



# Exploring the Role of Indigenous Languages in Safeguarding Traditional Indian Knowledge for Sustainable Development in Viksit Bharat

**Dr. J. N. Baliya\* Tania Sharma\*\* Sourabh Sharma\*\*\***

\*Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu

\*\* M.Ed. Student (Presenter), Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu

\*\*\*Research Scholar, Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu

## Abstract

India's rich cultural heritage and traditional knowledge systems (TKS) are deeply rooted in its diverse indigenous languages. These languages serve as reservoirs of ancient wisdom, encompassing practices in agriculture, medicine, environmental conservation, and sustainable living. However, with the rapid globalization and diminishing use of indigenous languages, this knowledge is at risk of being lost. This paper explores the pivotal role of indigenous languages in safeguarding and transmitting traditional Indian knowledge to future generations, contributing to sustainable development in the vision of Viksit Bharat. This Research paper further elaborates the need of preservation and promotion of indigenous languages in revitalizing traditional Indian knowledge, enhance biodiversity conservation and promote sustainable practices aligned with the principles of environmental sustainability along with the need for integrating indigenous languages into formal education systems.

**Keywords:** Indigenous Languages; traditional Indian Knowledge; Viksit Bharat; Sustainable Development.

## Introduction

India has many different languages, cultures, and histories, which we can see through its rich literature. By studying works like *Gitanjali* by Tagore, *Pudhumai Penn* by Bharati, and *Toba Tek Singh* by Manto, we can learn how literature reflects the true spirit of Indian languages and gives us deep insights into the lives and cultures of different regions. These examples show how literature goes beyond words to express the feelings, traditions, and complexity of Indian society (Alam, N). Multilingual education supports better learning and helps preserve culture, but it requires trained teachers, proper curriculum, and resources. Indian tribal languages are an important

part of the country's cultural diversity but are at risk due to social and political pressures. To protect them, joint efforts by the government, communities, and experts are needed to document, teach, and promote these languages for future generations **(Shaji, 2024)**. By 2047, India's education system is expected to improve through curriculum updates, better teaching methods, enhanced school infrastructure, standardized assessments, and the use of technology. Priority will be given to mother-tongue-based learning and special education for children with disabilities, ensuring inclusivity and better learning outcomes. These reforms aim to raise the overall quality of education and create a more effective and equitable system **(Gautam 2025)**. The use of language in art can enhance meaning and create new forms of expression. Art and language serve as crucial mediums for expressing cultural identity, transmitting values, and challenging societal norms. By examining these interactions, help to gain valuable insights into how cultures develop, evolve, and influence one another **(Panda 2024)**. The ancient cultural values of Bharat (India) can be compared with today's global strategies to understand how traditional wisdom can be applied in modern areas like governance, education, and diplomacy. This comparison can help in blending ancient knowledge with contemporary practices for better decision-making and progress **(Singh, Mishra, Sethi, Arora, & Ansari, 2024)**. Research result shows that learning new languages can greatly improve job opportunities by giving people an advantage in the workplace **(Khandelwal, & Kumar, 2024, September)**. Languages grow and develop within society and culture. They help pass knowledge from one generation to the next and across different places. Encouraging the use of many languages worldwide can promote fairness in language and culture, leading to balanced and lasting development **(Toppo, & Rahman, 2020)**. The true strength of Viksit Bharat (Developed India) comes from combining old traditions with modern ideas and supporting community efforts and sustainable practices. By following Mahatma Gandhi's principles of truth, non-violence, and inclusive growth, India can build a better and more fair society. His ideas are still important today and can guide the country's progress **(Bhouradia, & Kumari, Gandhian Vision for Viksit Bharat)**.

## Objectives

- To explore the role of indigenous languages in safeguarding Traditional Indian Knowledge for Sustainable Development in Viksit Bharat through the review of existing literature.

## Indigenous Languages

Language and land are deeply connected. Indigenous languages share special ways of seeing and living in the world. Protecting these languages and the knowledge they carry is important for solving today's environmental and social problems **(Chiblow, & Meighan, 2022)**. In North-East India, many local languages carry important knowledge about nature and sustainable living. When these languages disappear, both culture and the environment are affected. For example, the Mishing tribe in Assam has farming songs and rituals that are slowly being lost as young people use more common languages. In the Riang community of Tripura, knowledge about herbal medicine, which was passed down through stories and language, is also fading. This shows how language

loss can lead to the loss of valuable traditional practices (**Chakraborty,2025**). Indian tribal languages show the way of life and history of many well-known tribes, but their value is often neglected. Tribal traditions are a big part of Indian culture, yet many people are not aware of their importance. To protect these languages, the UGC has helped central universities set up centers to research and promote endangered languages across India. It is the responsibility of every person to help preserve these languages (**Boruah,2020**).

### **Traditional Indian Knowledge**

Indigenous knowledge is the wisdom and understanding of native people living in different parts of the world, shaped by their own language, culture, traditions, beliefs, and customs (**Chhetry, & Belbahri,2009**). TKS and IKS (Traditional or Indigenous Knowledge Systems) simply means the way an indigenous community uses its traditional knowledge in a well-organized way. This includes their close relationship with nature, deep understanding. It also includes their unique way of life, culture, beliefs about nature and the spiritual world, and how they think and see the world (**Gupta,2012**). The Indian Knowledge System is a rich and diverse set of ideas, beliefs, and practices that developed over thousands of years in India. It is found in old texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, and Puranas, and has grown with the help of many different cultures. It follows a complete approach that connects the mind, body, and spirit (**Bhatia,Gupta & Sharma 2025**).By including Indian knowledge systems in modern education we can create balanced way of learning that helps students grow in mind, body, and spirit. By using ideas from old traditions like the Gurukul system, in today's classrooms we can give students personal attention, teach useful skills, and help them learn good values that benefit both themselves and society (**Singh, & Meitei**).

### **Sustainable Development & Viksit Bharat**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream, called Viksit Bharat 2047, is to make India a fully developed country by the time it turns 100 years old in 2047. This plan focuses on many areas like helping people live better lives, protecting the environment, growing the economy, and improving how the government works (**Ohri,**). Indian Indigenous knowledge, such as Ayurveda and organic farming, can help us live healthier lives and tackle major global problems like climate change, pollution, and water scarcity. Ancient Indian texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, and Yoga Sutras offer many useful ideas and practices support sustainable living. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and protect our planet and humanity, we must value and use our traditional knowledge. It provides natural and effective solutions for both local and global challenges (**Mishra,& Singh** ). To help India become a developed country by 2047, the Viksit Bharat plan focuses on growing in a way that protects nature, supports the economy, and uses new technology(**Gautam,2025**).It is clear that traditional knowledge (IK) is very helpful in areas like farming, forests, and medicine. This knowledge is good for the environment and helps local people get food and meet their needs. It comes from local resources, tools, and

culture. It also gives fair chances to everyone in using resources and making decisions(Sultana, Muhammad,& Zakaria 2018).

## **Interconnectedness between Indigenous Languages and Traditional Indian Knowledge for Sustainable Development**

Human knowledge grows through social and cultural interactions, helping people share experiences and information across generations and communities. Language plays a key role in this process, as it connects people and carries both knowledge and culture. Because of this, language education, which includes both learning a language and understanding different cultures, is essential for sustainable human development and mutual understanding (Zygmunt,2016).In Africa, teaching people to read and write in their local languages has many benefits, especially for those in rural areas, the poor, women, and those who struggle in formal schools. Since these programs do not depend on international languages, they can reach the people who need them most. Whether in schools or community programs, learning in local languages helps development and makes sure progress lasts over time (Trudell, 2009).In India, tribal communities and their traditional ways of living help protect nature and keep the environment balanced. By Recognizing their importance in national development plans can offer useful solutions to tackle climate change and its effects (Priyadarshini,& Abhilash,2019).Teaching Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in schools helps students learn about ancient wisdom like the Vedas, Puranas, Yoga, Ayurveda, Astrology, and Meditation. It also introduces them to Sanskrit, one of the oldest languages. Learning Sanskrit and ancient traditions can have a positive impact on today's youth and help in creating a sustainable future.Many Sanskrit mantras guide daily life, from waking up in the morning to sleeping at night (Yadav,2023). Thus by adding Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) to education we can make learning more meaningful and help bring positive change in society.It has many benefits, like making learning more connected to culture, keeping students more interested, and encouraging people to live in a more sustainable and caring way(Waris, & Tiwari,).The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) helps share India's rich history and traditional wisdom, including tribal and indigenous learning methods. It covers many subjects and not only supports tourism but also helps people understand and appreciate India's culture and traditions. IKS spreads knowledge about important areas like historical sites, heritage, literature, art, music, and more (Khan, & Sharma,2024).Indigenous knowledge holders and scientists should work together to understand and develop these traditional systems. In India, traditional medicine has great potential, but there is a need to protect not just old inventions but also knowledge about living things like plants and animals (Rao,2006).By acknowledging and incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into modern environmental policies, we can both pay tribute to cultural history and make conservation efforts throughout the world more successful (Burgos-Ayala et al., 2020).

## **Role of Indigenous Languages in Safeguarding Traditional Indian Knowledge**



Language and culture are connected and influence each other. Language helps create culture, and culture helps shape communication. Through stories and literature, language carries the values that shape how people see themselves and the world. The way people view themselves affects their beliefs, politics, economy, and relationships with nature and others (**Nyota, Mapara, & Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society,2007**). Indigenous knowledge is very important because it carries traditional practices and is passed down through generations. It is essential to value Indigenous views, because their traditional knowledge connects nature with culture. Today, museums play an important role as cultural centers. They also help to protect endangered languages, support traditional ways of living, build skills in communities and promote the smart use of natural resources through teamwork and partnerships (**Ravjani, & Yadav**). Language and culture are deeply united, so it's important to protect them. Technology has become a helpful tool in saving these languages and the valuable knowledge they carry. It means that technology is a powerful tool to save and share language materials. The rise of the internet and social media has made popular languages like English, Russian, and Chinese even stronger, which is one reason why many Indigenous languages are at risk of disappearing. When endangered languages are used on the internet, it helps keep them alive and gives them a better chance to survive (**Minhas, & Salawu,2024**). Since protecting nature is important for everyone, saving languages is also important—not just because countries have promised to do so under human rights laws, but also it's our responsibility to the whole world. To stop the loss of nature, we need creative and culturally respectful ways to protect endangered cultures and languages, which are facing many threats today (**Blake,2013**).

## Discussion

Universities can create Literature Courses that teach **local languages**, stories, and traditions. These classes can include learning old texts, folk tales, and traditional poems from different cultures. By adding courses on **Ayurveda, Yoga**. Students can learn about healthy living, using herbs for treatment, and ways to stay well and prevent illness. Through Teaching **Vedic math** methods along with regular math. Students can also learn about old geometric ideas and how they can be used in real life. Traditional Indian art forms like Madhubani or Warli, which help keep our culture alive and boost creativity. Ancient texts like the **Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita** can help students think deeply and learn about ethics and life values. Studying old Indian **architecture and town planning** can give ideas for building modern cities in smart, eco-friendly ways. And learning **Indian classical music and dance** can help students understand the beauty and meaning behind cultural expressions(**Amani,2024**)&(**Shrivasa, & Dewangan,2024**).By knowing traditional Indian practices we can protect our nature. This includes farming in eco-friendly ways, saving water, and taking care of forests(**Lal, Srivastava, Narayan, Pal,Kumar, & Sinha, 2024**). For sustainable development we can use use organic farming that help crops to grow better and make farming more efficient and eco-friendly(**Mishra, Singh& Kumar,2011**). Ancient Indian knowledge helps people grow in all areas of life. It teaches how to improve the body, mind, spirit,

behavior, and creativity, so a person can become better and serve society in a good way(Mahesh, Aithal, & Sharma, 2023).

## Conclusion

Thus Indian Knowledge System (IKS) should be included in school and college education. Teachers should learn at least one or two IKS languages to understand it better. Students should also have access to original IKS texts to gain a deeper knowledge of the subject (Kamalakar & Vageeshan,2024). Universities are encouraged to offer IKS (Indian Knowledge System) elective courses or student credits in all subjects. This will help students from different fields learn about traditional knowledge (Khan & Sharma,2024).The National Education Policy 2020 also includes the importance of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), giving us chance to bring back and use ancient knowledge. By using scientific methods, we can use traditional knowledge to solve modern problems (Sharma,2024).

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