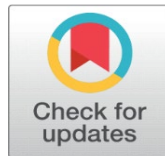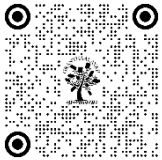# ROLE OF MEDIA IN PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF ANCIENT INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN THE PRESENT SOCIETY

Nilendu Chatterjee [1] ✉ 🆔, Dipak Kundu [2] ✉ 🆔

[1] Assistant Professor in Economics, Bankim Sardar College, South 24 Parganas, India
[2] Assistant Professor in Commerce, Bankim Sardar College, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India

## ABSTRACT

Ancient Indian knowledge systems, such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Sanskrit, and traditional arts and sciences, hold immense significance in today's globalized world. These systems, rooted in thousands of years of wisdom, are not only relevant to modern society but also contribute to holistic well-being, cultural preservation, and intellectual growth. However, the challenge lies in preserving and promoting these ancient systems in an era dominated by rapid technological advancements and cultural shifts. This paper explores the pivotal role of media in bridging the gap between ancient Indian knowledge systems and contemporary society. By examining the contributions of print, electronic, and digital media, this research highlights how media has facilitated the preservation and propagation of these systems. It also discusses the relevance of these knowledge systems in addressing modern challenges, such as health, environmental sustainability, and mental well-being. The paper concludes by emphasizing the need for a balanced approach to leverage media effectively while addressing potential challenges like commercialization and cultural appropriation.

**Keywords:** Role of Media, Ancient Indian Knowledge, Preservation, Promotion, Future Direction

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indian Knowledge Systems represent a rich and diverse intellectual tradition encompassing a wide range of disciplines, including medicine (Ayurveda), spirituality and philosophy (Yoga, Vedanta, and other Darshanas), linguistics and literature (Sanskrit and regional languages), mathematics and astronomy (as seen in the works of Aryabhata and Bhaskaracharya), education (Gurukul and oral traditions), architecture (Vastu Shastra), and the fine arts (classical music, dance,

theatre, sculpture, and painting), reflecting a holistic worldview that integrates science, art, and ethics. These knowledge systems were preserved and transmitted through oral traditions, scriptures, and practices for centuries. However, with the onset of globalization and technological advancements, the relevance and accessibility of these systems have been challenged. Media, as a powerful tool for communication and dissemination, has emerged as a critical enabler in preserving and promoting ancient Indian knowledge systems. Ancient These systems are rooted in the Vedas and other ancient texts, which are considered the foundation of Indian culture and philosophy. The preservation of these knowledge systems is essential for maintaining cultural identity and promoting holistic well-being. Ancient Indian knowledge systems are deeply rooted in the principles of holistic living, sustainability, and harmony with nature. These systems emphasize the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, offering solutions to many modern dilemmas, such as chronic diseases, mental health disorders, and environmental degradation. Few important categories of ancient Indian knowledge systems are as follows.

- **Ayurveda:** A traditional system of medicine emphasizing natural healing and preventive care, Ayurveda has gained global recognition for its holistic approach to health.

- **Yoga:** Beyond its physical postures, Yoga encompasses mental and spiritual disciplines that promote mindfulness and inner peace, making it a global phenomenon.

- **Sanskrit and Ancient Texts:** The Vedas, Upanishads, and epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana contain timeless wisdom on ethics, governance, and human behaviour.

- **Traditional Arts and Sciences:** Classical music, dance, and crafts are integral to India's cultural identity and continue to inspire contemporary art forms.

In recent years, the media has played a vital role in reviving and disseminating these ancient knowledge systems to a wider audience. Through various mediums such as television, radio, and digital platforms, media has helped to popularize and promote the relevance of these traditional knowledge systems in modern times. For instance, the widespread coverage of Yoga and Ayurveda has not only helped to promote their benefits but also created a global interest in these ancient practices. Furthermore, media has also facilitated a dialogue between traditional practitioners and modern experts, enabling a nuanced understanding of these knowledge systems and their applications in contemporary society. By showcasing the significance and relevance of ancient Indian knowledge systems, media has not only helped to preserve the country's cultural heritage but also contributed to a more informed and enlightened global community.

As researchers, we deeply engage in the intersection of tradition and modernity, we perceive the media not merely as a communication tool but as a transformative force with the potential to recontextualize ancient Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) for contemporary relevance. This paper is driven by a conviction that India's civilizational wisdom—rooted in disciplines such as Ayurveda, Yoga, classical arts, Vedic sciences, and linguistic traditions—holds timeless value, yet faces marginalization amid rapid globalization and technological dominance.

We approach the subject with an understanding that modern media platforms, when used judiciously, can serve as dynamic agents of cultural preservation and

revitalization. Rather than viewing IKS as static relics of the past, this study emphasizes their adaptability and ongoing relevance. Our analysis is informed by a belief in knowledge pluralism—where traditional knowledge is seen not in opposition to modern science but as a complementary paradigm that offers ethical, sustainable, and holistic frameworks for human well-being.

The central aim of this work is to examine how various forms of media—print, broadcast, digital, and social—can function as custodians and conveyors of indigenous wisdom. I advocate for a model of engagement where media professionals, educators, policymakers, and knowledge holders collaborate to ensure that IKS are not only preserved in archival forms but also translated into lived experiences for future generations. This paper investigates the role of media in this context, focusing on its contributions to the preservation of cultural heritage, its impact on contemporary society, and the challenges it faces.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: MEDIA AND ANCIENT INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

The cultural transmission theory, as discussed by Merton (1968), provides a framework for understanding how media can facilitate the passing down of knowledge across generations. Additionally, the concept of cultural imperialism Schiller (1976) emphasizes the potential of media to either erode or enrich indigenous knowledge, making it imperative to investigate how Indian media navigates these dynamics. Media has played a transformative role in preserving and promoting ancient Indian knowledge systems by bridging the gap between tradition and modernity. The following sections explore the contributions of different forms of media.

### 2.1. PRINT MEDIA

Print media, through books, journals, and magazines, has been instrumental in accumulating and disseminating knowledge. The establishment of publications focused on Indian philosophy, traditional medicine, and cultural practices has contributed to the localization and preservation of these knowledge systems. Notable journals, such as "Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge," serve as platforms for scholarly discourse and documentation Rajasekaran (2020).

### 2.2. BROADCAST MEDIA

Television programs and documentaries focusing on Indian traditions have resumed interest in AIKS. For instance, the BBC series "The Story of India" emphasizes the historical and cultural richness of India, including traditional practices. Such initiatives not only educate the audience but also encourage the revival of interest in traditional practices Sinha (2019).

### 2.3. DIGITAL MEDIA

The rise of digital platforms has revolutionized the accessibility and engagement with AIKS. Websites, online courses, and social media have democratized knowledge and stimulated awareness. The Yoga Alliance and The Indian Yoga Association utilize platforms like YouTube and Instagram to disseminate knowledge pertaining to yoga and wellness, reaching a global audience Mishra (2021).

The advent of the internet, social media, and online platforms has revolutionized the way ancient knowledge systems are accessed and shared.

### 2.3.1. WEBSITES AND BLOGS

Websites dedicated to Ayurveda, Yoga, and Sanskrit offer comprehensive resources, including e-books, courses, and articles. Platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook have become hubs for sharing content on Yoga, traditional recipes, and Sanskrit lessons. For instance, influencers like Shilpa Shetty and Bipasha Basu have popularized Yoga through their social media channels.

### 2.3.2. ONLINE COURSES

Platforms like Coursera, Udemy, and SWAYAM offer courses on Yoga, Ayurveda, and Sanskrit, making these subjects accessible to a global audience.

### 2.3.3. DIGITAL ARCHIVES

Initiatives like the Digital Sanskrit Library and the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute have digitized ancient texts, ensuring their preservation for future generations.

### 2.4. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms allow for grassroots movements aimed at promoting ancient knowledge systems. Hashtags like Ayurveda, Yoga, and Indian Philosophy generate discussions and forums where individuals share personal experiences and insights related to AIKS. This digital engagement fosters community-building and encourages the exchange of knowledge Ghosh (2020).

## 3. RELEVANCE OF ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS IN MODERN SOCIETY

The relevance of ancient Indian knowledge systems in contemporary society is evident in their ability to address modern challenges. For instance:

### 3.1. HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Ayurveda and Yoga have emerged as complementary therapies for chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension. The global wellness industry, valued at over $4.5 trillion, heavily draws from these systems Global Wellness Institute (2023).

### 3.2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ancient Indian concepts like Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the Earth as a family) and Ahimsa (non-violence) align with modern environmental movements, emphasizing harmony with nature.

### 3.3. MENTAL HEALTH

Practices like meditation and mindfulness, rooted in Yoga and Vedanta, are increasingly recognized as effective tools for managing stress and anxiety.

### 3.4. CULTURAL IDENTITY

In a globalized world, these systems serve as a source of pride and identity for Indians, fostering cultural preservation and exchange.

## 4. IMPACT OF MEDIA ON PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION

The impact of media on the preservation and promotion of Ancient Indian Knowledge has been significant. Media has helped in:

### 4.1. INCREASING AWARENESS

Media has played a crucial role in raising awareness about the importance and relevance of Ancient Indian Knowledge in contemporary society. Through various platforms, people have been introduced to the benefits of Ayurveda, Yoga, and classical arts, leading to a renewed interest in these traditions.

### 4.2. PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE

By documenting and showcasing Ancient Indian Knowledge, media has contributed to the preservation of cultural heritage. Digital archives and online repositories have ensured that these traditions are not lost to the passage of time.

### 4.3. PROMOTING EDUCATION

Media has facilitated the dissemination of Ancient Indian Knowledge through educational programs, online courses, and workshops. This has made it possible for people to learn about and engage with these traditions in a structured and accessible manner.

### 4.4. ENCOURAGING PRACTICE

Media has inspired people to incorporate Ancient Indian Knowledge into their daily lives. For example, the popularity of Yoga and Ayurveda has led to a rise in the number of people practicing these traditions globally.

### 4.5. CULTURAL FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Media plays a critical role in promoting cultural festivals that celebrate ancient traditions. Events like the International Yoga Day, which receive extensive media coverage, highlight the global resonance of ancient Indian practices Ghosh (2021).

### 4.6. SUCCESS STORIES

Highlighting success stories of individuals or communities that integrate ancient knowledge into contemporary lives creates a narrative of relevance. Media coverage of such cases enhances public awareness and inspires others Verma (2021).

## 5. CASE STUDIES
### 5.1. SPARSH GANGA INITIATIVE

The Sparsh Ganga initiative utilized social media to revive interest in ancient Indian water conservation techniques. Campaigns centered on indigenous practices attracted the attention of youth and prompted discussions on sustainable living correlating to AIKS. Data from surveys indicated heightened awareness about traditional methods of water conservation Sharma (2022).

### 5.2. DIGITAL LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

Digital libraries, such as the Digital Library of India, focus on archiving manuscripts and texts related to ancient Indian knowledge. Through digitization efforts, these libraries serve as critical resources for researchers and the public, ensuring that ancient wisdom is preserved for future generations. The accessibility of these texts has led to increased academic interest in AIKS (Ancient Indian Knowledge System) Rao (2020).

### 5.3. THE GLOBAL POPULARITY OF YOGA

Yoga, an ancient Indian practice, has gained immense popularity worldwide, thanks in large part to media. Social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube have been flooded with Yoga-related content, from tutorials to inspirational stories. This has not only increased awareness about Yoga but has also inspired people to adopt it as a part of their lifestyle. However, the commercialization of Yoga has raised concerns about its authenticity and cultural appropriation.

### 5.4. THE REVIVAL OF SANSKRIT

Sanskrit, the ancient Indian language, has seen a resurgence in interest, largely due to media efforts. Social media campaigns, online courses, and YouTube channels dedicated to Sanskrit have made the language more accessible and engaging for younger audiences. This has contributed to the preservation of Sanskrit and its associated literary and cultural heritage.

### 5.5. AYURVEDA IN MODERN HEALTHCARE

The integration of Ayurveda into modern healthcare systems, supported by media campaigns, has led to its recognition by global health organizations like the WHO.

## 6. CHALLENGES IN PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION

Despite the positive impact of media, there are several challenges in the preservation and promotion of Ancient Indian Knowledge. These include:

### 6.1. COMMERCIALIZATION

The increasing commercialization of Ancient Indian Knowledge has led to concerns about the authenticity and integrity of these traditions. Media often prioritizes content that is commercially viable, which can result in the dilution of traditional practices.

## 6.2. CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

The global popularity of Ancient Indian Knowledge has led to cases of cultural appropriation, where these traditions are adopted without proper understanding or respect for their cultural context. Media has sometimes been criticized for contributing to this issue by presenting these traditions in a superficial or sensationalized manner.

## 6.3. LACK OF AUTHENTICITY

The abundance of information available on media platforms has led to concerns about the authenticity of the content. With so many sources claiming to represent Ancient Indian Knowledge, it can be challenging for audiences to distinguish between authentic and misleading information.

## 6.4. ACCESSIBILITY AND REACH

While digital media has made Ancient Indian Knowledge more accessible, there is still a gap in reach, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Traditional media, which is often more accessible in these regions, has not always been effectively utilized to promote these traditions.

## 6.5. FRAGMENTATION

The fragmented nature of information in the media landscape can lead to confusion and misinformation. Compounding this issue is the lack of a coordinated effort among various media entities to standardize knowledge dissemination Kaur (2021).

## 7. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

To effectively preserve and promote Ancient Indian Knowledge, media must adopt a balanced approach that respects the authenticity and integrity of these traditions while making them accessible to a broader audience. Some potential strategies include:

## 7.1. COLLABORATION WITH EXPERTS

Media platforms should collaborate with experts and scholars in Ancient Indian Knowledge to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the content being disseminated.

## 7.2. EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

There should be a greater emphasis on creating educational content that provides in-depth information about Ancient Indian Knowledge. This could include documentaries, series, and interactive programs.

### 7.3. DIGITAL ARCHIVES

Creating digital archives of Ancient Indian Knowledge can help in preserving these traditions for future generations. These archives should be accessible to the public and regularly updated.

### 7.4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Media should engage with communities that have traditionally preserved Ancient Indian Knowledge, involving them in the content creation process. This can help in ensuring the cultural sensitivity and authenticity of the content.

### 7.5. ADDRESSING ACCESSIBILITY

Efforts should be made to increase the accessibility of media content on Ancient Indian Knowledge, particularly in rural and underserved areas. This could involve the use of regional languages and traditional media formats.

## 8. CONCLUSION

The role of media in the preservation and promotion of Ancient Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) is both pivotal and multi-layered. This paper has highlighted how media—through its diverse formats and global reach—has become a powerful conduit for raising awareness about India's intellectual and cultural heritage. From reviving interest in practices like Ayurveda and Yoga to showcasing classical arts, the media has opened new avenues for engagement with ancient traditions, especially among younger and diasporic audiences.

However, this process is not without its challenges. The increasing commercialization of traditional knowledge, the risk of cultural appropriation, and the dilution of authenticity due to oversimplification or sensationalism are critical concerns. These issues call for a media practice that is not only technically proficient but also ethically grounded and culturally sensitive.

The unique contribution of this paper lies in its emphasis on a responsible media framework—one that integrates historical fidelity, expert consultation, and contextual accuracy into the content creation and dissemination process. It proposes a model where media is not a passive observer but an active cultural steward, engaging with IKS as living traditions that can inform sustainable practices, holistic health models, and alternative pedagogies in the modern world.

Moreover, this study reframes media's role not just as a preserver of heritage but as a platform for dialogue—enabling cross-cultural exchange, critical reflection, and innovation rooted in indigenous epistemologies. In doing so, it positions media as a strategic partner in confronting contemporary challenges such as environmental degradation, mental health crises, and educational inequity, where traditional Indian knowledge can offer valuable insights.

In essence, this paper calls for a reimagined media landscape—one that not only protects the integrity of ancient knowledge but also repositions it within the global knowledge economy. By embracing both the wisdom of the past and the technologies of the present, media can ensure that Indian Knowledge Systems remain vibrant, respected, and accessible to future generations.

**CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

None.

**REFERENCES**

Bhattacharya, S. (2021). Culture, Commerce and Yoga: The Impact of Globalization on Traditional Practice. Journal of Cultural Studies, 15(2), 34–56.

Ghosh, R. (2020). Social Media and the Revival of Folk Knowledge Systems. Media, Culture & Society, 42(7–8), 1321–1336.

Ghosh, R. (2021). The Global Impact of Yoga: Celebrating International Yoga Day. International Journal of Cultural Studies, 23(4), 500–512.

Global Wellness Institute. (2023). Global Wellness Economy Monitor. Global Wellness Institute.

Kaur, P. (2021). Media Literacy and Ancient Knowledge: Navigating the Challenges. Media Studies Journal, 15(3), 234–250.

Merton, R. K. (1968). Thematic Analysis of Social Theory and Research. Social Forces, 46(3), 242–256.

Ministry of AYUSH. (2023). Global Acceptance and Recognition of Ayurveda and yoga. Government of India.

Mishra, A. (2021). Digital Dissemination of Ancient Indian Knowledge Systems: A Study of Online Yoga Platforms. Journal of East-West Knowledge, 5(1), 22–39.

Rajasekaran, P. (2020). Traditional Knowledge in Contemporary Science: A Case for Ayurveda. Journal of Indian Medicine and Ethics, 3(2), 77–82.

Rao, K. (2020). Accessing Ancient Knowledge: The Role of Digital Libraries in India. Journal of Digital Humanities, 7(2), 67–81.

Schiller, H. I. (1976). Communication and Cultural Domination. M. E. Sharpe.

Sharma, R. (2022). Sparsh Ganga: A Social Media Initiative for Reviving Traditional Water Conservation Practices. Environmental Communication, 10(3), 345–359.

Sinha, T. (2019). The Impact of Documentary Films on Public Perception of Indian Culture. Journal of Cultural Studies, 36(3), 44–61.

Verma, K. (2021). Case Studies of Cultural Resilience: Ancient Knowledge in Modern India. Journal of Cultural Studies, 24(1), 77–95.