

# Practicing Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Systems into Pre- Primary Education

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**Abstract:** *This study explores the Practicing Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Systems the context of pre-primary education. In a culturally diverse country like India, traditional knowledge -passed through generations- holds immense educational value. The research focuses on how pre-primary teachers incorporate local stories, folk songs, traditional games, and cultural practices into everyday learning activities. A qualitative and quantitative data were collected through semi structure interview of three pre-primary teachers and observation of learning resources of school. The findings highlighted that there is a growing awareness among teachers about the importance of cultural roots, structured implementation remains limited due to a lack of formal training and resources. The study recommended that policy level support, teacher trading and curriculum alignment are required to strengthen the integration of indigenous knowledge in early education, ensuring children grow with culture identity and foundational life skills.*

**Key Words:** *National Education Policy 2020, Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Systems, pre-primary education.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indigenous traditional knowledge represents the centuries old wisdom values, customs and practices rooted in local culture. early childhood is a foundational stage for cognitive, emotional, and cultural development. In India, the integration of Indigenous Traditional Knowledge in to pre-primary education offers a valuable opportunity to connect young learners with their roots. This knowledge, passed down through generations, includes local customs, folk stories, traditional games, art forms, music and sustainable practices - each holding deep culture and educational significance.

The National Education Policy 2020 and National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational stage 2023 emphasize the importance of culturally responsive education. It encourages the inclusion of local traditions and languages to promote holistic learning and identity formation. Through engaging activities such as storytelling, folk songs, nature-based games, and art. At pre-primary education can foster creativity, moral values language skills, and environmental awareness.

### 1.1 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In an increasingly globalized world, a noticeable cultural gap is emerging between early childhood education and the learners' heritage. We need to give our children some taste of understanding, following which they would be able to learn and create their own versions of knowledge as they go out to meet the world of bits, images and transactions of life. Such a taste would make the present of our children wholesome, creative and enjoyable; they would not be traumatized by the excessive burden of information that is required merely for a short time before the hurdle race, we call examination (cited in Bhatia & Chaudhari,2023). And there is also need to go back to our own roots. This study proposes to address this issue by integrating Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Systems (ITKS) into the pre-primary curriculum. ITKS—which includes ancestral wisdom like local narratives, songs, customs, ecological knowledge, and moral frameworks—offers a centuries-old, community-driven perspective rooted in nature and real-life experiences.

Introducing this culturally rich material early not only promotes holistic development but also solidifies a child's identity and sense of belonging, making their education more relevant, contextual, and engaging.

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) plays a vital role in pre-primary education because it supports holistic child development and aligns with the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. When elements such as Yoga, stories from traditional texts like the Panchatantra, indigenous art forms, nature-based activities, and value education are woven into the curriculum, learning becomes more meaningful, engaging, and connected to the child's immediate world. This integration strengthens cognitive abilities—such as concentration and critical thinking—through practices like prāṇāyāma and nyāya, while also nurturing cultural confidence, identity, and a sense of belonging. Additionally, IKS encourages core values such as empathy, environmental care, and ethical behavior, helping shape well-rounded, socially responsible learners in line with the NEP 2020's goals for an inclusive, culturally rooted, and developmentally appropriate foundational stage. Therefore, its right time to focus on Practicing Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Systems into Pre- Primary Education.

### **1.2 PANCHAKOSHA VIKAS (Five-fold Development) - A keystone in Indian tradition**

The child is a whole being with panchako-shas or five sheaths. The layers are annamaya kosha (physical layer), pranamaya kosha (life force energy layer), Manomaya kosha (mind layer), vijnana-maya kosha (intellectual layer) and Anandamaya kosha (inner self). Each layer exhibits certain distinct characteristics. The holistic development of a child takes into account the nurturing and nourishment of these five layers (Cited in [https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/NCF\\_for\\_Foundational\\_Stage\\_20\\_October\\_2022.pdf#page=11.26](https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/NCF_for_Foundational_Stage_20_October_2022.pdf#page=11.26))

This research paper aims to explore how Indian Traditional Knowledge (ITK) is being incorporated into pre-primary classroom. It also highlights how traditional knowledge can contribute to early skill development while preserving cultural heritage.

### **1.3 IMPARTING INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES AT PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Pre- Primary schools make use of Indian traditional knowledge through different teaching and learning activities such as:

#### **a. Storytelling**

Teachers share folktales, myths, and legends to teach morals, history, and language.

#### **b. Use of Local Language**

Teaching in mother tongue helps learners grasp concepts faster and communicate confidently.

#### **c. Indigenous Games and Songs**

Traditional games, dances, songs, and riddles are incorporated into physical education and language lessons.

#### **d. Environmental and Agricultural Knowledge**

Learners are taught: Respect for nature and conservation

#### **e. Local Crafts and Skills**

Using traditional tools, , pottery, or beadwork introduces learners to creativity and cultural heritage.

#### **f. Community Involvement**

Elders, healers, artisans, and parents are invited to share indigenous knowledge with learners.

#### **g. Cultural Events and Heritage Days**

Schools celebrate cultural days where learners display traditional foods, dances, music, and attire.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION**

- What are current practices being used by the pre-primary teachers to integrate IKS into pre-primary school education?

**2. METHODOLOGY:** A qualitative research design using a case study approach.

Statement of the Problem: **Practicing Indigenous Traditional Knowledge Systems into Pre- Primary Education**

### **2.1 OBJECTIVE FOR THE STUDY**

□ To investigate current practices used to integrate IKS into pre-primary school education.

### **2.2 EXPLANATION OF THE TERM**

- **Practicing Indigenous Traditional Knowledge:** Teachers share folktales and legends to teach morals, language, and use of Traditional games, dances, songs for teaching.

### **2.3 DELIMITATION FOR THE STUDY**

- The present study was limited to Shri Vallabhi Vidhyapith school, Morbi.
- The present study was limited to the year 2024-25 only.

**2.4 SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY:** Purposive sampling technique was used. Pre- Primary school teachers, students constituted as a sample for the present study. So, the final sample were 03 teachers and 62 students.

**2.5 TOOLS FOR THE STUDY:** Semi-structured interview schedule, observation schedule were used.

### **2.6 DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE:**

- Data were personally collected by the investigators.
- Data were analysed using percentage (quantitative data) and content analysis (qualitative) technique.

### **2.7. FINDINGS :**

- There are three classroom and one toy room in the school for preschool students.
- Majority of the Teachers have had minimal awareness about importance of indigenous traditional knowledge as suggested in NEP 2020 and NCF SE 2023.
- All the teachers use Gujarati language, but sometimes use local dialects like Kathiyavadi to make it relatable to the teaching content.
- All the teachers used traditional activities like local games, stories and folk tales informally, but not as part of a structured curriculum. Stories namely, Panchatantra stories, local animal stories like The Hare and the Tortoise, The Lion and the Mouse, The Crow and The Water pot, The Fox and the Grapes were told by the teachers.
- All the teachers said that traditional games namely, "Langdi", "kho kho", and "Sankli", matching games, Ball passing games, musical chair are arranged for the students.
- All the students were engaged for painting, Shape from clay, colour matching, action song, paper cutting, with reference to traditional handicraft activities and creativity.
- Regarding folk songs sung most of the teachers said that they taught garba to the students.
- All the teachers responded that they use paper for teaching traditional kites, and natural colours for painting, Shape from clay, colour matching, action song, paper cutting, with reference to traditional handicraft activities and creativity.
- All the teachers said that to develop sense of Indian tradition among the students, Uttarayan, Janmashtami, Holi, Diwali celebration with making rangoli traditional festivals are celebrated in school.

- Regarding traditional medicines and environment, most of the teachers responded that they show plants namely, neem, tulsi to the students and make them familiar about its uses age accordingly.
- Regarding developing sense of cleanliness, All the teachers said that they taught Hand washing, brushing teeth, use the dustbin to their students.
- To develop moral values among the students, all the teachers said that stories regarding fruits of hard work, True friend, Hare and Tortoise are being told.
- All the teachers involved in teaching learning process at pre-primary did not receive specific training on systematic implementation of Indian traditional knowledge in teaching.
- There was dearth of proper teaching learning materials for indigenous knowledge-based activities.
- Pictures related to Bhartiya sign, symbol are used to teach alphabets and posted on the wall of the classroom.

### 3. CONCLUSION

This analysis highlights that indigenous traditional knowledge (ITK) is actively present in early education through local games, songs, stories, crafts, and festivals. The study suggests that policy support, teacher training, and curricular integration are essential to systematically embed ITK into the foundational stage as recommended by NCF 2023 and NEP 2020. Facilities in schools are good and helpful for teaching, but teachers still need proper training.

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