

# United International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

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## Dimensions of Indian Knowledge System in Science and Technology: A Comprehensive Research Study

**Dr.K.Lakshmi Prameela**

Lecturer in Chemistry

Government College for Women(A), Guntur, A.P

### Introduction

The Indian Knowledge System represents the cumulative scientific and technological wisdom developed in the Indian subcontinent through centuries of intellectual exploration and practical application. Unlike modern disciplinary fragmentation, traditional Indian knowledge evolved through interdisciplinary integration of mathematics, astronomy, medicine, metallurgy, architecture, ecology, and philosophy.

Historically, India made foundational contributions such as the decimal number system, advanced astronomical calculations, surgical practices, corrosion-resistant metallurgy, sustainable irrigation technologies, and climate-responsive architecture. In the contemporary era, the revival of IKS has become increasingly important due to the global search for sustainable development models, affordable technologies, and culturally contextual innovation. Understanding the dimensions of IKS in science and technology can provide valuable insights for modern research and technological policy.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the historical foundations of the Indian Knowledge System in science and technology.
2. To identify the major scientific and technological dimensions of IKS.
3. To analyze the relevance of indigenous knowledge for contemporary innovation and sustainable development.
4. To develop a conceptual framework for integrating traditional knowledge with modern research systems.
5. To highlight challenges and policy recommendations for strengthening IKS-based research.

### Research Methodology

This study follows a **qualitative conceptual research methodology** based on:

- Secondary data from historical texts, academic journals, policy documents, and research reports.

- Comparative analysis of traditional technological practices and modern scientific approaches.
- Conceptual framework development using interdisciplinary research perspectives.

## Conceptual Foundations of Indian Knowledge System

The Indian Knowledge System is characterized by several foundational principles:

- **Holistic Knowledge Integration:** Science, philosophy, environment, and social ethics are interconnected.
- **Empirical Validation:** Many technologies evolved through repeated experimentation over centuries.
- **Sustainability Orientation:** Technologies were designed to maintain ecological balance.
- **Community-Based Innovation:** Knowledge was transmitted through guilds, artisans, and traditional institutions.
- **Context-Specific Technology:** Solutions were adapted to local climatic, geographical, and social conditions.

## Major Dimensions of Indian Knowledge System in Science and Technology

### Mathematics and Astronomical Sciences

Indian mathematicians introduced zero, decimal numeration, algebraic methods, trigonometry, and early calculus concepts. Astronomers calculated planetary movements, eclipse patterns, and the length of the year with remarkable precision, demonstrating advanced observational and computational methods.

### Medical Science and Health Technologies

Traditional medical systems such as Ayurveda emphasize preventive healthcare, herbal pharmacology, dietetics, and holistic treatment approaches. Ancient surgical practices included reconstructive surgery, cataract removal, and fracture management, indicating advanced medical knowledge.

### Metallurgy and Materials Engineering

Indian metallurgists produced high-quality steel, zinc distillation technologies, and corrosion-resistant iron structures. These technological achievements reflect sophisticated chemical processing and furnace engineering knowledge.

### Engineering, Architecture, and Urban Technology

Ancient Indian architecture incorporated earthquake-resistant construction, climate-responsive building design, acoustic engineering, and advanced drainage systems. Stepwells and temple structures illustrate deep understanding of geometry, hydrology, and material science.

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## Agricultural Science and Environmental Technology

Traditional agricultural systems promoted mixed cropping, organic fertilizers, biodiversity conservation, and water-efficient irrigation systems. These practices ensured long-term soil fertility and ecological sustainability.

## Maritime Technology and Navigation

Historical records indicate advanced shipbuilding methods and navigation knowledge using seasonal wind patterns and ocean currents, supporting extensive trade networks across Asia and Africa.

## Relevance of Indian Knowledge System for Contemporary Science and Technology

The modern relevance of IKS can be observed in several areas:

- Development of eco-friendly technologies inspired by traditional practices.
- Affordable healthcare solutions based on herbal medicine research.
- Climate-resilient agricultural models derived from indigenous farming systems.
- Sustainable construction technologies using traditional architectural methods.
- Innovation opportunities through interdisciplinary integration of traditional and modern science.

## Conceptual Framework for Integration of IKS with Modern Innovation

A systematic integration model may include:

1. **Documentation:** Digitization of manuscripts and traditional technological practices.
2. **Scientific Validation:** Laboratory testing and experimental verification.
3. **Interdisciplinary Research Collaboration:** Partnerships between scientists, historians, and traditional practitioners.
4. **Technology Adaptation:** Modern engineering refinement of validated indigenous technologies.
5. **Commercialization and Policy Support:** Government incentives and intellectual property protection mechanisms.

## Challenges in Strengthening IKS-Based Scientific Research

- Lack of standardized research methodologies for traditional knowledge validation.
- Limited funding for interdisciplinary indigenous technology research.
- Intellectual property protection challenges.
- Declining transmission of traditional skills across generations.
- Insufficient integration into higher education curricula.

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## Policy Recommendations

- Establish dedicated interdisciplinary research centers for Indian Knowledge Systems.
- Promote inclusion of IKS-based scientific studies in university curricula.
- Support community participation in documentation of indigenous knowledge.
- Encourage public-private partnerships for commercialization of validated traditional technologies.
- Strengthen intellectual property rights protection for indigenous innovations.

## Conclusion

The Indian Knowledge System represents a rich scientific and technological heritage that integrates empirical research, sustainability, and social relevance. Its contributions to mathematics, medicine, metallurgy, architecture, and environmental technology demonstrate the depth of indigenous scientific innovation. In the contemporary context, systematic documentation, scientific validation, and integration with modern technological research can transform IKS into a powerful driver of sustainable development and innovation. Future research should focus on interdisciplinary approaches that bridge traditional wisdom with advanced scientific methodologies.

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