



Promoting Value Education through Indian Knowledge Systems at the Middle School Stage in the context of National Education Policy 2020

¹Saraswati Maharana and ²Dr. Rasmirekha Sethy

¹Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Education, Regional Institute of Education, BBSR (NCERT), Odisha, India

²Lt. Professor, Department of Education, Regional Institute of Education, BBSR (NCERT), Odisha, India

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Corresponding Author: Saraswati Maharana

Abstract

The growing concern over value erosion among school learners has renewed attention toward culturally rooted approaches to education. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), with their emphasis on ethics, harmony, and holistic development, offer a rich foundation for value education. The present study explores the role of IKS in promoting value education at the middle school stage (Grades VI-VIII) in the context of NEP 2020. Using a qualitative-cum-analytical approach, the study examines traditional sources such as epics, folklore, indigenous practices, and philosophical teachings to identify their relevance for contemporary classrooms. The paper proposes an IKS-based pedagogical framework and highlights strategies for integrating values like empathy, respect, cooperation, and environmental responsibility into school education. The findings suggest that systematic integration of IKS can significantly enhance value-oriented learning and contribute to the holistic development of students.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge Systems, Value Education, Middle School, NEP 2020, Holistic Development, Pedagogy

1. Introduction

Education is not merely the transmission of knowledge but also the cultivation of values essential for individual and societal well-being. In recent times, there has been a visible decline in moral and ethical standards among students, necessitating a renewed focus on value education. The National Education Policy 2020 strongly emphasizes holistic and value-based education rooted in Indian culture and traditions. Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) encompass a wide range of disciplines, including philosophy, literature, science, arts, and community practices. These systems inherently promote values such as truth, non-violence, and respect for diversity, environmental consciousness, and social responsibility. The middle school stage is a crucial period for value formation, making it an ideal stage for integrating IKS into the curriculum.

2. Objectives of the study

- To examine the relevance of Indian Knowledge Systems in promoting value education.
- To identify key values embedded in IKS suitable for

middle school learners.

- To propose pedagogical strategies for integrating IKS into the middle school curriculum.
- To develop a suggestive framework for value-based education using IKS.

3. Research Questions

- How can Indian Knowledge Systems contribute to value education at the middle school stage?
- What values can be effectively transmitted through IKS?
- What pedagogical approaches are suitable for integrating IKS in classrooms?

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative and analytical research design based on:

- Review of policy documents (especially NEP 2020).
- Analysis of classical Indian texts, folklore, and indigenous practices.
- Thematic interpretation of values embedded in IKS.

5. Conceptual Framework

5.1 Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)

IKS refers to the indigenous knowledge traditions developed in India over centuries. It includes:

- Epics (Ramayana, Mahabharata).
- Folk traditions and oral narratives.
- Yoga and ethical philosophies.
- Community-based knowledge systems.

5.2 Value Education

Value education refers to the process of developing moral, ethical, social, and spiritual values in individuals.

Some of the Core Values in Indian Context are:-

- Respect (Guru-Shishya tradition).
- Truth (Satya).
- Non-violence (Ahimsa).
- Compassion (Karuna).
- Duty (Dharma).

These values are deeply embedded in Indian philosophical traditions such as the Vedas, Upanishads, and epics

- Value education aims at developing moral, social, and ethical values such as:
- Respect and tolerance.
- Honesty and responsibility.
- Cooperation and empathy.
- Environmental awareness.

6. Role of IKS in promoting value education

6.1 Learning through Stories and Epics

Indian epics and folklore provide powerful narratives that convey moral lessons. Stories encourage reflection and help students internalize values.

6.2 Experiential Learning through Indigenous Practices

Activities such as yoga, meditation, and traditional games foster discipline, cooperation, and emotional balance.

6.3 Community Engagement

Local traditions and community knowledge promote respect for cultural diversity and social responsibility.

6.4 Environmental Ethics

IKS emphasizes harmony with nature, encouraging sustainable practices and environmental awareness.

7. Pedagogical strategies for integration

1. Storytelling Method

- a) Use of Panchatantra, Jataka tales.
- b) Teaching moral lessons through narratives.

2. Experiential Learning

- a) Yoga and meditation practices.
- b) Community service activities.

3. Activity-Based Learning

- a) Role plays from epics.
- b) Group discussions on ethical dilemmas.

4. Art-Integrated Learning

- a) Folk arts and crafts.

- b) Music and dance reflecting cultural values

5. Reflective Practices

- a) Journaling.
- b) Value-based discussions.

8. Proposed IKS-Based Framework

- a) **Input:** IKS content (stories, traditions, and practices).
- b) **Process:** Interactive pedagogy (discussion, activities, reflection).
- c) **Output:** Development of values (empathy, respect, responsibility)
- d) **Outcome:** Holistic development of learners.

9. Classroom Strategies

- a) Integrating moral themes in subjects.
- b) Celebrating cultural festivals.
- c) Project-based learning on Indian heritage.
- d) Peer collaboration and group ethics tasks.

10. Role of Teachers

- a) Demonstrate ethical behavior.
- b) Use culturally relevant pedagogy.
- c) Encourage critical thinking on values.
- d) Create inclusive classroom environments.

11. Recommendations

In context to Curriculum Level

- a) Inclusion of structured IKS modules.
- b) Integration across subjects.

In context to Teacher Education

- a) Training programs on IKS pedagogy.
- b) Workshops and refresher courses.

In context to Policy Level

- a) Development of resource materials.
- b) Institutional support for implementation.

In context to Assessment

- a) Use of formative and qualitative evaluation.
- b) Portfolio and reflective assessment.

12. Educational Implications

- Curriculum designers should incorporate IKS-based content.
- Teachers should be trained in IKS pedagogy.
- Schools should promote experiential and value-based learning.
- Assessment should include value-based outcome.

13. Discussion

The integration of IKS into middle school education aligns with the vision of NEP 2020, which advocates culturally relevant and value-based education. By incorporating indigenous knowledge and practices, education becomes more meaningful and contextually relevant. However, challenges such as lack of teacher training, limited resources, and curriculum rigidity need to be addressed.

14. Educational Implications

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- c) Schools should promote experiential and value-based learning.
- d) Assessment should include value-based outcomes.

15. Conclusion

Indian Knowledge Systems offer a holistic and culturally grounded approach to value education. Integrating IKS at the middle school stage can play a significant role in shaping responsible and ethical individuals. In line with the National Education Policy 2020, such integration is essential for achieving the broader goals of education in India. At the middle school stage, such integration can significantly contribute to the holistic development of learners. By embedding cultural wisdom and ethical values into education, schools can nurture responsible citizens rooted in Indian traditions while being globally competent.

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