

From Prescription to Practice: Grounding Value Education in the *Triguna* Theory of Indian Knowledge Systems

Iram Sarver¹

Abstract

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes adopting an education system rooted in the Indian ethos and recommends including Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in the school curriculum to support students' holistic development. In response to this directive, this conceptual paper examines the potential of incorporating the Triguna framework—a core concept in Samkhya philosophy that delineates the three attributes of mind: Sattva (clarity and harmony), Rajas (activity and passion), and Tamas (inertia and delusion)—into Value Education. The paper suggests that Value Education should transcend the conventional approach of moralistic teaching and, in fact, be viewed as a practical science of the mind and behaviour, applied through psychological models. It discusses how educators can apply *Guna*-based learner profiles to identify students' value orientations and behavioural challenges, thereby facilitating differentiated and empathetic teaching strategies. The study has emphasized the application of various methods of integration—reflective methods, mindful methods, and discursive methods. These methods are aimed at inculcating Sattvic attributes like truthfulness, compassion, and value judgment in the students. By equipping the students with such tools of self-regulation and value judgment, the focus of this IKS-based approach is on the development of real virtue rather than theoretical knowledge. This is aimed at making Value Education a dynamic and practically oriented process so that the students can become value-driven and globally skilled citizens in the true sense of the NEP 2020.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Value Education, Triguna, Indian Psychology, NEP 2020

¹ Ms. Iram Sarver is a Research Scholar at Department of Educational Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

Introduction

The release of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 marks a pivotal moment in the history of Indian education, shaping a path toward a decolonized and transformative system that is "rooted in Indian ethos" (Ministry of Education, 2020, p. 5). The policy clearly promotes integrating Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the curriculum, moving beyond a sole focus on memorization to encourage the holistic development of the child, covering intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and ethical aspects. This initiative aims to prepare students not only for economic success but also for life. It seeks to create individuals who are compassionate, resilient, and creatively productive members of a global society (Ministry of Education, 2020, p. 4). The NEP's focus on IKS is not a nostalgic look back; it is a forward-thinking approach. It draws on India's rich philosophical heritage to address modern educational challenges. This positions indigenous knowledge as a vital resource for learning in the 21st century.

However, there exists a wide and ever-widening chasm between this lofty vision and its actual practice on the ground, especially when it comes to Value Education. Value Education in schools in India has traditionally meant a prescriptive mode, usually limited in scope to a short period of time spent on moral education or integrated in a passive manner in the curriculum of other subjects (Kunar, 2024). This mode of value education, as identified by different education thinkers such as Krishna Kumar (2018), usually follows a transmission format in which values are portrayed in the form of a set of rules that the students are expected to accept in a passive manner. In fact, this drawback was identified by the NCF 2005 itself, wherein value-based education was found not to be possible through "occasional lectures or talks," but had to be embedded into the very culture of the school (NCERT, 2005, p.61). The end result of this prescriptive approach to Value Education is that students are able to regurgitate the importance of values like honesty and compassion during an exam, but are unable to connect this knowledge with self-awareness and psychological capabilities to act on these values during real-life situations of ethical dilemma, peer pressure, and internal conflict. This failure to bridge this disconnect between knowledge and action renders Value Education ineffective, thereby failing to achieve its primary objective of impacting character and behaviour.

In direct response to this significant gap, this paper argues that Value Education needs a fundamental shift in its epistemology. It must be completely reimagined not simply as a subject that teaches a set of moral rules, but as a practical and experiential science of the mind and behavior. This new perspective places values not as external rules to follow, but as natural

expressions of a cultivated and self-regulated inner state. A robust psychological model is also necessary for this shift to occur. A model that offers students and teachers a common language to observe, understand, and navigate their own minds. While Western psychology has its place, the call of the NEP's directive is to look inward to India's own intellectual traditions for an appropriate model.

For this purpose, we suggest integrating the Triguna framework, a fundamental psychological theory based on the Samkhya school of Indian philosophy. The Samkhya school is one of the six orthodox (astika) schools of Indian philosophy and offers an elaborate metaphysical and psychological description of reality that is based on its theory of the three gunas: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas (Larson & Bhattacharya, 1987). The gunas are not considered entities but rather three fundamental qualities that constitute the entirety of prakriti (material nature) and its components, including the human mind. Sattva is associated with purity, harmony, intelligence, and goodness; Rajas is associated with energy, movement, passion, and dynamism; and Tamas is associated with inertia, stability, dullness, and ignorance (Bhagavad Gita, 14.5-9). The classical text of the Bhagavad Gita provides an easy explanation of the gunas and how they bind the human soul to its physical body through attachment to their respective manifestations: knowledge to Sattva, actions to Rajas, and ignorance to Tamas (Bhagavad Gita, 14.6-7). The contemporary relevance of this theory has been increasingly acknowledged. According to psychologist (Rao & Paranjpe, 2023), "the guna theory offers a dynamic typology of personality that can be used to explain individual differences in thought, feeling, and desire without being rigid and determinate."

Using this sophisticated indigenous framework, educators can transcend the one-size-fits-all approach to teaching morality. The Triguna framework allows for the development of Guna learner profiles, which enables educators to view learners' natural value orientations and behavioral challenges through a framework of empathetic understanding. Rather than viewing a child's "inability to sit still" as "disruptive," this child may be viewed as being in a state of Rajasik guna and channeling this energy towards constructive and productive activity. Similarly, a child's lethargic and withdrawn nature may not be attributed to "laziness" but may be viewed as being in a state of Tamasik guna and needing strategies to uplift and motivate this child. The ultimate aim and objective of this educational process is to cultivate Sattva—awareness and understanding that transcends Rajas and Tamas, which is essential for all human and animal activity and rest, and to establish Sattva as the guiding principle that balances Rajas

and Tamas (Radhakrishnan, 1948). By engaging learners in reflective journaling to observe their mental state, mindful practice to self-regulate their mental state, and discursive practice to analyse their story through the Guna framework, learners may be provided with appropriate tools to help them navigate their own inner world.

This paper will contend that this IKS-based approach can help foster the development of "embodied virtue" in which values like truthfulness, compassion, and moral discernment become second nature to the individual, rather than abstract ideas. By making the process of value development conscious and practical, this approach seems to align well with the NEP 2020's ideal of an educational system that is "transformational" rather than "transactional" (Ministry of Education, 2020, p. 4). It hopes to produce not only knowledgeable persons but also value-driven, resilient, and self-assured persons who can tackle the complexities of the modern world wisely and virtuously.

Review of Literature

The review of existing literature synthesizes across three key areas to establish the theoretical basis for integrating the Triguna framework into Value Education. It starts by critiquing the limitations of current Value Education models, then places the study within the growing field of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in education, and finally, discusses the Triguna theory by examining its classical roots and its relevance to modern psychological concepts.

The Inadequacy of Prevailing Value Education Models

The principal forms of Value Education in contemporary schooling systems have largely failed to deliver because of their prescriptive and superficial nature. Various limiting paradigms have been identified. First, there is the dogmatic or doctrinal approach that offers values as a set of unchanging rules, usually derived from a single source such as a religion or culture. This method, as Nucci (2009) notes, does not promote the critical moral reasoning needed for children to navigate complex, diverse societies; instead, it encourages conformity that can crumble under external pressures or internal conflicts.

Second is the fear-based or punitive model, which relies on the threat of punishment, either divine or social, to bring about compliance. However, according to Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, this external form of control actually decreases intrinsic motivation. Once this threat is lifted, the pro-social behavior will cease because the individual has not been

socialized to see the inherent value in the behavior, only to avoid punishment. This is a "do and don't" culture, which is not conducive to autonomous ethical decision-making.

Thirdly, the exclusive approach based on the narrative form also shows its limitations. Even if this approach is better than the former one, there is a risk that values will be seen as something fictional or based on stories from history. Saxena (2017), for instance, claims that the students tend to respect the hero in the story. However, they do not have the opportunity to make a connection and apply the values in their real-life stories of jealousy, anger, etc. The values are "out there," associated with heroes and legends, while they should be "in here," in the hands of the individual.

These arguments are further confirmed by empirical research. For instance, Berkowitz & Grych (1998) used longitudinal research to demonstrate that character education based only on didactic learning has little lasting effects on actual moral behaviour. Sokol and colleagues (2010) used a meta-analysis to demonstrate that for moral education to be effective, there is a need to actively engage students' cognitive and emotional skills through reflection and discussion rather than mere learning. All this research points to the urgent need to create a new model that treats value development as an internal psychological process rather than an external one.

The Resurrection of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) in Education

In response to the limitations of the Western-centric approaches, and in keeping with the NEP 2020's mandate, a strong academic movement is emerging to advocate for the incorporation of IKS in the current education system. This movement attempts to retrieve India's rich intellectual heritage as a relevant resource for the present education system, rather than seeing it as a relic of the past. According to Paranjpe (2019), "IKS offers us a vast reservoir of theories of mind, consciousness, and well-being, which have systematically been marginalized in the post-colonial education system."

The debate on the incorporation of IKS is no longer limited to the superficial level of including a few Sanskrit verses or historical dates in the school curriculum. The academic community is currently advocating for the application of Indian epistemology to tackle pressing concerns of the day. For instance, the efforts of the IKS Division of the AICTE are at the forefront of integrating Indian philosophical, linguistic, and scientific traditions into the higher education curriculum (AICTE, 2021).

This paper positions itself firmly within this emerging and important scholarly conversation. It directly responds to experts like Giri (2020), who call for "creative recoveries" of Indian psychological models to address modern challenges in areas like mental health and education. By suggesting the use of the Triguna framework—a complex IKS-based psychological model—in Value Education, this study offers a practical, actionable strategy for the broader effort to revitalize IKS.

The Triguna Theory: From Classical Foundations to Modern Psychology

The Triguna theory is most thoroughly explained in the Samkhya philosophy, one of the oldest and most influential of the six orthodox (āstika) schools of Indian thought. According to the main text of the school, the Samkhya Karika by Ishvarakrishna (around the 4th century CE), the three guṇas of sattva, rajas, and tamas are the fundamental principles (tattvas) of Prakriti (material nature). The text states, “The whole universe, the human mind included, is the product of the interplay of the three forces” (Larson & Bhattacharya, 1987).

The Bhagavad Gita, which combines Samkhya philosophy with practical ethics, provides a more accessible and detailed analysis of the guṇas. In Chapter 14, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna that the three guṇas bind the eternal soul to the temporary body. Sattva, because of its purity, is illuminating and free from suffering, but it binds through attachment to happiness and knowledge. Rajas is characterized by passion, arising from cravings and attachments; it binds the soul through attachment to action. Tamas, born of ignorance, deludes all beings; it binds through heedlessness, laziness, and sleep (Bhagavad Gita, 14.6-8). These classical texts demonstrate that guṇas are not moral absolutes but are dynamic forces that are psycho-physical in nature and that influence perception, cognition, and conduct.

Modern Psychology and Neuroscience

Crucially, current scholars are endorsing the Triguna framework as a robust psychological model. Indian psychologists have spearheaded this movement. The social construction of consciousness highlights how indigenous concepts like the guṇas provide a more comprehensive understanding of personality by integrating cognitive, conative, and affective domains, unlike the mostly cognitive focus of Western models (Misra, 2011). According to Dr. Matthijs Cornelissen, a leading figure in the development of Indian Psychology, the guṇas are a "theory of qualities" that may be used to explain the full gamut of human experience, including the most stagnant and the most sublime states of consciousness (Cornelissen, 2014). He

contends that the framework is essentially practical because it offers a language for self-observation and deliberate self-transformation.

Researchers have also started making parallels between gunas and existing psychological concepts. For example, developing sattva is closely linked to the psychological concept of self-regulation, which is the ability to monitor and control one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors to achieve long-term goals (Vohs & Baumeister, 2016). Observing an individual's guna exemplifies metacognition, or "thinking about thinking," a vital part of emotional intelligence and learning (Flavell, 1979).

Furthermore, exploratory psychometric studies have attempted to connect the gunas with the Big Five personality traits. For example, in the study conducted by Wolf (1999), Sattva showed positive correlations with Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, Rajas with Extraversion, and Tamas with Neuroticism. Although these correlations should not be seen as equivalent in any way, since the gunas are constantly changing states rather than traits, there is a certain level of convergent validity that makes the ancient framework accessible and researchable within the context of modern science. This body of work shows that the Triguna theory is not just an archaic religious practice, as the above discussion might have indicated, but is actually a sophisticated and very relevant theory in modern Psychology in Education.

The body of research in Value Education, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), and indigenous psychological theories has achieved considerable conceptual mileage but has also exposed considerable conceptual lacunae. Modern methods in Value Education have come in for heavy flak for being prescriptive and promoting set values. These methods, as Nucci (2009) has pointed out, also fail to promote independent moral reasoning capabilities necessary for functioning in a modern society. Further, Deci & Ryan's (2000) Self Determination Theory has pointed out how imposed value systems can actually undermine intrinsic motivation and promote behavior by compliance alone.

Some studies support this view, showing that prescriptive moral instruction has limited long-term impact (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998; Sokol et al., 2010). Even narrative-based methods, while more engaging, often fail to turn values into lived practice without reflection or experiential support (Saxena, 2017). In response, recent educational discussions—especially after the release of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020—have renewed focus on IKS as a resource for holistic and contextually relevant teaching. academics such as Paranjpe (2019)

and Giri (2020) emphasize that Indian philosophical schools provide a holistic framework for the interrelated domains of mind, behavior, and ethics, which can be helpful in resolving current educational issues. The initiatives of organizations such as AICTE (2021) indicate a move towards applying IKS in a more concrete manner in education. Within this intellectual tradition, Triguna theory, based on the philosophical school of Samkhya, is a prominent psychological theory that describes human behavior in terms of the interplay of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. These gunas, described in classical texts such as the Bhagavad Gita, are said to be related to cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes. Modern scholars such as Cornelissen (2014) and Rao & Paranjpe (2023) emphasize their relevance in understanding personality, self-regulation, and even consciousness. Though this concept has a strong philosophical foundation and has gained acceptance in psychology, its application in school education, particularly in Value Education, has yet to be explored. This paper proposes a model that applies Triguna theory in Value Education.

Methodology

The research design of this study is qualitative in nature and is based on a conceptual-analytical research approach. Unlike most research studies, this research paper is not based on any data collection process but is a synthesis of literature from different disciplines and sources, ranging from classical literature to contemporary literature and research in Value Education and National Education Policy 2020. In this research paper, a critical analysis of existing Value Education models has been conducted to identify their conceptual limitations, and then a theoretical analysis of the Triguna framework has been conducted to understand its dynamic nature and implications for a psychological theory of human behavior. On this basis, a unique Value Education pedagogy has been developed that includes elements of learner profiling, reflective practice, discursive learning, and self-regulation. It takes a normative and exploratory approach to bridge the gap between philosophical theory and practical application. Although it does not include data validation, the study presents a theoretically derived model that can guide future empirical validation.

Conceptual Framework: The Triguna as a Dynamic Pedagogical Tool

The main contribution of this paper is creating a conceptual framework that turns the metaphysical principles of Triguna theory into a practical method for Value Education. This framework is based on the core idea that the gunas are not fixed personality traits but are

changing, flexible states of mind that vary with thoughts, actions, environmental influences, and intentional practices (Cornelissen, 2014).

This flexibility makes the model more effective in terms of pedagogy by moving the focus away from the labelling of the child and toward the empowering of the child with the knowledge that they can become aware of and control their inner condition. From this perspective, Value Education is viewed as an organized process of "Sattvic cultivation," where students learn to identify Rajasic agitation and Tamasic inertia and apply techniques to overcome them. To facilitate this in an educational setting, we suggest using "Guna-Based Learner Profiling," which is designed as a non-diagnostic, observational method intended for empathetic teaching.

It shifts a teacher's perspective from judging behaviour as "good" or "bad" to understanding it as an expression of a dominant psycho-physical state, thereby enabling targeted pedagogical interventions. The profile is summarized in the table below.

Guna Dominance	Value Orientation	Potential Learning Challenges	Educational Goal
Sattva	Curiosity, compassion, truthfulness, focus	May avoid conflict; can be overly idealistic; may lack dynamism	Nurture leadership, resilience, and grounded action
Rajas	Ambition, courage, dynamism, and enthusiasm	Impatience, competitiveness, frustration, easily distracted	Channel raw energy into sustained, focused action
Tamas	Loyalty, stability, contentment, patience	Procrastination, lack of motivation, inertia, resistance to change	Inspire, energise, and create clarity and purpose

Source: By Author

For example, a teacher observing a student's Rajasic restlessness might assign them a dynamic, hands-on leadership role instead of reprimanding them. A student displaying Tamasic lethargy

could be engaged through group activities or real-world problems to spark interest, rather than being labeled as uninterested.

The final goal of this framework is not the complete removal of Rajas and Tamas, since both are necessary for action and rest, respectively. This is because, according to the Bhagavad Gita (14.12), nothing exists in pure form; the gunas are in a constant state of interaction. Instead, the objective is to make Sattva the guiding principle, or the state of conscious awareness where Rajas is used for selfless and focused action, and Tamas is used for rest and contemplation (Rao & Paranjpe, 2023). In this context, Value Education is defined as “the art and science of maintaining internal balance within which righteous action is a spontaneous product of a well-regulated mind.”

Practical Strategies for the Classroom

This section proposes a comprehensive three-tier pedagogical approach for the application of the Triguna framework. This approach is experiential, circular, and age-appropriate, allowing the student to grow from self-awareness to critical thinking to self-regulation. The main goal is to cultivate "embodied virtue" by intentionally developing values as a continuous process.

Strategy 1: Reflective Self-Observation through "Guna Journaling"

The crux of this technique is metacognition. Guna Journaling is a technique that offers students a framework to observe their internal states without judgment and make a direct connection between their internal states and their behaviours. This technique is helpful for students because it offers them a way to understand that their internal state is something that they can choose and that it impacts their behaviours.

Activity: The Guna Journal

- *Format:* A dedicated notebook or digital document with three columns such as situation, dominant guna & feeling, and effect.

Frequency: This practice should be brief, lasting only 5 minutes. It should be done at the end of the day or after a significant event has taken place (for example, after an exam, group work, or a conflict)

Implementation

Introduction to Vocabulary: The teacher will explain Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas using analogies that can be understood by students. For example: Sattva is like a lake that reflects nature's beauty. Rajas is like a stormy ocean that does not reflect nature's beauty. Tamas is like a muddy pond that does not reflect nature's beauty.

Guided Practice: Initially, the teacher will offer prompts that will help facilitate student reflection. In addition to the prompt used in the example, other prompts can include: Have you felt like you understood and cooperated with others when doing group work (Sattva)? Have you felt like you needed to be heard and prove yourself (Rajas)? Have you felt like you didn't care or participate (Tamas)? What was the result? When you received negative feedback about your group work, did you feel interested and open to learning from others (Sattva)? Did you feel defensive and angry (Rajas)? Or did you feel shut down and indifferent (Tamas)? What was the outcome?

Progression to Independence: Gradually, students will begin to write in their journals about significant life events and identify those events in which gunas played an important role. The teacher will act more as a facilitator and read students' journal entries (with their consent) to understand their patterns and offer support.

Strategy 2: Discursive Learning & "Guna Analysis of Narratives"

This approach transfers the locus of learning from the internal space to the external space, using stories as a proxy to discuss the complexities of human behavior and ethical challenges. Critical thinking skills are developed, as students recognize the power of their values to impact stories and their own lives, both in the epics and in their own stories.

Activity:

Ethical Deconstruction through the Guna Lens

- **Materials:** A carefully selected set of stories, including:
 - o **Classical IKS Texts:** Stories from the Panchatantra, Mahabharata, Ramayana.
 - o **Contemporary Media:** News stories, movie clips, Young Adult Literature.

o Historical Case Studies: Ethical decisions made by historical leaders.

Implementation

Group Discussion Framework: The teacher will share the story and lead the discussion with the students using the following set of questions:

Identification: "Whose actions in the story were Sattvic, Rajasic, or Tamasic? What are the reasons given in the text?"

Motivation Analysis: "What Rajasic or Tamasic desires or fears motivated Duryodhana not to return the kingdom? What would have been the Sattvic action, in the spirit of dharma and justice?"

o Consequence Mapping: "How would the chain of events have unfolded if the Rajasic action of anger or the Tamasic action of deception had taken place in the story? How did it escalate?"

o Personal Application: "Have you ever faced a similar, smaller-scale dilemma? How might applying a Sattvic intention change your approach?"

Role-Playing: Students can be asked to reenact a scene from a story first with the original Guna dominance, then again to show how applying Sattva might change the dialogue and outcome.

Strategy 3: Mindful Practices for Self-Regulation

To complete this learning cycle, students must be provided with tools to act as "change agents" to modify their own Guna states. This approach equips students with a "tool kit" of simple, secular techniques for self-regulation and empowerment. Students understand that they are not bound by their moods but can use their body and breath to foster an attitude of openness, focus, and inner peace—the ideal mindset for learning and for living ethically and morally.

Activity:

The Guna Toolkit - Practices for Mental Balance
These quick exercises can be used in class as needed, based on teacher observation and/or student recognition.

Implementation

- For Rajasic Agitation (Overactive, Distracted, Frustrated)

Practice: "Balloon Breathing" or "4-7-8 Breathing". In this practice, one takes a deep breath for 4 counts, holds it for 7 counts, and exhales for 8 counts.

Teacher's Script: "I see a lot of restless energy. Let us pause and cool our engines with some balloon breathing. Let us release that Rajas so we can focus."

- For Tamasic Inertia (Lethargic, Unmotivated, Dull)

Practice: "Energizing Movement Break". 2 minutes of jumping jacks or dancing to an upbeat instrumental song.

Teacher's Script: "Our minds feel heavy, like Tamas is weighing us down. Let us stand up and shake it off to get our energy flowing again."

- For Cultivating Sattva (Focus, Clarity, Calm)

Practice: "Mindful Sensing" or "Just Watching". Students will be asked to spend 2-3 minutes focusing their minds on one sense input, like listening to a bell's sound fade away or their feet touching the ground. They can also practice observing their thoughts and emotions like clouds drifting across the sky.

Teacher's Script: "Let us take a Sattva moment. Close your eyes and listen to the sound. If your mind wanders to Rajas or Tamas, gently bring it back. No judgment."

Together, these three strategies create a cohesive model that brings the ancient science of Triguna into action as a practical and modern classroom approach that aligns with the NEP 2020 vision of nurturing the whole person.

Discussion

The pedagogical model proposed here directly addresses one of the most significant limitations of Value Education Paradigms, as identified in the literature. Moving from a prescriptive and dogmatic approach to an experiential and self-inquiry-based one helps combat the "do and don't" culture, which is known to destroy intrinsic motivation (Nucci, 2009; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Guna Journaling and story analysis strategies serve as the "practical bridge" that Saxena (2017) identified as missing in story-based approaches, making values more than abstract concepts and turning them into "concrete tools for self-management." This shift aligns well with the transformative vision proposed by the National Education Policy 2020, which states that

"the child's cognitive, emotional, and ethical capacities develop together in an integrated manner." Specifically, the model implements key NEP goals: it promotes holistic development by engaging the cognitive domain through ethical discernment in case studies, the emotional domain through reflective self-observation, and the ethical domain through the intentional cultivation of Sattvic qualities; it fosters essential 21st-century skills such as self-awareness (metacognition), critical thinking, and resilience by providing students with a framework to manage internal and external challenges (Cornelissen, 2014); and it encourages the growth of empathetic teachers by offering a non-diagnostic, observational lens (the Guna profile) that replaces judgment with understanding, enabling differentiated and supportive interventions. Possible challenges to this integration are valid but manageable. The concern over whether this model is religious can be addressed by emphasizing that the Triguna theory is a psychological and philosophical view of the mind rather than a religious one, and it can be taught in a secular, pedagogical manner related to self-regulation and behavior, similar to the concept of mindfulness (Telles et al., 2012). Regarding complexity, the model is designed to be simplified based on students' age groups. Younger students can be taught to recognize basic "energy states" (calm, active, sluggish), which can later be connected to more advanced concepts of gunas.

Recommendations and Conclusion

This paper argues that the call in the National Education Policy 2020 for a new education system based on Indian values and aimed at holistic development requires a fundamental rethinking of Value Education. The authors believe that Value Education should be viewed as a science of the mind, utilizing the advanced psychological model of Triguna from the philosophical school of Samkhya (Cornelissen, 2014; Larson & Bhattacharya, 1987). The main contribution of this research is the development of an effective pedagogical model that embodies this theoretical shift. The three-part model—comprising Reflective Self-Observation in Guna Journaling, Discursive Learning through Guna Analysis of Narratives, and Mindful Practice in Self-Regulation—innovatively transforms an ancient metaphysical concept into an active, engaging, and repetitive learning process. The key innovation of this pedagogical approach is its ability to make students' internal mental processes transparent and controllable. It represents a move away from external controls and more towards internal expressions of a self-controlling philosophy in alignment with Sattva, as propounded in Rao & Paranjpe (2023). It would also provide the educator with a compassionate way of understanding the learner through the Guna

learner profiling process, replacing judgmental approaches with guidance—another limitation of the traditional value education process in being unable to relate with the learner's real-life experiences (Nucci, 2009; Saxena, 2017). To make this conceptual model a transformative process in the nation's education sector, the following recommendations provide a clear roadmap for the way forward.

For Curriculum Frameworks

The upcoming revisions of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) should include the Triguna model as a recommended approach in Value Education and overall development of the learner. It is imperative that the NCERT views the Triguna model not in isolation but as a way of thinking that influences the overall understanding of the development of the child, personality development, and the various learning styles of the learner. This would motivate textbook writers and curriculum developers to include guna analysis in existing textbooks on history, literature, and science. As the NEP 2020 states, education must incorporate "ethics and human & constitutional values" into all areas of learning (Ministry of Education, 2020, p. 4), and the Triguna framework provides the ideal indigenous theoretical foundation to accomplish this seamlessly.

For Teacher Education

The successful implementation of this model depends entirely on a well-trained teaching force. Therefore, we strongly support adding mandatory modules on "IKS-Based Psychology and Pedagogy" to the teacher education curriculum at all Regional Institutes of Education (RIEs) and other Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs. These modules should go beyond theoretical knowledge to include practical training in conducting Guna journaling sessions, leading discussions of ethical dilemmas through the Guna lens, and utilizing the suggested mindful interventions. Incorporating teacher training with opportunities for self-observation is also essential, allowing student-teachers to apply the framework to understand their own mental states and biases, thus becoming true practitioners of the model themselves.

For Future Research

To gather the necessary empirical evidence and enhance the model, a focused research plan is crucial; the following specific research ideas are suggested.

- *Pilot Intervention Studies:* A quasi-experimental study can be conducted to demonstrate the impact of the Triguna-based pedagogy on specific student outcomes in one or a few schools. This could evaluate its effectiveness in improving self-regulation (Vohs & Baumeister, 2016), metacognitive skills (Flavell, 1979), prosocial behaviour, and resilience compared to control groups using traditional Value Education methods.
- *Instrument Development and Validation:* A "Guna-based Observational Scale for Teachers" needs to be created and statistically validated. This dependable instrument would enable educators to systematically record behavioural indicators of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas in classroom environments, shifting from informal profiling to structured, data-driven support.
- *Longitudinal and Interdisciplinary Studies:* Future research should also include longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of this education on life choices and well-being. Moreover, interdisciplinary studies that examine the correlations between Guna states and well-known psychological constructs (Big Five personality traits, emotional intelligence, etc.) will solidify the scientific validity and acceptance of this framework in the world academic community (Wolf, 1999).

In conclusion, the opportunity to develop Value Education with the Triguna framework is uniquely linked to India and yet has the potential to be universally applicable. This framework seamlessly integrates with the NEP 2020 vision of not only developing successful learners but also enlightened and compassionate individuals. Through the recommended approach of curriculum integration, teacher empowerment, and thorough research, we can turn this conceptual model into practice, ultimately nurturing a generation that is not only knowledgeable but also wise, resilient, and fundamentally strong.

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1. Statement of Originality and Prior Publication

I hereby declare that the manuscript titled “From Prescription to Practice: Grounding Value Education in the *Triguna* Theory of Indian Knowledge Systems” is an original work and has neither been published previously nor is it under consideration for publication elsewhere, either in whole or in part. The manuscript has not been submitted as part of any book, institutional report, or publicly accessible document.

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