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Relevance of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara (Indian Knowledge System) in Modern Education of India

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Abstract

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara (BGP), commonly known as the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), constitutes India's rich and continuous intellectual heritage that has evolved through centuries of philosophical inquiry, scientific investigation, educational practices, and socio-cultural experiences. The Indian Knowledge System encompasses diverse domains, including philosophy, education, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, ethics, literature, arts, and spirituality. Contemporary education in India is confronted with numerous challenges such as declining moral values, increasing mental stress among learners, environmental concerns, fragmentation of knowledge, and cultural alienation. In this context, the principles of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara have acquired renewed significance. The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 has also emphasized the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into educational curricula and pedagogical practices. The present paper examines the relevance of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara in modern education in India and explores its implications for educational reforms. The study adopts a descriptive and analytical approach based on secondary sources of data. The findings reveal that Bhartiya Gyan Parampara offers a holistic and value-oriented framework that can significantly contribute to educational transformation and holistic human development.

Keywords: Bhartiya Gyan Parampara, Indian Knowledge System, Modern Education.

Introduction

Education is an essential instrument for the development of individuals and societies. It facilitates the transmission of knowledge, values, skills, and cultural heritage across generations. Every civilization develops distinctive educational philosophies and knowledge traditions that shape its intellectual and cultural identity. India possesses one of the oldest and



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most comprehensive knowledge traditions in the world, popularly referred to as Bhartiya Gyan Parampara or the Indian Knowledge System (IKS).

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara is deeply rooted in the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, epics, classical philosophical systems, scientific treatises, and indigenous educational practices. It presents a holistic vision of education that integrates physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual dimensions of human development. Unlike purely utilitarian perspectives of education that focus primarily on information acquisition and employability, the Indian Knowledge System advocates the development of wisdom, character, self-realization, and social responsibility. The twenty-first century has witnessed remarkable progress in science and technology. However, contemporary education also faces serious challenges, including increasing psychological stress, ethical decline, environmental degradation, and fragmented learning experiences. These challenges have generated renewed interest in indigenous knowledge traditions that can provide alternative perspectives for educational transformation. Consequently, Bhartiya Gyan Parampara has emerged as an important framework for reimagining modern education in India.

Contemporary literature on integrating Indian Knowledge Systems with modern pedagogy has emphasized the significance of the Guru-Shishya tradition, experiential learning, reflective inquiry, and holistic development. Studies have demonstrated that educational principles such as Shravana (listening), Manana (reflection), and Nididhyasana (internalization) align closely with constructivist and learner-centred pedagogies. Researchers have also identified Yoga, mindfulness, ecological ethics, and multidisciplinary learning as significant contributions of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara to modern education.

Review of Related Literature

Radhakrishnan (1923), in his seminal work *Indian Philosophy*, argued that the primary aim of Indian education was self-realization and the pursuit of truth. According to him, knowledge was not merely the acquisition of information but a transformative process leading to wisdom and ethical living. He emphasized that Indian educational thought considered character formation and spiritual development as essential components of education.



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Altekar (1944), in *Education in Ancient India*, examined the nature and objectives of ancient Indian education and observed that the educational system aimed at the all-round development of personality. He highlighted the significance of discipline, moral values, self-control, and the close relationship between teachers and learners in the Gurukul system. Altekar concluded that ancient Indian education was holistic, value-oriented, and learner-centred.

Dasgupta (1963), in *A History of Indian Philosophy*, demonstrated the intellectual richness of Indian philosophical traditions and emphasized their contributions to logic, epistemology, ethics, and scientific inquiry. He observed that Indian philosophical systems promoted analytical thinking, rational inquiry, and reflective learning, thereby contributing significantly to intellectual development.

Mukherjee (1966), in his work *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist*, highlighted the educational practices of ancient India and emphasized that learning was experiential and practical in nature. He noted that educational institutions promoted social responsibility, self-discipline, and the cultivation of ethical values. The study further pointed out that education was regarded as an instrument for both individual and social transformation.

UNESCO (2015), in its report *Rethinking Education: Towards a Global Common Good?*, advocated holistic and humanistic approaches to education that promote sustainable development, ethical values, and global citizenship. The principles identified in the report resonate strongly with the fundamental tenets of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara, particularly its emphasis on holistic development, ethical responsibility, and harmonious coexistence with nature.

The Government of India, through the National Education Policy (2020), recognized the importance of India's rich knowledge traditions and recommended the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into educational curricula and pedagogical practices. The policy advocates multidisciplinary education, experiential learning, ethical reasoning, promotion of Indian languages, and value-based education, all of which are deeply embedded within Bhartiya Gyan Parampara.



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Joshi (2025) examined the implementation of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara under the framework of the National Education Policy (2020). The study highlighted that curriculum reforms, teacher education, promotion of Indian languages, and interdisciplinary research are essential strategies for revitalizing Indian Knowledge Systems in educational institutions. The author further argued that integrating indigenous knowledge traditions can strengthen cultural identity, promote holistic development, and improve educational outcomes.

Singh (2026) observed that Bhartiya Gyan Parampara represents one of the world's oldest and most comprehensive intellectual traditions encompassing philosophy, science, medicine, arts, ethics, and spirituality. The study emphasized the role of Indian languages in preserving and transmitting indigenous knowledge and advocated the integration of traditional knowledge systems with modern educational practices.

The literature collectively indicates that Bhartiya Gyan Parampara is not merely a historical repository of knowledge but a dynamic and relevant educational framework capable of addressing contemporary challenges such as value erosion, mental health concerns, environmental degradation, and fragmented learning experiences. The studies reviewed consistently suggest that the integration of Indian Knowledge Systems into modern education can promote holistic development, ethical consciousness, cultural rootedness, sustainable living, and responsible citizenship.

Objectives of the Study

The study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To understand the concept and philosophical foundations of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara.
2. To examine the relevance of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara in modern education in India.
3. To analyze the contribution of the Indian Knowledge System toward holistic and value-based education.
4. To explore the educational implications of integrating Bhartiya Gyan Parampara into contemporary educational practices.



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Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive and analytical in nature and is based entirely on secondary sources of data. Relevant books, journal articles, policy documents, reports, and classical Indian texts were reviewed and analyzed. The collected information was subjected to thematic analysis to identify major themes relating to the educational relevance and contemporary significance of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara.

Relevance of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara in Modern Education of India

1. *Holistic Development of Personality*

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara emphasizes the holistic development of personality by advocating the harmonious growth of the body, mind, intellect, emotions, morality, and spirit. The Indian educational tradition regards education as a process of self-realization and character formation rather than merely the acquisition of information. The Upanishadic dictum *Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye* (education is that which liberates) highlights the transformative purpose of education, while the Taittiriya Upanishad advocates the integrated development of the physical, mental, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of life through the concept of the five sheaths (Panchakosha). The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes self-discipline, emotional balance, ethical conduct, and selfless action as essential qualities of a developed personality. Similarly, the Gurukul system promoted experiential learning, self-control, social responsibility, and close teacher-student relationships to facilitate the all-round development of learners. The principle of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* found in the Maha Upanishad further underscores the development of compassion, social harmony, and universal brotherhood. Thus, Bhartiya Gyan Parampara conceives education as a holistic process that nurtures balanced, ethical, self-aware, and socially responsible individuals.

2. *Value-Based Education*

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara places value-based education at the centre of the teaching-learning process and regards education as a means of character formation, self-discipline, and ethical living rather than merely the acquisition of information. The Indian Knowledge Tradition seeks to cultivate values such as truth (Satya), righteousness (Dharma), non-



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violence (Ahimsa), compassion (Karuna), self-control, respect, and social responsibility. The Upanishadic dictum *Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye* (knowledge is that which liberates) signifies that true education should lead to moral and spiritual elevation. The Taittiriya Upanishad explicitly instructs students to practice ethical values through the injunctions *Satyam Vada* (Speak the truth) and *Dharmam Chara* (Practice righteousness). Similarly, the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes self-discipline, equanimity, selfless action (Nishkama Karma), and devotion to duty as essential virtues of an educated person. The principle of *Ahimsa Paramo Dharma* (non-violence is the highest duty) found in Indian philosophical traditions further promotes peace, tolerance, and respect for all forms of life. The Gurukul system reinforced these values through close teacher-student relationships, disciplined living, community service, and learning by example. Moreover, the ideal of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the world is one family), mentioned in the Maha Upanishad, encourages universal brotherhood, empathy, and social harmony. Thus, Bhartiya Gyan Parampara views education as a process of nurturing ethical consciousness and developing individuals who are truthful, compassionate, responsible, and committed to the welfare of society.

3. Experiential and Learner-Centred Education

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara strongly emphasizes experiential and learner-centred education by considering knowledge as a process of inquiry, reflection, and realization rather than mere acquisition of information. The Upanishadic pedagogy of *Shravana* (listening), *Manana* (reflection), and *Nididhyasana* (internalization) promotes active learner participation and experiential understanding. The dialogues in the Chandogya Upanishad and Brihadaranyaka Upanishad demonstrate the importance of questioning, reasoning, and self-discovery in learning. Similarly, the Gurukul system encouraged learning through direct experience, observation, practical activities, and close teacher-student interaction. The Bhagavad Gita also emphasizes reflective inquiry and learning through disciplined action and experience. Thus, Bhartiya Gyan Parampara advocates a learner-centred approach that fosters critical thinking, active engagement, and the practical application of knowledge.

4. Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being



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Educational institutions are increasingly confronted with concerns regarding stress, anxiety, and emotional disorders among learners. Yoga, meditation, and mindfulness practices embedded within Bhartiya Gyan Parampara offer practical strategies for promoting concentration, emotional resilience, and psychological well-being.

5. Environmental Sustainability

Environmental degradation and climate change have emerged as major global concerns. The Indian worldview emphasizes coexistence and harmony with nature and advocates ecological responsibility and sustainable living. These principles can significantly strengthen environmental education.

6. Multidisciplinary and Integrated Learning

The Indian Knowledge System perceives knowledge as interconnected rather than compartmentalized. Ancient Indian scholars integrated philosophy, science, mathematics, medicine, and ethics within unified frameworks of inquiry. This perspective aligns with contemporary efforts toward multidisciplinary and integrated education.

7. Cultural Identity and National Development

Globalization has generated concerns regarding cultural alienation and the erosion of indigenous traditions. The study of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara enables learners to appreciate India's intellectual heritage and develop cultural rootedness and national consciousness.

8. Inclusive and Humanistic Education

The principle of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam emphasizes universal brotherhood, inclusivity, mutual respect, and social harmony. These ideals are highly relevant for developing democratic values and promoting peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.

Alignment with National Education Policy (2020)

The objectives of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara closely correspond with the vision of the National Education Policy (2020). The National Education Policy (2020) strongly



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emphasizes Bhartiya Gyan Parampara (Indian Knowledge System) by advocating the integration of India's rich intellectual, cultural, and knowledge traditions into all levels of education. The policy recognizes that education should not only impart academic knowledge and skills but also promote holistic development, ethical values, critical thinking, and cultural rootedness. NEP 2020 recommends the incorporation of Indian Knowledge Systems, including philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, Ayurveda, Yoga, arts, literature, and traditional ecological knowledge, into curricula and pedagogy. It further emphasizes value-based education, experiential and multidisciplinary learning, promotion of Indian languages, preservation of cultural heritage, and the development of scientific temper grounded in India's knowledge traditions. By encouraging research, innovation, and interdisciplinary studies related to Indian Knowledge Systems, the policy seeks to develop learners who are competent, ethically responsible, culturally aware, and globally engaged citizens.

Findings of the Study

The analysis of literature yielded the following findings:

1. Bhartiya Gyan Parampara advocates holistic and integrated human development.
2. The Indian Knowledge System emphasizes ethical values and character formation as central aims of education.
3. Experiential and reflective learning constitute important pedagogical principles of the Indian educational tradition.
4. Yoga and meditation contribute significantly to students' mental health and emotional well-being.
5. The Indian worldview promotes ecological consciousness and sustainable development.
6. The multidisciplinary orientation of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara is highly relevant to contemporary educational reforms.
7. The integration of Indian Knowledge Systems can strengthen cultural identity, responsible citizenship, and social harmony.
8. The principles of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara are closely aligned with the objectives of the National Education Policy (2020).



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Educational Implications

The findings of the study have several implications for educational policy and practice. Indian Knowledge Systems should be integrated into curricula at school and higher education levels. Teacher education programmes should incorporate courses on Indian educational philosophy and indigenous pedagogical practices. Educational institutions should promote value-based and experiential learning approaches. Yoga and meditation programmes should be integrated into educational practices to enhance student well-being. Environmental education should be strengthened through indigenous perspectives on sustainability. Research and documentation of Indian Knowledge Systems should be encouraged. Universities should establish interdisciplinary centres for research and dissemination of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara.

Conclusion

Bhartiya Gyan Parampara represents a rich and dynamic repository of intellectual, ethical, scientific, and cultural wisdom that remains highly relevant in contemporary India. Its emphasis on holistic development, value orientation, experiential learning, mental well-being, environmental sustainability, and multidisciplinary education offers meaningful solutions to many challenges confronting modern education. The integration of the Indian Knowledge System into educational policies, curricula, and pedagogical practices can contribute significantly to the development of competent, compassionate, culturally rooted, and socially responsible citizens. Therefore, the incorporation of Bhartiya Gyan Parampara into modern education is not merely a revival of the past but a constructive step toward building an inclusive, sustainable, and humanistic educational system in India.

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