



THE NEO-ACHARYA: REIMAGINING THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN IMBIBING INDIAN ETHOS WITH REFERENCE TO NEP 2020 AND IKS

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ABSTRACT

When it is about Bharat, its civilization has profoundly carried its deepest values across millennia, not as ruins in gallery to watch but as existing flames. National Education Policy 2020 of India is not merely a piece of paper or policy update. It is a breakthrough as many educationists classified it as 'cognitive decolonization' for Indian brains and civilization at large. Bringing back Bharatiya ethos & values, and its long tradition of knowledge quest in the form of Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in the center of the learning process, the policy works as a challenge to colonial era and colonized curriculum once used to silence the native indigenous wisdom. However, the paper focuses on the challenge where the teachers have to be more efficient, profound and skilled in their content knowledge, pedagogical practices rather just a fact facilitator in the classroom. This paper sees teachers as an Acharya; a person who teaches by being example through their own conduct and life, and explains to explore the way ancient frameworks such as Panch Kosha for holistic development, three stages of learning attained through Shrivana, Manana, Nididhyasan to solve present day classroom matters where students' stress and a question of decay in moral grounding arises. NEP 2020 intends to reimagine teachers' identity from transactional instructor to transformational Acharya. Whereas the statutory body of teachers training institution had set a large aim of providing training to 1.5 million teachers by 2025, the actual work lies in overcoming deep-rooted academic conflict and rebranding this 'old' looking ideas into feel more relevant to tech-driven world.

KEYWORDS: National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Teacher as Acharya, Ethos and Values, Panch Kosha.

INTRODUCTION

The formulation of NEP 2020 aims to depart the colonial paradigm, seeking phenomenal change in current educational practices with an intent to bring back Indian traditions of knowledge quest. The formulation of NEP 2020 aims to fetch centuries old indigenous Indian epistemologies which was erased in favor of western standards of academic legitimacy under Macaulay's idea of implementation of British education in India to create a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, opinion, in morals and in intellect' (Meghwal, 2025).

For ages, educational framework in India suffered from what scholars' name it epistemicide, wherein the systematic destruction of indigenous knowledge traditions has been done. However, to resurgent the lost glory of Indian tradition of knowledge quest and indigenous wisdom, teacher needs to act as transformation Acharya and shall not limit thyself just to transect the instructions in the form of content sharing (Singh & Bajpai, 2025).

Since longer period of time, including both pre-independence and post-independence, the classroom structure in India was looked more existent where it follows the western influenced standards of education whereas indigenous Gurukul structure of education being practiced disgraced and raised question on its credibility

and relevance in the era of modernization and digitalization (Gawande, A., Wadegaonkar, A., & Singh, G. 2025).

This idea of glorifying western education structure led to weird kind of cultural amnesia and ungratefulness towards the legacy of Nation amongst students (Singh & Bajpai, 2025). NEP 2020 comes up with a strong proposal which seems radical but is very homely, it proposes a resurgence in present-day educational practices with indigenous methods of teaching. NEP 2020 expects teachers to be recognized as change makers, placing them as dynamic torchbearers who utmost personifies our ethos and values before transmitting it to students, and not just submissive operators who are following the commands blindly without using their intellect (Choudhary, 2024).

ROLE OF TEACHER AS NEO-ACHARYA MATTERS UTMOST

Since ages, teacher holds utmost position in the Indian society. Teacher has been observed as the pulsation of evolution. The role of teaching has crossed a long journey from Guru to Acharya to Teacher to Facilitator to recently known as mentor. It is basic requirement of being teacher that, thyself believe in the Indian ethos and values, demonstrate in their daily practices and holds a strong command and understanding over their beliefs, else being



just commuter of these beliefs becomes mute spectators, just like a chapter of the textbook.

As NEP 2020 aims to revive the present-day education system with indigenous knowledge traditions, we have to think about the role of teacher in this entire organization called education system. To imbibe ethos and values in true sense, it is our duty to redefine the role of teacher; who is not simply a facilitator who share the information or a mentor but an Acharya who aims to teach students about the legacy of this nation in the form of ethos and values by weaving it in their curriculum. Since Ancient times, when Gurukul education structure was in practice ethos were imbibed through Gurus', Acharyas', where they not only used to pass on the knowledge to Shishyas/students but also used to taught them how to generate new knowledge and application of learned knowledge in day-to-day lives (Kumari, 2026).

Back than during Gurukul era, *Guru-Shishya Parampara* and *Guru-Shishya* relationship was everything. With each Shishya, Guru's relationship was personalized, bond used to reflect utmost parental care and love in every phase of darkness. This reflects that a teachers' supreme pedagogical tool isn't PowerPoint Presentation or the factual information they share in the classroom but dignity of thyself, compassion for teaching and unwavering focus on the holistic growth of the students. Present-day teaching seems more transactional where achievements and success being measure through marks and grade achieved by students. However, IKS pushes us towards 'guide on the side' model where the focus remains on student and their needs. Here, a teacher serves as a navigator, and not just serves everything on the plate (Nathwani, D. B. 2026).

PANCH KOSHA – FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL

It is depicted in *Taittiriya Upanishad* that, an individual isn't just a brain, but are made up of five *koshas*. These *koshas* ranges from gross to subtle. To develop holistically an individual requires all five *koshas* namely *Annamaya* (physical) *kosha*, *Pranayama* (energy) *kosha*, *Manomaya* (mental) *kosha*, *Vijnanamaya* (wisdom) *kosha*, and *Anandamaya* (Bliss) *kosha*.

Annamaya (Physical) where building strong body requires daily practice of Yoga and healthy food habits.

Pranayama (Energy) where understanding breathing pattern and its impact on body, mind and intellect is basic for an individual to manage stress.

Manomaya (Mental) is important to build empathy through understanding Katha (stories) and various forms of art.

Vijnanamaya (Wisdom) where learning happens to achieve wisdom, moving beyond rote learning and merely memorizing the information.

Anandamaya (Bliss) is a state where without considering outer validation focus remains on inner joy and finding purpose of life.

Therefore, when a teacher decides to use this model for teaching, it doesn't remain just a transaction between teacher and students but it becomes a process of attaining utmost goal of being human. When students are assured by their teachers that they are being observed, taken care off and nurtured with balanced approach for *anandamaya* life (Rajalakshmi, 2017).

THE JOURNEY OF LEARNING: SHRAVAN, MANAN, NIDIDHYASAN

To stop students from simply memorizing, rote learning and omitting facts in exam, there is an ancient method which offers a cognitive response to exam oriented problem.

Shravan (Listening) where skill of focused listening being taught to students for better understanding and utmost intake of knowledge.

Manan (Reflection) is the method where students being tested for their understanding on the gained knowledge. Here students' skill of critical thinking is being examined by the learned teachers.

Nididhyasan (Internalization) the last step is attainment of knowledge, internalization of knowledge. Here students are being examined for 'being them', 'knowing thyself, and 'knowing the *Prakriti* (nature) (Nathwani, D. B. 2026).

THE HURDLES, THE ROADBLOCKS AND WAY FORWARD

Post NEP 2020 implementation, University Grant Commission (UGC) has made it compulsory that 5% of total credits must come from Indian Knowledge System. The Malaviya Mission for Teacher Training Centre (MMTTC) runs rigorous training programs for faculty to train them in and for IKS. The Ministry of Education has digitized 1.5 lakh texts for teachers to provide a solid base for IKS trainings and work ahead (Patel, 2025).

Present-day education system is way complicated and influenced by western idea of education. There are institutions and teachers who sees IKS in compartments and not able to incorporates IKS into mainstream subjects of present-day curriculum (Pandey, 2025). In larger academia, there are institutions who finds IKS unscientific and non-relevant in present-day education structure. It lacks highly trained educators, and to overcome the shortage of skilled and trained educators, the system requires to bring change in more than just one-off a kind workshop (Devi, 2024). The system requires Sanskrit and all vernacular language friendly AI tool for better incorporation of IKS into mainstream subjects.

CONCLUSION

Role of teacher in imbibing Indian ethos is not about moving backward; it demand phenomenal change in attitude towards IKS and understanding its futuristic possibilities. It is about moving ahead with a sense of belongingness and sense responsibility towards who we are and what legacy we have received from generation to generation since ages. By turning into *Acharya* who



nurtures the *Panch Kosha*, a teacher turned *Acharya* focuses on preparing students for 21st century's complexities.

For better implementation of NEP 2020, the goal is to produced global citizen with indigenous soul, who carries the ethos of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (One world, one family), *Satya* (Truth), *Ahimsa* (Non-violence), *Nishkam Karma* (Selfless action) and *Dharma* (Righteous duty) at core. During this civilizational shift, the teacher is the catalyst who assures that education liberates thyself in true sense.

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