

Integration of 21st-Century Skills in the Classroom: Panchkosha Perspective

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Abstract: The 21st century's fast-evolving sociocultural and technical environment necessitates an educational system that promotes thinking skills, creativity, teamwork, communication, flexibility, and digital literacy over memorization and knowledge acquisition. Despite the significance of these competences, their incorporation into the classroom frequently lacks an adequate structure that supports the learner's intellectual, social, spiritual, emotional and physical development. Although the Pancha Kosha philosophy of Indian thought articulates human development through five major domains: Annamaya (physical), Pranamaya (vital energy), Manomaya (psychological-emotional), Vijnanamaya (intellectual-wisdom), and Anandamaya (inner peace)- it teaches 21st-century skills in a balanced manner. In order to promote holistic well-being and comprehend 21st-century skills, the Panchakosha model presents us with a thorough overview.

Through a variety of skill-teaching techniques, the article addresses this; Pancha Kosha Vikas can assist learners' overall development while encouraging the acquisition of 21st-century abilities. The Annamaya Kosha worldview emphasizes kinesthetic learning, health and well-being. Pranamaya Kosha enhances empathy and teamwork by promoting emotional regulation, lowering stress, and increasing focus. Manomaya Kosha develops social and emotional intelligence, which is critical for communication and teamwork. Vijnanamaya Kosha promotes critical and creative thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making in accordance with higher-order cognitive capacities. Last but not least, by encouraging intrinsic desire, ideals, logical thought, and a sense of purpose, Anandamaya Kosha provides education with a greater meaning.

This paper focuses on how the integration of five major domains of Pancha Kosha with today's demand of 21st skill. This article also helps to explore Pancha Kosha-based pedagogical skills in reality, including value-based education, experiential learning, reflective practices, and group projects. This study is a conceptual review-based article, journals and publications from Google Scholar. The study concludes that a system of education that combines contemporary skill frameworks with a traditional holistic philosophy achieves worldwide citizenship and lifetime fulfilment, while also meeting the demands of the 21st century. The paper ends with a demand of 21st century skill by integrating the five Kosha.

Keywords: 21st Century Skills, Pancha Kosha, Holistic Education, Classroom Integration.

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I. INTRODUCTION

First time in 2006, an OECD study that sought to identify the competencies people should possess in the twenty-first century introduced the idea of 21st century skills. In the project, the traits of this century and the methods by which people will learn those talents were identified. Pedro (2006) and Trilling and Fadel (2009) developed some frameworks for categorizing skills in this era. Rapid social, cultural, technological, and economic changes in the 21st century have drastically changed the demands placed on education. Learners must develop

competencies beyond rote learning and content repetition in light of globalization, digital transformation, and the knowledge-based economy. Rather, students must acquire the abilities necessary to think critically, adjust to shifting circumstances, and work together in a variety of technology and social settings (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). The ability to think creatively is essential for the advancement of nations and cultures. Schools and teachers bear the primary duty for teaching this talent to pupils, giving them opportunities to develop it, and allowing them to utilize it. According to earlier studies, educators want direction on how to instruct and help pupils develop this ability. Important steps for

fostering students' creativity were incorporated into the implementation of this study. The teaching strategy works well for developing pupils' capacity for original thought (Dilekci & Karatay, 2023). Academic success and expertise in particular fields were prioritized in old educational methods. Although fundamental information is still important, it is insufficient to equip students for the complexity of modern society. To succeed in today's connected and innovative world, kids need to be prepared with 21st-century skills- creativity, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, digital literacy, and socioemotional intelligence (Martin & OECD, 2018).

Despite having its roots in ancient Indian wisdom, the Panchakosha philosophy- which is derived from the Taittiriya Upanishad- describes human development as a layered progression across five sheaths: Annamaya (physical), Pranamaya (vital energy), Manomaya (mental-emotional), Vijnanamaya (intellectual), and Anandamaya (spiritual bliss) (Gambhirananda, 1986). This concept is still very useful in today's classrooms, especially when it comes to fulfilling the 21st-century demands for holistic learning. Even though modern education usually places a strong emphasis on cognitive and technical skills, global issues like climate change, mental health issues, cultural conflicts, and the demands of an increasingly digital lifestyle call for a more integrated approach to human development. Panchakosha offers this unity by promoting not only cognitive development but also physical health, emotional resilience, moral reasoning, and inner well-being (Raina, 2016).

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF PANCHKOSHA

According to the Upanishads, humans are multifaceted "energetic" phenomena. They also suggest that Atman is a pure activity of the self that leads to self-actualization and, eventually, eternal enjoyment, or "anandam". The "doctrine of koshas" is discussed in the Taittiriya Upanishad (Vijay, 2025). From micro to macro and from the individual to the universal, the Upanishad has gradually revealed the five strata (panchakosha) of existence. These layers are represented by five interwoven spherical sheaths, or koshas, which must be attained one after the other to progress and arrive at the all-encompassing sense of "self and world" wholeness (Gyanbodh, 2025). The Panchakosha concept offers a groundbreaking, culturally grounded educational methodology that supports international skill goals for the twenty-first century. It demonstrates how a five-dimensional strategy can meet learners' emotional, ethical, physical, and spiritual requirements in addition to their cognitive demands by bridging the gap between conventional knowledge and modern science. Because of this integration, Panchakosha is positioned as a powerful model for creating resilient, purpose-driven, and well-rounded citizens in the twenty-first century. The colored filters that cover the "light of beings"

are these layers of persona. The more delicate layers of skill that build strength as they move from the lowest to the highest, until they reach the fundamental identity of individual consciousness, make up the persona (body, mind, and force). As one passes through the spiritual body and ascends from the basic level of the existing body, the sharira, to the spiritual sheath, life advances (Nuernberg, 2003). The panchakosha is complex and the "cornerstone of development". The human mind comprises five koshas, or levels of awareness or consciousness, each with its own distinct nature.

III. INTEGRATING 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS WITH PANCHKOSHA

An ancient Panchakasha provides an old explanation of the importance of the body-mind complex in human experience and understanding. This broad view of human development provides a more comprehensive approach to education. Several developmental domains envisaged in ECCE, which form the foundation of the curriculum goals covered by the integration of twenty first century skills in the following chapter, Sharirik Vikas (called Physical Development), are also mapped into the Panchakosha concept and imagination: Balanced physical development according to age, physical fitness, flexibility, strength, and endurance, although the growth of senses, nutrition, hygiene, and personal health, as well as the expansion of physical abilities and the development of body and habits while bearing in mind a person's 100 years of healthy living. Pranik Vikas (Life Energy Development)- Activation of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nerve systems promotes energy balance and retention, positive energy and enthusiasm, and the seamless operation of all major systems, including the circulatory, respiratory, digestive, and nervous systems. Focus, serenity, willpower, bravery, managing negative emotions, cultivating virtues (maulavyardhan), the ability to connect and disassociate from work, people, and circumstances, contentment, the visual and performing arts, culture, and literature are all components of emotional and mental development (Manshik vikas). Observation, testing, ability to analyses, abstract, and divergent thinking, logical reasoning, language abilities, imagination, creativity, discrimination power, generalization, and abstraction are all examples of intellectual development (Bauddhik Vikas). Happiness, love and compassion, spontaneity, independence, aesthetic sense, and the process of introspection are all components of spiritual development (Chaitzik Vikas) (NCF-Foundational Stage 2022).

IV. THE PANCHAKOSHA: 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS MAP

The useful mapping that follows will assist you in creating activities and units that address both Panchakosha development and global 21st-century outcomes (NCF-FS 2022):

Table 1 The Panchakosha: 21st-Century Skills Map

S.NO	Focusing School	Core Area of Development	21st-Century Skills Accomplished
1	Annamaya Kosha (Body/Physical)	Physical development, motor skills, senses, nutrition, hygiene, healthy literacy, and environmental awareness	Collaboration & leadership through team games, self-management, health literacy, data literacy via fitness logs
2	Pranamaya Kosha (Vital energy)	Energy balance, breathing awareness, voice regulation	Self-regulation, attention, stress management, resilience, communication presence (voice, pace)
3	Manomaya Kosha (Mind/Emotions)	Concentration, handling emotions, virtues, arts & culture, conflict resolution	Self-awareness, management, empathy, intercultural competence, and inclusive teamwork
4	Vijnanamaya Kosha (Intellect/Discernment)	Observation, inquiry, analysis, creativity, language, reasoning, meta-learning	4Cs (critical thinking, creativity, communication & collaboration), computational thinking, information/media literacy, design thinking, metacognition
5	Anandamaya (Self-actualization/values)	Love, compassion, freedom, aesthetic sense, and inward awareness	Ethical reasoning, global citizenship, civic and environmental responsibility

➤ *Classroom Strategies to Integrate 21st-Century Skills*
(Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Bhatta, 2009; Pedro 2006):

• *Project-Based and Experiential Learning:*

As they involve students in practical exercises that link knowledge to practical application, project-based and experiential learning are in line with the Annamaya Kosha (physical dimension) and Vijnanamaya Kosha (intellectual dimension). Students gain topic knowledge through group projects, fieldwork, and community involvement, but also develop thinking skills, creativity, and problem-solving abilities- all of which are essential for education in the twenty-first century. There are different type educational tours and games activity organized to in co-curricular activities to inculcate the Physical development and intellectual awareness around the environment.

• *Combining Yoga, Meditation, and Mindfulness Techniques:*

Yoga, pranayama, and meditation are exercises that enhance the Pranamaya Kosha (energetic dimension) and Manomaya Kosha (mental/emotional dimension). Students benefit from regular mindfulness exercises in the classroom as they learn to focus, cope with stress, and regulate their emotions. This fosters resilience, empathy, and emotional balance- all of which are essential for both effective learning and general well-being.

• *Digital Tools and ICT in Line with Panchakosha:*

Proper use of digital technologies can improve any kosha. Fitness promotes physical well-being (Annamaya), guided meditation apps improve mental clarity (Manomaya), and virtual labs and simulations stimulate intellectual curiosity (Vijnanamaya). Collaborative digital platforms follow the Panchakosha framework and align with global 21st-century skills while also encouraging communication and creativity.

• *Inclusive Methods for Varied Learners:*

The Panchakosha philosophy is consistent with inclusivity, even though it recognizes the multifarious potential of every learner. Differentiated instruction, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) techniques, and assistive technology can all be used to accommodate children with a range of needs, including CWSN (Children with Special Needs). Classrooms can foster equitable opportunities for holistic development for students from all koshas by encouraging self-worth, empathy, and teamwork among peers.

• *Assessment methods for holistic skills:*

While Panchakosha-based methods require thorough analysis, standard evaluation methods typically focus solely on cognitive performance. Peer and self-assessments, portfolios, reflective journals, and performance-based activities can all be used to assess intellectual, emotional, social, and physical skills. Rubrics that assess students' creativity, empathy, teamwork, and resilience ensure that their overall development across the koshas is duly recognized.

➤ *Knowledge, Dispositions, Capacities and Value:*

NEP 2020 and NCF 2023, which call for competency-based, holistic education that cultivates knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions, are the greatest ways to accomplish the wide goals of education. Additionally, they emphasize holistic learning at all educational levels, 21st-century skills, and life skills:

- Cultivating acceptable values, such as the traditional Indian ideas of ethics, morality, democracy, and intellectual study.
- Fostering positive traits, including a strong work ethic, curiosity and wonder, and pride in one's Indian heritage
- Building up one's ability to enquire, communicate effectively, solve problems and use logic, be creative and artistic, stay healthy, work productively, and positively interact with others.
- Acquiring in-depth information. The seven curricular areas- languages, science, math, social science, art

education, physical education and well-being, and vocational education- as well as interdisciplinary fields, provide students with multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge. With this knowledge, students can develop a strong understanding of the world, and Vinanamaya in the Panchkosha discusses these kinds of skills.

V. CONCLUSION

This study provided a coherent conceptual framework that may help us better understand how adaptability is necessary to acquire today's need-based skills and how Panchkosha can support learners' growth and development. The demands of today necessitate a change in education from memorizing information and limited academic success to the development of comprehensive in-depth knowledge that equips students for a world that is complex, interconnected, and changing rapidly. With its five levels of human development (Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya, and Anandamaya), the Panchakosha framework provides a paradigm-shifting approach. Panchakosha offers an integrated road map for meaningful education by coordinating 21st-century skills like creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, communication, digital literacy, and socio-emotional intelligence with physical wellness, emotional regulation, cognitive development, ethical reasoning, and inner well-being. In order to apply Panchakosha ideas, they must be carefully modified for modern situations while maintaining the fundamental understanding of multifaceted human development. This entails combining academic rigor with meditative practices, finding a balance between personal growth and social responsibility, and upholding cultural sensitivity while implementing the universal principles of human happiness.

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