

**Essence of Traditional Knowledge**  
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Hello learners.

Welcome to the Indigenous Knowledge session. In this session, we will talk about indigenous knowledge and its definition, characteristics of indigenous knowledge, the significance of indigenous knowledge, the importance of indigenous knowledge, challenges faced, and the difference between indigenous knowledge and western knowledge. Indigenous knowledge or IK refers to the skills, knowledge, and beliefs utilized by native people to survive in a given geographic region. The knowledge accumulated by indigenous or local communities over generations living in a specific environment can also be broadly construed as indigenous knowledge or IK. The term encompasses all forms of knowledge, technologies, skills, practices, and beliefs that assist the community in creating stable livelihoods within their respective environments.

Let's see the definition of indigenous knowledge.

Indigenous knowledge can be defined as "A body of knowledge built up by a group of people through generations of living in close contact with nature" (Johnson, 1992). As per UN, the term "Indigenous" is defined as "Groups of people whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national communities, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations. People in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous are considered as descent people who inhabited geographical region to which belongs, at the time of colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries".

Most people think of indigenous knowledge as outdated, backwards, static, or 'unchanging.' Indigenous people are the first settlers in a specific location, who have a different culture and belief system example, the local Tribal, Native, First, or Aboriginal populations.

It has led to widespread use of the term local knowledge, which refers to any knowledge possessed by a group that lived off the land for a long period in a particular area.

In this approach, it is not necessary to understand whether the people in question are the original inhabitants of an area. What is important is to identify how people - aboriginal or non-aboriginal - in a particular region view and interact with their

environment, so that their knowledge can be mobilized for the design of effective interventions.

**So, what are the characteristics of indigenous knowledge?**

Its fundamental principles are dynamic, methodical, and universal.

The transmission occurs verbally rather than in writing.

It is based on teachings and knowledge experience that are passed down from generation to generation.

It is holistic in nature.

It can give people credibility.

It is based on observational experience and may be beneficial for decision making.

It governs the use of resources.

It is a way of living for their survival.

It is associated with the sustainable use of native resources.

Examines the holistic understanding of biological and human systems.

**Let's now look at the significance of indigenous knowledge.**

- The survival of every human being depends on the wholeness of nature and the elements it contains.
- It describes the specific circumstances of communities in connection to the environment and offers practical solutions to people's issues.
- It explains how cultural behaviours resulted from human adaptation to their environment
- Knowledge about 'Indigenous or Traditional knowledge' is a mix of simple but applied education, economics, politics, religion, sciences, and technologies found in indigenous societies.
- It is fundamental knowledge, but it provides a rich foundation for the development of modern society.

**So, why indigenous knowledge is important?**

Indigenous knowledge is given for local empowerment and development, increasing self-sufficiency and strengthening self-determination.

- The indigenous population can also contribute valuable information regarding how to manage the local environment.
- Indigenous knowledge offers local communities, particularly the marginalized, with problem-solving solutions.
- Indigenous knowledge on development challenges is an important component of global knowledge.
- Indigenous knowledge is a valuable resource that is less utilized in the development process.
- Using indigenous wisdom to obtain a deeper understanding of your surroundings might be beneficial.

**Let's look at the challenges faced in using indigenous knowledge.**

- Lack of adequate management
- Lack of documentation
- Understanding their knowledge is eroding
- Less importance is given to indigenous knowledge

Commercialisation and economic instability can destroy indigenous knowledge  
So, how indigenous knowledge is different from western knowledge. Let's see.

- Indigenous knowledge is a visual representation of oral knowledge whereas, western knowledge is based on written words.
- Indigenous knowledge is learning by doing and experiencing whereas, western knowledge is through formal education.
- Indigenous knowledge has a holistic approach whereas, western knowledge has a reductionist approach.
- Indigenous knowledge is subjective and western knowledge is objective.
- Indigenous knowledge sharing is through storytelling whereas, western knowledge is through a didactic approach.

With this, we come towards the end of our session. In today's session, we discussed about indigenous knowledge and its definition, characteristics of indigenous knowledge, the significance of indigenous knowledge, the importance of indigenous knowledge, challenges faced, and the difference between indigenous knowledge and western knowledge.

I hope you would have got a fair understanding of the essence of indigenous knowledge  
Thank you and Happy Learning!

Thank you Learners