

16. Impact of Indian Knowledge Systems on Sustainable Development Goals

Sangita Pramanick

Assistant Professor,
Madhyam Gram B.Ed. College,
Madhya Gram, Kolkata.

Jayanta Mete

Professor, Department of Education,
Faculty of Education, University of Kalyani,
Kalyani, West Bengal, India

Abstract:

India is rich in ancient traditions. Since ancient times, the arrival of many foreign geniuses in India, the wealth of knowledge has emerged in their writings. From ancient literature to scriptures, the contribution of many intellectuals and great personalities has enriched the Indian knowledge base. Therefore, the wealth of knowledge rich in ancient traditions strengthens our current developing infrastructure. With the help of that knowledge base, the current sustainable development goals have also been achieved. The purpose of this research is to discuss how ancient knowledge is leading the current developing (sustainable development) country to progress. In addition, the current sustainable development goals 1 (no poverty) and 3 (Good health and well-Being) the extent to which knowledge systems have helped various schemes and their implementation and current status are discussed. This research is mainly done depending on secondary data, i.e. - various websites, journals, books etc. This study has shown that no matter how many years India has progressed, it is dependent on that ancient knowledge and only archaic knowledge has made it possible to reach the aspirational goal of sustainable development.

Keywords:

Indian knowledge system, sustainable development goals, no poverty, good health, well-being.

16.1 Introduction:

Indian knowledge is grandiose in the empire which is really difficult to describe in its entirety. Knowledge helps people to succeed in the society world. As a developing country, India has played a vital role in sustainable development, which has been made possible by the influence of ancient Indian knowledge. Sustainable development has its roots in the 1970s and 1980s, but the modern concept gained momentum in the 1990s. 1972: United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm) - first international meeting on environmental issues. 1987: Brundtland Commission report "Our Common Future" -

introduced the concept of sustainable development. 1992: Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro) - established sustainable development as a global priority. 2000: Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - 8 goals to address global challenges (2000-2015). 2015: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - 17 goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity (2015-2030). The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are: No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water and Sanitation, Affordable and Clean Energy, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, Reduced Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Consumption and Production, Climate Action, Life Below Water, Life on Land, Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, Partnerships for the Goals. These goals aim to address the world's most pressing challenges and ensure a sustainable future for all. The Indian knowledge system is a rich and diverse tapestry of traditional wisdom, spiritual philosophies, and indigenous practices that have evolved over thousands of years. It encompasses various disciplines, including: Vedas and Upanishads (ancient scriptures), Ayurveda (traditional medicine), Yoga and Tantra (spiritual practices), Jyotish (astrology), Vastu Shastra (architecture and design), Gandhian philosophy (non-violence and self-sufficiency), Indigenous knowledge systems (tribal and folk traditions). The Indian knowledge system offers valuable insights and solutions for modern challenges, such as: Sustainable development, Environmental conservation, Health and wellness, Education and learning, Social and economic empowerment. These Indian knowledge systems offer valuable lessons for sustainable development, such as: Living in harmony with nature, emphasizing community and social equity, promoting holistic well-being, encouraging local self-reliance, Fostering environmental stewardship. By exploring and embracing this rich heritage, we can discover innovative and sustainable solutions for a resilient future.

Statement of the Problem: India is a land of many people and diversity. So the range of related knowledge is also wide. The scope of ancient India's knowledge empire is such that its influence can be seen in various areas of sustainable development. So, the researcher's problem is mentioned to know the importance of Indian knowledge process in sustainable development, that is-

“Impact of Indian knowledge systems on sustainable development goals”

16.2 Objectives of the Study:

- i. To know how Indian knowledge systems contribute to sustainable development, especially in poverty alleviation and promotion of good health and well-being.
- ii. To know about the current schemes and achievements of sustainable development for no poverty and health and well-being as per India's knowledge system.

16.3 Review of Related Literature:

Sharma (2024), in this study the researcher informed about the use of each term India (I), knowledge (K) and process (S). NEP 2020 discussed how the Indian knowledge system has been utilized. The researcher's study is written entirely based on secondary data. Researcher talks about disseminating the Indian knowledge system to society through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research.

He also mentioned the inclusion of knowledge in NEP, various programs under the Indian Knowledge System, UGC's draft guidelines and the guidelines for the incorporation of Indian Knowledge in higher education.

Chandel & Prashar (2024), in this study the researcher argues that the integration of IKS with NEP will help in understanding the underlying contemporary society. Discusses the issues related to this topic and further research on this topic. It will promote the growth and understanding of the rich and diverse indigenous people, knowledge among various stakeholders and revitalization of traditional knowledge with the help of modern technology.

Kumari (2024), in this study the researcher does not talk about the Indian knowledge system.

It also talks about how it focuses on sustainable development so that we can fulfill the objective of One World One Family and One posterior.

Biswas (2021), in this study the researcher discusses the Proliferation, contravention and amenities in the field of Indian knowledge system and NEP 2020.

16.4 Discussions:

16.4.1 How Indian knowledge systems contribute to sustainable development, especially in poverty alleviation and promotion of good health and well-being:

The Indian knowledge system has inherent principles that can contribute significantly to achieving sustainable development goals related to eradicating poverty (Goal 1) and promoting good health and well-being (Goal 3) in India. Here's how:

Eradicating Poverty (Goal 1):

- 1. Traditional Livelihoods:** India's traditional knowledge systems include various sustainable livelihood practices such as organic farming, handicrafts, handloom weaving, and small-scale cottage industries. Promoting these can create employment opportunities and uplift rural economies, thereby reducing poverty.
- 2. Community-Based Development:** Indian traditions emphasize community cohesion and support systems (like self-help groups and cooperatives) which can be leveraged to empower marginalized communities economically and socially.
- 3. Skills Development:** Traditional knowledge often includes skills like herbal medicine preparation, artisan crafts, and sustainable resource management. Training programs to revive and modernize these skills can enhance income-generating capacities of local communities.
- 4. Resource Management:** Indigenous knowledge of natural resource management, such as traditional water harvesting techniques (like tankas and stepwells), sustainable agricultural practices (organic farming, crop rotation), and forest conservation practices, can help in poverty reduction by ensuring sustainable use of resources.

Good Health and Well-being (Goal 3):

1. ***Ayurveda and Herbal Medicine:*** Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine, promotes holistic health through natural remedies, diet, yoga, and lifestyle practices. Integrating Ayurvedic principles with modern healthcare systems can promote preventive healthcare and reduce the burden of diseases.
2. ***Yoga and Mental Health:*** Yoga, originating from India, emphasizes mental and physical well-being through exercises, breathing techniques, and meditation. Promoting yoga can contribute to mental health resilience and overall well-being among the population.
3. ***Nutrition and Indigenous Food Systems:*** Traditional Indian diets are diverse and nutritionally rich. Promoting indigenous food systems and dietary diversity can address malnutrition and improve overall health outcomes.
4. ***Community Health Practices:*** Traditional community health practices, such as community kitchens (like langars), collective healthcare decisions, and local healing practices, foster community well-being and resilience.
5. ***Environmental Health:*** Traditional ecological knowledge promotes a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, which is crucial for long-term health and well-being. Practices like organic farming and forest conservation contribute to clean environments and sustainable health.

16.4.2 The current schemes and achievements of sustainable development for no poverty and health and well-being as per India's knowledge system:

As of recent updates, India has implemented several schemes and initiatives aimed at achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly focusing on no poverty (SDG 1) and health and well-being (SDG 3). These efforts often integrate elements of the Indian knowledge system to leverage traditional wisdom and practices. Here's an overview of some key schemes and achievements:

1. Schemes for No Poverty (SDG 1):

a. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA):

Objective: Provides guaranteed wage employment to rural households, thereby enhancing livelihood opportunities and reducing poverty.

Achievements: MGNREGA has played a significant role in ensuring economic security for rural households, promoting sustainable rural development, and reducing distress migration.

b. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY):

Objective: Aims to provide affordable housing to all rural and urban households by 2022, particularly targeting the homeless and those living in dilapidated houses.

Achievements: PMAY has facilitated access to safe and affordable housing, thereby improving living conditions and reducing poverty.

c. National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM):

Objective: Focuses on mobilizing rural poor households into self-help groups (SHGs) and federations to improve their livelihoods through skill development, access to finance, and market linkages.

Achievements: NRLM has empowered millions of rural households by promoting entrepreneurship, enhancing income generation, and reducing poverty through community-driven initiatives.

2. Schemes for Health and Well-being (SDG 3):

a. Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY):

Objective: Provides health insurance coverage of up to ₹5 lakh per family per year to over 10 crore vulnerable families (approximately 50 crore beneficiaries).

Achievements: PM-JAY aims to reduce out-of-pocket health expenditures, improve access to quality healthcare services, and ensure financial protection against catastrophic health expenses.

b. National Health Mission (NHM):

Objective: Aims to provide accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare to rural populations, focusing on maternal and child health, communicable diseases, and non-communicable diseases.

Achievements: NHM has strengthened healthcare infrastructure, improved immunization coverage, reduced maternal and child mortality rates, and enhanced disease surveillance and control measures.

c. AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) Ministry:

Objective: Promotes traditional Indian systems of medicine (Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) to ensure holistic health and well-being.

Achievements: AYUSH initiatives include research, education, and healthcare delivery through integration with mainstream healthcare services, contributing to preventive and wellness-focused healthcare.

Since 2018, India has made substantial progress on several key SDGs namely – Goal 1 (No Poverty), 3 (Good Health and Welfare), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Efficient and Clean Energy), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

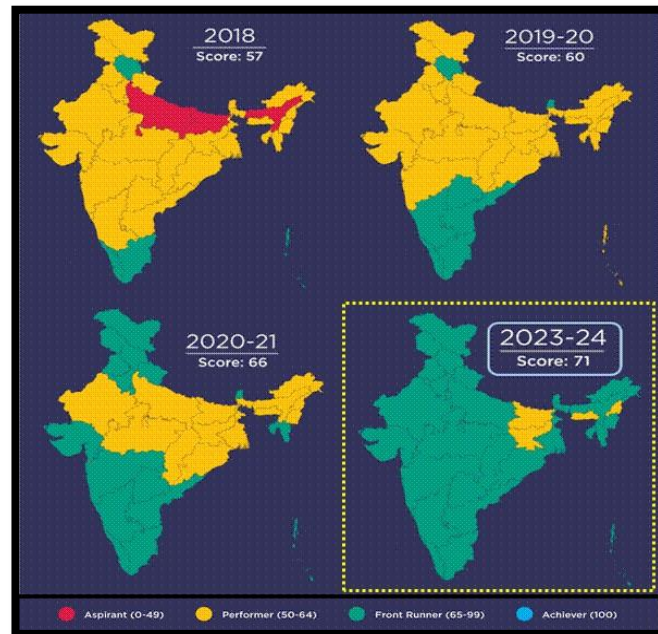


Figure 16.1: India's over all achievement of Sustainable Development
(<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2032857>)

Goal 1 – No Poverty:

Goal-1 (No Poverty) improved by 12 points from 2020-21 (Index 3) to 2023-24 (Index 4), advancing from Performer to Front Runner category.

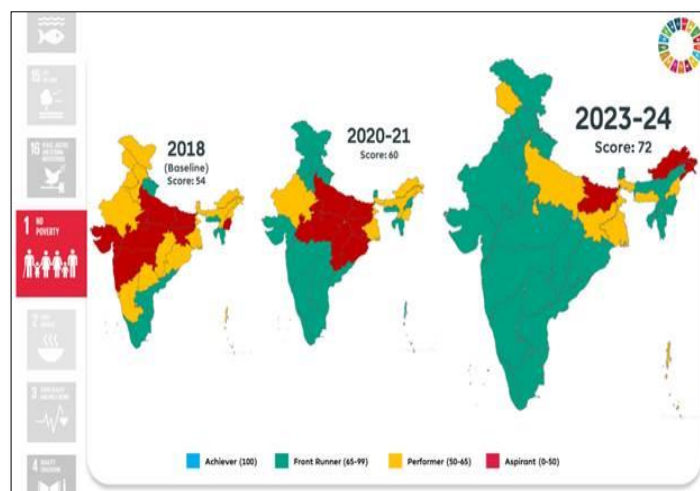


Figure 16.2: Better achievement of Sustainable Development Goal - 1(No Poverty)
(<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2032857>)

1. Multidimensional poverty declined from around 24.8% to 14.96% between 2015-16 and 2019-21.
2. Multidimensional poverty further reduced to 11.28% in 2022-23, with 24.8 crore people moving out of multidimensional poverty between 2013-14 and 2022-23.
3. 99.7% of persons claiming employment under MGNREGA were offered jobs in 2023-2024.
4. As per NFHS-5 (2019-21) 95.4% households live in brick/semi brick houses.
5. As per NFHS-5 (2019-21) 41% of households have at least one member covered by health insurance or health scheme, an improvement from 28.7% in NFHS-4 (2015-16).

Goal 3- Good Health and Well-being:

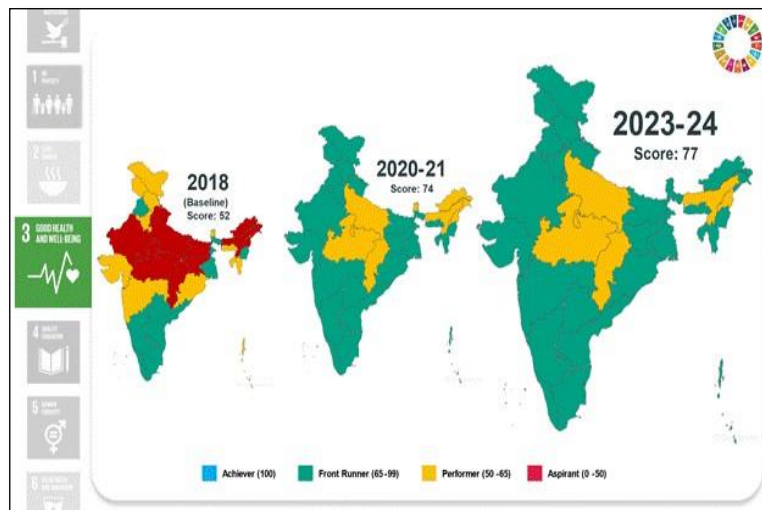


Figure 16.3: Better achievement of Sustainable Development Goal – 3 (Good Health and Well-being) (<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2032857>)

1. Overall score improved substantially from 52 in 2018 to 77 in 2023-24.
2. Maternal mortality rate stands at 97 per 1, 00,000 live births.
3. Reduce the mortality rate below 5 (per 1,000 live births) from 36 in 2016-18 to 32 in 2018-20.
4. 93.23% children aged 9-11 months are fully immunized.
5. 87.13% TB cases reported against target.
6. 97.18% of total deliveries reported in health facilities.

16.5 Conclusion:

By integrating these elements of the Indian knowledge system into development policies and programs, India can progress towards achieving sustainable development goals related to poverty eradication and improving health and well-being. Emphasizing local knowledge systems can lead to more culturally appropriate and sustainable solutions tailored to the needs of communities across the country.

India's efforts towards achieving SDGs related to no poverty and health and well-being are increasingly integrating elements of the Indian knowledge system. By leveraging traditional wisdom, practices, and community-centric approaches, these schemes and initiatives are not only addressing immediate development challenges but also contributing to long-term sustainable development outcomes, ensuring inclusive growth and well-being for all segments of society.

16.6 Reference:

1. Biswas, S. (2021). Indian Knowledge system and NEP-2020 Scope, Challenges and Opportunity, *National Journal of Hindi & Sanskrit Research*, 1(39), 179-183.
2. Chandel, N., & Prashar, K., K. (2024). Indian knowledge system and NEP: a brief analysis, *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 11(1), d260-d263.
3. Kumari, D. (2024), Indian Knowledge for Sustainable Futures, *International Journal of Novel Research and Development*, 9(3), d259-d262.
4. NITI Aayog (2024). Release of SDG India Index 2023-24. Retrieved from <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2032857>.
5. Sharma, R. (2024). Incorporation of India Knowledge System through NEP (2020) For Sustainable Development, *International Journal of Advance and Applied Research*, 5(4), 105-108.
6. United Nations (2015). Department of Economic and Social Affairs Sustainable Development. Retrieved from <https://sdgs.un.org/goals#history>.