditation is necessary to get a glimpse of God.

Buddhism is one of the philosophy which believes in the great four truth-

1. This world is full of miseries.
2. There is some cause for human miseries.
3. It is possible to get rid of worldly miseries.
4. And there are ways to be free of these miseries.

Buddhist philosophy always believed in Nirvan or attainment of salvation. Gautam Buddha realized the uselessness of severe penance. He considered it harmful as a material and motivational force and aspiration. So he has suggested a middle course which is known as Astangik i.e eight fold course of action.

Education should be a means to make the student self-reliant. The aim of education should be to dedicate one's life for the good of others. Good education should lead us to emancipation or salvation.

#### ***Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (World Family):***

This verse beautifully and nicely expresses the concept of One World One Family (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam). This idea of universal fellowship can be realized only based on the spiritual unity of all existence. Sages and mystics have always set this ideal before the people. To the Vedas, the most ancient literature of the world goes the credit of visualizing the concept of one world society on the firm foundation of philosophy of spirituality, Veda says, Adinah syama saradah satam. (May we live for a hundred years with our heads held high). The noble ideal of family concord, later on, became a great ideal for the whole of humanity in the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. The whole world must become a global family. This ideal of world unity and concord which is nicely placed before us by the Atharva veda.

#### ***National Education Policy -2020:***

A Roadmap to make a good human being. The National Education Policy has provided a broader framework covering physical and non-physical domains through academic and non-academic spheres. With eternal knowledge as its guiding light in its principles NEP-2020 has rightly stated the purpose of education is to make good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion empathy courage and resilience scientific temper and creative imagination with sound ethical moorings and values.

#### **Holistic Knowledge:-**

One of the hallmarks of Indian Knowledge like Vedanta is its epistemology. In Bhagavat Gita (13.3) complete knowledge of both- external field or body as well as the knower of body called self (inner being). According ly education founded on traditional knowledge system recognises two kinds of knowledge, para or knowledge pertaining to higher dimensions of life and apara or knowledge restricted to physical domains as complimentary to one another. Both the categories of knowledge useful and together the knowledge becomes inclusive. Apara vidya identified with material sciences covers all knowledge from phenomenal world that are empirically studied and verified, while para vidya identified with spiritual sciences covers knowledge about self and higher dimensions of life which necessarily impact empirical studies that lie within the purview of material science.

Hence it is natural to apply apara vidya in the understanding of higher or deeper dimension of life. Traditionally the Gurukul environment facilitated nurture of both external skills as well as internal self – values corresponding to two broad domains to help evolve the student towards perfection.

## **V. MEASURES TO INCULCATE INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Higher educational institutes are regarded as the knowledge production centre and the students are to get these knowledge from various field. The following are the measures for production of knowledge-

1. ***Designing the Higher Education System on the Concept of Swadeshi-*** The Govt. of India has taken the National Education Policy 2020 and will try to change the system of education and make it as global level. It is important to keep an open mind to welcome new ideas and our quest to add new knowledge must continue. To get this position the best way could be to discard all that is western system and design Swadeshi Higher Education System.
2. ***The Gurukula system-*** The most famous aspect of Indian education is the Guru-Shishya parampara. In this the transmission of knowledge had taken place one to one interruptedly. The Guru is considered the embodiment of knowledge and the duty of the disciples is to draw from the treasure as much as they can. Teachers must tap their potential and channel their energy for nation building and in promotion of civil society. They need to be facilitators and mentors as ancient Guru.
3. ***Issue of Quantity versus Quality-*** There is a big discrepancy regarding the number of universities and colleges in India. There are no fixed caps or standards. National Knowledge Commission (NKC) opined that India needs about 1500 universities (GoI



2006). There is no common policy as how many universities India can contain. NEP-2020 is in favour of downsizing the number in respect of colleges. As a matter of fact there are about 40000 colleges now under the affiliation of various universities in country. This shall come down to about one-fourth. There must be clear cut policy on the number of HEIs.

## **VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

From the above discussion, it is clear that Indian Knowledge System is rich from the ancient times and various eminent persons like, Panini, Koutilya, Banbhatta contributed to their own field. World's first University at Takshila spread the knowledge for upliftment. Legacy of knowledge of arts, science impact by the Indus Vally Civilization. The Aryan society was very well organised and practiced the four Veda. The ancient Indian scriptures, particularly Vedas and Upanishads contain profound philosophical insights, hymns and spiritual knowledge. Ancient India was home to numerous libraries housing a vast collection of scriptures and text. These repositories of knowledge played a crucial role in the preservation and dissemination of Indian System through out history. All the philosophy believes in spiritual development. The aim of education is to awaken spiritual consciousness in the student and show him the the realization God or Brahma. The teacher should be the friend and spiritual

father of his student. In the curriculum, according to National Education Policy-2020 there should be provision of spiritual subjects for the development of humanity. Indian culture and tradition to be survive forever and with this India will be Viswaguru. Some Value Added Course (VAC) is introduced by the universities, like Yoga education practical and theory. And near future the universities will continue more other course also. We believe that God is the creator of the entire universe. God is the creator, protector and destroyer. He has no purpose or desire. These processes are automatic.

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