

Shifting the Episteme of Sustainability through the lens of India's Traditional Wisdom and Reclaiming Harmony

Manish Verma

Research Scholar

Department of Political Science

University of Delhi, Delhi-110007

Tanu

Research Scholar

Department of Political Science

University of Delhi, Delhi-110007

Abstract

Climate change has prompted a discussion over sustainable development which in turn has initiated several worldwide reforms. Amidst these transformations, the nexus between 'developmentality' and the West supremacy over economy emerges as a pivotal arena for exploration. This research paper aims to critically analyze the sustainability paradigm predominant in the Western context and projecting India's rich culture and knowledge systems as potential alternatives for promoting global welfare. This paper unravels the tenets of Western sustainability in order to reveal its shortcomings and prejudices that is based on profit making only and not sustainable at all. This mind-set of 'developmentality' treats human and environment as an object that lacks justice, equity, common and collective ethics, and harmony. The Brundtland Report, 1987 popularized the sustainability concept that has three pillars that is social, economic and ecological but it ignored the culture. While culture should be the heart of debate about sustainable development. India has lots of methodologies for the protection of the environment and sustainability. Their rich and diverse culture is the crucial element that hinges on sustainability through the pursuit of integration of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, body to soul, human to human, human to environment. India has so many localized ideas, customs, cultures, practices, values and knowledge systems for centuries. By engaging these ideas and culture with our policies we can shift the episteme of sustainability and also can project the path of true sustainability. India's tradition of non-violence and pluralism, diversity and tolerance, its Yoga and Ayurveda, and classical dances are popularized all over the world that contributes to the well being of all. Through a comparative analysis, this paper seeks to highlight the potential of India's traditions in promoting ecological harmony, social equity, and economic prosperity on a global scale.

Keywords- Sustainability, Climate change, Developmentality, Harmony and Social equity.

Introduction

In this era of environmental degradation, climate change, and socioeconomic inequality, the debate of sustainability has become essential to the advancement of humanity. But in current sustainability paradigms, ancient knowledge systems—which are deeply rooted in national, cultural and ecological ethos are frequently disregarded. In order to reshape the episteme of sustainability, this research paper aims to investigate the transformational potential of ancient knowledge from India, emphasising the necessity of restoring balance between humans and nature. It projects the path of sustainability which reclaims the peace and harmony in the world by criticizing the mindset of 'developmentality'. India is well-known for its rich cultural legacy and traditional wisdom. It also has a wealth of traditional knowledge systems that have guided humanity for thousands of years. These wisdom traditions, which are fundamentally rooted in holistic lifestyles, indigenous practices, and spiritual ideologies, provide invaluable insights for living in harmony with the natural world.

This paper aims to elucidate the traditional wisdom of India's importance in the current discourse on sustainability. It seeks to highlight the inherent sustainability principles of indigenous practices—such as Ayurveda, Yoga, and traditional agriculture as well as its capacity to guide and improve contemporary sustainability models. By acknowledging the holistic insights embedded in indigenous knowledge systems and cultural heritage, alongside the advancements of scientific inquiry, we aim to chart a course towards a more inclusive and sustainable future. Through interdisciplinary collaboration and a commitment to learning from diverse sources, this paper seeks to uncover innovative approaches that can guide us towards a harmonious coexistence with our planet and each other.

Literature Review

Traditional knowledge systems have long served as pillars of cultural heritage and resilience in societies worldwide. The role of indigenous knowledge in promoting sustainability is crucial, especially in India, a nation recognised for its rich cultural diversity and age-old wisdom traditions. However, despite the inherent worth of these customs, there is still little discussion of them in the mainstream when it comes to sustainability. The debate about sustainable development is becoming apparent because of severe impact on environment that leads to climate change and the root cause of this change is the notion of 'developmentality' that is created by the West. But in our Indian culture, its rooted in millennia-old philosophies, spiritual traditions, and indigenous practices, traditional knowledge systems offer profound insights into harmonious coexistence with nature. The wealth of wisdom that has supported societies for decades comes to light to scholars as they delve into the historical and cultural background of different knowledge traditions. These indigenous practices, which range from Yoga's emphasis on unity with nature to Ayurveda's holistic approach to health and well-being, express a profound regard for the interdependence of all living things. Recognising the importance of traditional knowledge, empowering local communities, and encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration are all necessary for safeguarding it in order to protect cultural legacy, ecological sustainability, and social harmony.

The goals of the sustainability techniques propagated in the West have not been met. Due to the rising carbon emissions from resource exploitation, deforestation, international trade, and transportation, globalisation and market dynamics have a major effect on climate change. Consequently, the traditional knowledge systems are continuously in threat.

Threats to Traditional Wisdom: Tracing Developmentality

According to Deb (2009) 'developmentality' has devastated the natural resources of the earth as well as the traditional methodologies to conserve the environment and it has created an unjust system that threatening to the environment. These threats are caused by globalisation, commodification, fast modernization, environmental deterioration, and socioeconomic inequality. Indigenous wisdom is marginalised, its integrity is distorted, and its transmission is at risk by these threats. Around 7.6 million people from 185 countries participated in the worldwide climate strike that took place in September 2019 to protest the idea of never-ending growth that is connected to the contemporary concept of "development" and its destructive relationship to the climate crisis that the world is currently facing (Das, 2021).

If we understand about the threats to traditional wisdom, we find that it comes from the so-called developed countries which the West countries. The concept of development was seemed as acquiring and storing more wealth by exploiting the natural resources. It interprets development as expansion of European culture and considering other cultures as inferior by putting human domination over nature. After the Renaissance, the industrial revolution continuously evolved the progressive changes such as it put forward the 'Social Darwinism' theory that justify free-market competition which is linear progressivism projected. This progressivist programme defended colonialism as well as the extermination of the global South's primitive populations and cultures. It continued the further extension in the current phase of political economy and considering the people of global South are backward or even lazy (Deb, 2009). This developmentality has flawed conception,

The problem lies not in lack of implementation, but in conception of development as linear, unidirectional, material, and financial growth, driven by commodification and capitalist markets (Kothari, Salleh, Escobar, Demaria, & Acosta, 2019).

This narrow perspective fails to account for the holistic well-being of societies and the preservation of traditional wisdom and cultural heritage. According to Chakrabarty (2018) the concept of the 'Anthropocene' challenges conventional notions of human history and environmental impact. He suggests that the 'Anthropocene Time' represents a new geological epoch characterized by the profound influence of human activity on Earth's systems. This influence extends beyond mere pollution or resource exploitation; it encompasses fundamental alterations to the

planet's geology, atmosphere, and biodiversity. It is based on the human-centred approach and market based so it sometimes may be said as 'Capitalocene' or 'Econocene'. Within this framework the pursuit of economic growth at all costs lead to environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, and exploitation of natural resources, further undermining the sustainability of traditional livelihoods and knowledge systems that are intricately connected to the land and ecosystems. However, among the most vulnerable populations worldwide are 370 million indigenous people. The corporate giants' unstoppable hunger to plunder natural resources, mega-dam projects, chemical agriculture, and development-induced displacement have all posed serious risks to them. This has weakened their strong bond with the natural world throughout the years (Mohanty, 2021).

Debate on sustainability and Indigenous Knowledge System-

The continuous mindset of developmentalism leads to the drastic impact on climate change that prompts so many international transformations and then the concept of 'sustainable development' gets popularised in Brundtland Report in 1987 named report of the 'World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future' which defines,

"Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland G., 1987).

But this is based on the three-dimensional model of sustainable development that is social, economic, and ecological which lacks the culture. Whereas culture should be heart of debate about sustainable development. But this model is biased by the economy and tries to universalize the idea of sustainability. Kothari, Salleh, Escobar, Demaria, & Acosta (2019) also say that "the mantra of sustainability was swallowed up by capitalism early on, and then emptied of ecological content." They further reveal the flaws of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by pointing out that it has not proper analysis about the structural roots of poverty and unsustainability. It continued gives importance to the economic growth by putting Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as the indicator of progress in which science and technology considers as panacea, neglecting its impact and marginalizing 'other' knowledge. It lacks justice and equity, common and collective ethics, and ecological sustainability features. SDGs do not adequately acknowledge or incorporate Indigenous knowledge. Its implementation frameworks frequently ignore traditional ecological knowledge, community-based resource management techniques, and cultural heritage preservation, all of which are essential to indigenous societies. This exclusion keeps people on the margins and keeps indigenous wisdom from reaching its full potential for sustainable outcomes.

On the other hand, sustainability lies in the indigenous tradition and culture. The national and international community must acknowledge indigenous peoples and their knowledge as essential partners in addressing climate change, sustainable development, and global biodiversity conservation (Sultana & Muhammad, 2018). A Programme Management Officer at United Nation Environmental Programme, Siham Drissi talks about the recognition and mechanisms of indigenous knowledge system by saying that

"Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge has informed how to practically ensure the balance of the environment in which they live so it may continue to provide essential services – such as water, fertile soil, food, shelter, medicines – to all life forms," (UNEP, 2022).

Indigenous communities have cultivated deep insights and practices over generations, rooted in their close relationship with the land. This knowledge encompasses sustainable resource management, ecosystem stewardship, and harmonious coexistence with nature. In addition to scientific knowledge, traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge is becoming increasingly vital in the process of making environmental decisions on a worldwide scale. International treaties and protocols have been established as a result of this acknowledgment with the goal of safeguarding traditional knowledge and incorporating it into scientific evaluations and environmental policy. Indigenous peoples' participation in these processes may increase if successful strategies from these debates are put into reality. Furthermore, to improve community resilience and advance sustainable development, continuous assistance is required for tracking traditional knowledge and disseminating examples of achievement (UNO, 2014).

Shifting the Episteme of Sustainability through Integration of India's Traditional Wisdom

Traditional knowledge systems, which have their roots in India's rich cultural legacy and traditional customs, provide invaluable insights on holistic living, sustainability, and societal well-being. The foundation for an in-depth study of how embracing traditional wisdom from India could shift the episteme of sustainability and change our thinking and behaviours to create a future that is more equitable, sensitive to cultural differences, and ecologically harmonious. The wisdom of traditional India has a holistic point of view that sees nature and humanity as interconnected. This perspective emphasises how humans and the natural world are intertwined and values human

sensitivity to the environment, as seen in ancient writings such as the Vedas, Buddhist teachings, Jain writings, and Kautilya's Arthashastra. These writings, which emphasised the importance of living in balance with the environment, established the fundamentals of sustainability long ago (Sharma & Tewari, 2017).

The Nayakrishi Andolan (New Agriculture Movement) in Bengal region presented its sustainable idea of agriculture and food chain that is based on biological civilization. The idea of 'Shahoj' was popularised as a tool for thinking and learning. It has deep roots in the spiritual tradition of Bengal, signifying an innately clear-cut and uncomplicated way of being in the cosmos. Philosophically speaking, it disapproves of hierarchies between the sensual, intellectual, and imaginative faculties and promotes a single method of responding to both internal and exterior realities. 'Shahoj', translated literally, is an exploration of the bio-spiritual potential of human societies to rise above oppressive and dehumanizing existence and strive for peaceful cohabitation with the actual material world (Nayakrishi Andolan, 2017). Along with this, many localized ideas, customs, cultures, practices, and knowledge systems in India have the true path of sustainability. By engaging these ideas and culture into policy formulation, we can shift the episteme of sustainability. India is frequently at the vanguard of sustainability projects, can cooperate and partner internationally to exchange policy frameworks, technology innovations, and best practices. These countries have an ethical philosophical basis for ecology such as India nurturing the idea of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam' (to see the world as one family), 'Swaraj' meaning 'self-reliant and self-governance'. If we look at the tourism sector it has launched a social awareness campaign 'Atitho Devo Bhava' meaning 'be the one from whom the guest is God'. This is for advertising the stakeholders and public to sensitize tourists and also for good behaviour towards tourists, ensuring cleanliness, hygiene, and safety (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). Local towns can access a plethora of information and resources by forming sister-city partnerships or taking part in international networks, which promotes cross-border collaboration for sustainable development.

To liberate knowledge production regarding the global context outside of Euramerica from the confines of elitist, male-centric positivist thinking prevalent in modernist ideologies of the 19th and 20th centuries, post-colonial and feminist criticisms are necessary (Derichs, Kalia, Knorr, & Fleschenberg, 2023). Their ideas and methodology truly suit sustainability and shift the episteme of sustainability from the West to the indigenous tradition and culture. India is motivated from the Western perspective research in policy-making but it has already the best solution in its Vedas and Upanishads as well as in its socio-cultural practices for example there is a verse in Vrihadarnyaka Upanishad,

“Om Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah

Sarve Santu Niraamayaah |

Sarve Bhadraanni Pashyantu

Maa Kashcid-Duhkha-Bhaag-Bhavet |

Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||” (Green Message, 2024).

Meaning -Om, May All be Happy, May All be Free from Illness. May All See What is Auspicious. May no one Suffer. Om Peace, Peace, Peace. This shloka encapsulates the essence of India's philosophy of sustainability, which emphasizes interconnectedness, compassion, and the well-being of all living beings. This philosophy is enshrined in its culture and we see the resurgence of this kind of approach in its policies and principles and glorifying the richness of the land. Unlike anthropocentric approach, India's philosophy of sustainability is deeply rooted in its spiritual and philosophical traditions, which view humans as part of a larger ecological system rather than separate entities. India's ancient texts, including the Vedas, Upanishads, and scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita, advocate for sustainable living practices that respect and honour nature. These texts promote principles of stewardship, moderation, and reverence for the environment, guiding individuals towards a harmonious coexistence with the natural world.

In response to the ongoing climate crisis, there is a need for a framework capable of mitigating existing damage and preventing further harm to both humanity and the environment. The 'Vikalp Sangam' or the 'Confluence of Alternatives' platform has been leading the charge in launching these initiatives in India. In a variety of areas, including education, community-based conservation, renewable energy, agriculture, forestry, water conservation, grassroots politics, and more, it acts as a forum for people to participate in exploratory conversations and actions. By working together and sharing experiences and information, participants want to create a new paradigm for socio-political and economic life that takes into account the difficulties brought on by the climate catastrophe (Das, 2021). The study on initiatives of Chaitanyabhai by Patel, et al. (2023) found that the traditional rainwater harvesting techniques, like the Matka tank, can help mitigate the effects of climate change-related water scarcity. Given its many facets, heritage preservation—whether cultural, social, or technological requires a multidisciplinary approach. Even

with the present scarcity of drinkable water, we shouldn't disregard the effectiveness of our ancestors' ancient methods of conserving water. Safeguarding these traditions entails supporting and advancing artisans' skills through the adoption of their practices. In the field of agriculture, there is need of integrating traditional practices into modern agricultural techniques to enhance sustainability. These traditional methods, which have their roots in regional ecosystems, offer responsible, and sustainable solutions. Combined with contemporary methods like scientific soil health management, they can result in more environmentally friendly farming practices. For example, increasing soil fertility and lowering the need for artificial fertilisers can be achieved by combining organic manure with a variety of crop kinds. Resilient agricultural systems depend on biodiversity, and conventional farming practices like mixed cropping encourage a diversity of plants and animals. Using genetically diverse seeds and maintaining natural environments on farms are two examples of contemporary tactics that can increase biodiversity (Sekhar, et al., 2024). In the context of shifting the episteme of sustainability, such initiatives demonstrate a move towards a more inclusive and holistic approach, integrating diverse perspectives and experiences to redefine our understanding and practices of sustainability.

Yoga and Ayurveda: Holistic health, personal well being and environmental harmony

Yoga and Ayurveda are ancient practices originating from India that promote holistic health, personal well-being, and environmental harmony. Yoga, originating from Indian philosophy, is an ancient and multifaceted practice. Although it was originally based on spirituality, it is now widely used as a way to improve mental and physical health. While ancient yoga includes other aspects, modern yoga in the West mainly concentrates on physical postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation (dhyana) (NCCIH Clearinghouse, 2023). Yoga encompasses physical postures (asanas), breath control (pranayama), meditation, and ethical principles (yamas and niyamas) aimed at achieving balance and harmony in body, mind, and spirit. Through regular practice, individuals can enhance their physical strength, flexibility, mental clarity, and emotional resilience. It fosters a deep connection with nature and encourages mindfulness and compassion towards all living beings, promoting environmental harmony. Yoga promotes inclusiveness and harmony by facilitating an internal psychological transformation in individuals. Through practice, yoga enhances mental clarity, enabling individuals to approach problems with a constructive attitude and contribute positively to society. Additionally, heightened awareness cultivated through yoga leads to environmentally beneficial decisions, such as reducing plastic use, walking instead of driving, and advocating for clean air and water. These actions collectively contribute to the fight against climate change (Arivalan, 2022).

The comparative study among the practitioners of Yoga and non-Yoga in South Florida by Weisner & Cameron (2020) find that Yoga promotes mental clarity, a stronger sense of connection to the environment, and spiritual experiences through its deep connection to nature and emphasis on self-discipline. As a result, practitioners frequently take up environmentally friendly habits. Yoga's active emphasis on breathing, stability, and bodily movement improves one's sense of sight. It has been discovered that Pranayama and Yoga practices lower blood pressure, enhance brain function, reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, and promote general well-being. That is why, on 11th December, 2014, our honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi proposed the idea of celebrating June 21st as International Yoga Day during his speech at the United Nations General Assembly by saying that,

“Yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition. Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action ... a holistic approach [that] is valuable to our health and our well-being. Yoga is not just about exercise; it is a way to discover the sense of oneness with yourself, the world and the nature” (UN, 2023).

PM Modi's efforts have extended beyond India's borders, with International Yoga Day celebrations being held in various countries worldwide. Indian missions and diplomatic representatives collaborate with local authorities and yoga enthusiasts to organize events, promoting yoga as a universal practice for health and harmony.

Ayurveda, often referred to as the "science of life," is a holistic system of medicine that emphasizes the interconnectedness of the body, mind, and environment. It focuses on maintaining balance in bodily functions through proper diet, lifestyle practices, herbal remedies, and detoxification techniques. Ayurveda recognizes the intimate relationship between human health and the natural world, advocating for the use of sustainable and environmentally-friendly practices to preserve the planet's resources. Ayurveda acknowledges the interconnectedness of all living beings through the five elements—earth, air, water, fire, and ether. Thus, maintaining equilibrium involves not only adjusting our behaviour to environmental shifts but also nurturing the environment itself to sustain its health and balance (UMA Editorial Team, 2023).

The research work of H S, Krishna, & Mahto (2022) presents how the Ayurveda's features is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) laid down by the United Nation. which is mentioned in the table below:

SDG 2 and SDG 12	Promotion of nutritious, locally available foods and responsible consumption
SDG 3	Overall health, well-being, and preventive care
SDG 6	Hygiene, aligning with clean water and sanitation goals
SDG 10	Promotes equality by emphasizing care and forgiveness for all
SDG 13	Locally available, seasonal foods, reducing the carbon footprint and supporting climate action
SDG 16	Well-being and indirectly promoting peace and justice
SDG 17	Sharing traditional knowledge and practices to promote a comprehensive approach to well-being and sustainable advancement.

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of moderation and balance in all aspects of life. By encouraging individuals to lead balanced lifestyles and follow ethical principles, Ayurveda fosters a sense of responsibility towards oneself and the environment. It includes principles such as seasonal eating, which aligns food consumption with the natural cycles of the environment, and the use of sustainable agricultural practices to cultivate medicinal plants. This mindset promotes sustainable living practices and reduces the ecological footprint of individuals and communities. Sabharwal (2023) showcases the ancient knowledge system and comments that by embracing the practice of Ayurveda as a sustainable lifestyle option for people and the environment, we can work towards the ideal of "One Health, One Family, and One World," which represents the harmonious period known as "Amrit kaal." Introducing Ayurveda through innovative approaches during India's G20 presidency represents a significant milestone in history.

Towards a Harmonious Future: Reimagining Sustainability

By integrating concepts and practices from ancient Indian philosophies such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Traditional Knowledge System, and Vedic principles, this approach seeks to reimagine sustainability as a holistic endeavour that encompasses not only environmental conservation but also social equity and spiritual well-being. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life forms and the importance of living in harmony with nature, drawing upon centuries-old wisdom to address contemporary sustainability challenges. Through the integration of Indian knowledge systems, this approach aims to foster a harmonious and sustainable future for both humanity and the planet. Bhattacharya & Stern (2023) shed lights on India's rich history that is characterized by profound traditions, knowledge system, and inherent talents, which garner international admiration and fortify its global standing. It has demonstrated a remarkable ability to thrive by harnessing the skills and talents of its own people.

Assuming accountability for our sustainable future entails recognising the inherent skills of our community, putting trust in them, and figuring out new ways to build on and develop these qualities. This method makes it easier to incorporate sustainability into our way of life since it views it as a way of thinking and acting rather than something that is forced upon us (Sahai, 2022). This perspective emphasizes empowering communities to drive sustainability initiatives, fostering a natural integration of sustainable practices into daily life. It highlights the importance of viewing sustainability as intrinsic to our mindset and behaviour, rather than an external imposition.

Building sustainable communities is vital, and India as well as the rest of the world is facing serious environmental challenges. In that sense, realising the development is more than simply economic expansion and that everyone must work together to achieve sustainability. India's initiative in tackling these issues emphasises how important international cooperation is and propagating its traditional wisdom such as the notion of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam'. We may help from one another's knowledge and skills while implementing practical solutions for a

sustainable future by utilising both modern science and traditional wisdom (Pandey, 2017). Acknowledging the value of indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage in complementing scientific advancements, ultimately leading to more inclusive and resilient solutions for the future.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this research paper aims to explore the paradigm shift in sustainability through the perspective of India's traditional wisdom, with a focus on reclaiming harmony with nature. To achieve this, a multi-faceted approach is adopted, beginning with an extensive literature review to survey existing scholarly work on sustainability, developmentality, climate change, traditional knowledge systems, and Indian cultural heritage. This review serves as a foundation for understanding key themes and theoretical frameworks relevant to the research topic. The comparative analysis is conducted to compare traditional sustainability practices across different cultures, including those from India and other regions. This comparative approach helps identify commonalities, differences, and potential synergies between diverse cultural approaches to sustainability.

In this research paper, incorporating gathered experience and knowledge as a methodology involves integrating experiential learning alongside traditional research methods to enrich our understanding of sustainability through the lens of India's traditional wisdom. This approach recognizes that insights gained from direct experience and practical engagement can complement and enhance the findings obtained through literature reviews. This could include joining community-led projects focused on sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, or conservation efforts and also the traditional practices applying by indigenous people. By immersing ourselves in these initiatives, this paper aims to gain first-hand experience and insights into how traditional knowledge is applied in real-world contexts. By embracing gathered experience and knowledge as a methodology, we seek to provide a more nuanced and holistic understanding of the subject matter, ultimately contributing to a comprehensive and impactful research paper that explores the potential of integrating traditional wisdom into contemporary sustainability practices.

Theoretical framework development is undertaken to synthesize insights from traditional wisdom, contemporary sustainability theories, and systems thinking. This conceptual framework guides the analysis and interpretation of research findings, facilitating the synthesis of knowledge and formulation of recommendations. The research findings are synthesized to draw connections between traditional wisdom, contemporary sustainability challenges, and potential pathways for transformative change. Actionable recommendations are provided for policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders to advance sustainability through the lens of India's traditional wisdom and the pursuit of harmony with nature.

Discussion

With an emphasis on regaining harmony with environment, this research paper has explored the transformative potential of incorporating traditional wisdom from India into the discourse on sustainability. After a thorough examination of contemporary science, ancient philosophy, and hands-on learning, we have pinpointed important themes and avenues for changing the way that sustainability is understood. Deb (2009) vision is the recognition of the interconnectedness between humans and the environment, as well as the intrinsic value of biodiversity and traditional knowledge systems. He highlights the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in stewarding natural resources and maintaining ecological balance. Deb advocates for the protection and promotion of indigenous knowledge and practices, which he views as valuable assets in the pursuit of sustainability. In the continuation of it, this research paper put forward the idea and projects the potential of integrating India's traditional wisdom into the discourse of sustainability. By reclaiming harmony with nature and embracing a more holistic and inclusive approach, we can pave the way for a more sustainable and resilient future for all. Through ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and action, we can work towards shifting the episteme of sustainability and fostering a deeper sense of connection and stewardship towards the natural world.

Conclusion

This research has investigated the feasibility of incorporating the traditional wisdom of India into the sustainability framework, emphasising the restoration of balance with the environment. By means of an interdisciplinary methodology that integrates perspectives from ancient philosophies, contemporary science, and hands-on learning, it has emphasised the importance of traditional knowledge systems in tackling current sustainability issues. It has revealed that India's rich cultural heritage offers valuable insights into holistic living, ecological balance, and community resilience. By drawing upon concepts such as Ayurveda, Yoga, and Vedic principles, we can cultivate a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of all life forms and the importance of living in harmony with nature.

This study has also highlighted the necessity of a shift in episteme, or a fundamental revision to the way we think about and approach sustainability. It argues for a more holistic and inclusive vision that includes traditional wisdom and cultural legacy, rather than interpreting sustainability only through the lenses of economic growth and technical progress. It is imperative that policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders recognize the importance of integrating traditional knowledge systems into sustainability initiatives. In conclusion, by reclaiming harmony with nature and integrating India's traditional wisdom into the discourse of sustainability, we can pave the way for a more balanced, resilient, and equitable future for all.

References

1. Andolan, N. (2017, November 26). *Cultivating 'Ananda': Joy of Farming and Healthy Living*. Retrieved from UBING: <https://ubinig.org/index.php/network/printArticleNayakrishi/2/46>
2. Arivalan, K. (2022, June 21). *Yoga Is The Perfect Tool For Sustainability, Say Experts*. Retrieved from FEMINA: <https://www.femina.in/wellness/health/yoga-is-the-perfect-tool-for-sustainability-say-experts-230092.html>
3. Bhattacharya, A., & Stern, N. (2023). Towards a Sustainable, Resilient and Prosperous Future for India: Investment, Innovation and Collaboration in a Changing World. *The Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment*, 1-15.
4. Chakrabarty, D. (2018). Anthropocene Time. *The Seventh History and Theory Lecture*, 5-32.
5. Clearinghouse, N. (2023, August). *Yoga: What You Need to know*. Retrieved from National Centre for Complementary and Integrative Health: <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/yoga-what-you-need-to-know>
6. Das, P. (2021, April 30). *Rethinking Development: Vikalp Sangam and the search for Alternatives in India*. Retrieved from Gestion y Ambiente: <https://doi.org/10.15446/ga.v24nsupl1.91896>
7. Deb, D. (2009). *Beyond Developmentality: Constructing Inclusive Freedom and Sustainability*. London and Sterling: Earthscan Publishing.
8. Derichs, C., Kalia, S., Knorr, L., & Fleschenberg, A. (2023). Introduction: Local Responses to Global Challenges. In L. Knorr, A. Fleschenberg, S. Kalia, & C. Derichs, *Local Responses to Global Challenges in Southeast Asia: A Transregional Studies Reader*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Company.
9. H S, D. M., Krishna, D. N., & Mahto, D. R. (2022). Ayurveda: A Time-Honoured Path to Sustainable Well-Being and Global Health. *Journal of Population Therapeutics & Clinical Pharmacology*, 1032-1037.
10. India, G. o. (2022). *Draft National Tourism Policy*. New Delhi: Ministry of Tourism.
11. Kothari, A., Salleh, A., Escobar, A., Demaria, F., & Acosta, A. (2019). Introduction: Finding Pluriversal Paths. In A. Kothari, A. Salleh, A. Escobar, F. Demaria, & A. Acosta, *Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary* (pp. xxi-xli). New Delhi: Tulika Books and Authors Upfront Publishing Services Limited.
12. Message, G. (2024, March). *Green Message: The Evergreen Messages of Spirituality, Sanskrit and Nature*. Retrieved from Green Message: https://greenmesg.org/stotras/vedas/om_sarve_bhavantu_sukhinah.php
13. Mohanty, A. (2021, January 16). *Indigenous people and nature: A tradition of conservation*. Retrieved from The Times of India: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/development-paradigms/indigenous-people-and-nature-a-tradition-of-conservation/>
14. Pandey, A. (2017, October 02). *What India can teach the World about Sustainability*. Retrieved from World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/10/what-india-can-teach-the-world-about-sustainability/>
15. Patel, M., Pant, V., Sikligar, H., Quadri, S., Bachar, N., & Maurya, N. (2023). Harnessing Conventional Wisdom for Rain Water Harvesting to Mitigate the Risks of Climate Change. *Environmental Conservation Journal*, 157-162.
16. Sabharwal, P. (2023). Marching towards Amritkaal @G20 with Ayurveda – The Soft Power of India. *IMCR Commentary*.
17. Sahai, S. S. (2022, July 09). *Sustainability: An Inherent Indian Thought Process*. Retrieved from The Times of India: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/blogs/voices/sustainability-an-inherent-indian-thought-process/>
18. Sekhar, M., Rastogi, M., CM, R., Saikanth, D., Rout, S., Kumar, S., & Patel, A. K. (2024). Exploring Traditional Agricultural Techniques Integrated with Modern Farming for a Sustainable Future : A Review. *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*, 185-198.
19. Sharma, E., & Tewari, R. (2017). Teaching Sustainability through Traditional Wisdom: A Conceptual Framework for Business Studies. *Current Science*, 236-244.
20. Sultana, R., & Muhammad, N. (2018). Role of Indigenous Knowledge in Sustainable Development. *International Journal of Development Research*, 18902-18906.
21. Team, U. E. (2023, November 07). *How Ayurveda Promotes Sustainable Health & Wellness*. Retrieved from UMA: <https://ayurveda.umaails.com/how-ayurveda-promotes-sustainable-health-wellness/>
22. UN. (1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. Rio de Janeiro: Oxford University Press.
23. UN. (2023, June 21). *International Day of Yoga 21 June*. Retrieved from United Nations: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/yoga-day>

24. UNEP. (2022, August 08). *Tapping into Indigenous Knowledge to protect Nature*. Retrieved from United Nation Environmental Programme: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/tapping-indigenous-knowledge-protect-nature>
25. UNO. (2014, June). *The Knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and Policies for Sustainable Development: Updates and Trends in the second decade of the World's Indigenous People*. Retrieved from IASG Thematic Paper_Traditional knowledge: https://www.un.org/en/ga/69/meetings/indigenous/pdf/IASG%20Thematic%20Paper_%20Traditional%20Knowledge%20-%20rev1.pdf
26. Weisner, M., & Cameron, M. M. (2020). Does Yoga Increase Sustainability? *World Views Environment Culture Region*, 1-23.