

NATIONAL CIVIC CHARTER



IKS-Based Framework for Responsible Citizenship

KNOWLEDGE | VALUES | DUTY | HARMONY | NATION

Rooted in Our Heritage,
Committed to Our Future



RIGHTS
WITH RESPONSIBILITIES



ETHICS & INTEGRITY



SERVICE & EMPATHY



SUSTAINABILITY



UNITY IN DIVERSITY



सत्यमेव जयते

— A CITIZEN TODAY, A NATION TOMORROW —

National Civic Charter:

IKS-Based Framework for
Responsible Citizenship

Dr. Harshvardhan Singh

Educators Plus
Elite Research Press

National Civic Charter:

IKS-Based Framework for Responsible Citizenship



An Indian Knowledge System-Based Framework for Civic Duty,
Constitutional Values, Community Participation,
Public Institutions, and Responsible Citizenship



Dr. Harshvardhan Singh



First Edition



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New Delhi, India
2026

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An Indian Knowledge System-Based Framework for Civic Duty, Constitutional Values, Community Participation, Public Institutions, and Responsible Citizenship

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This book is published for educational, academic, policy-discussion, civic-awareness, and research purposes. The views expressed in this book are those of the author. The book does not claim to be an official government policy document. References to constitutional values, civic duties, governance principles, Indian Knowledge Systems, education, public institutions, and civic participation are presented for conceptual, educational, and policy-oriented discussion. Nothing in this book should be treated as legal advice or as a substitute for official legal, constitutional, administrative, or governmental interpretation.

Every effort has been made to present the concepts, examples, and policy ideas in a responsible and accurate manner. However, readers are advised to consult official documents, statutes, government notifications, constitutional texts, and institutional guidelines wherever formal interpretation or implementation is required.

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Author Profile

Dr. Harshvardhan Singh is an education researcher, psychometrician, author, and policy-oriented academic professional working in the areas of educational measurement, research tool development, teacher education, inclusive education, Indian Knowledge Systems, civic education, learning assessment, and policy-relevant educational research. His academic and professional work focuses on evidence-based educational reform, learner diversity, constitutional values, responsible citizenship, civic awareness, ethical conduct, and the integration of Indian civilisational knowledge with contemporary education and governance frameworks.

His work emphasises the need to connect knowledge with action, rights with duties, education with character, and policy with implementation. Through his writings, research tools, educational resources, and policy-oriented publications, he seeks to contribute to a more inclusive, ethical, reflective, and socially responsible educational and civic culture.

In this book, Dr. Singh examines the idea of a National Civic Charter through the combined lens of Indian Knowledge Systems, constitutional morality, civic responsibility, community participation, education, digital citizenship, public accountability, and institutional reform. The book reflects his broader commitment to developing practical frameworks that can support national development, responsible citizenship, and ethical public life in India.

Preface

India stands at an important moment in its democratic journey. The country has a deeply rooted constitutional framework, a vibrant democratic system, a rich civilisational heritage, and a young population capable of shaping the future of national life. Yet, the idea of responsible citizenship often remains limited to voting, obeying laws, paying taxes, or claiming rights. These are essential aspects of citizenship, but they do not fully capture the moral, social, educational, and civilisational depth of what it means to be a responsible citizen in India.

This book, *National Civic Charter: IKS-Based Framework for Responsible Citizenship*, has been written with the purpose of rethinking citizenship from an Indian perspective. It argues that citizenship should not be understood only as a legal status or political identity. It should also be understood as a lived responsibility—towards the self, family, community, nation, environment, public institutions, and future generations. A democratic nation becomes strong not only through laws and institutions but also through the quality of civic conduct practiced by its citizens.

The central idea of this book is that India needs a National Civic Charter that can act as a moral, educational, and practical framework for responsible citizenship. Such a charter should not be seen as a rigid legal document or a one-way instruction from the state to citizens. Rather, it should be understood as a living social contract between citizens, communities, educational institutions, public institutions, civil society, and the nation. It should help citizens understand not only what they can expect from the state, but also what the nation and society can expect from them.

Indian Knowledge Systems offer a meaningful foundation for this discussion. Concepts such as **dharma**, **kartavya**, **seva**, **satya**, **nyaya**, **ṛta**, **lokasaṅgraha**, and **rashtra dharma** provide ethical and philosophical insights into duty, social order, justice, truth, service, harmony, and collective welfare. These concepts do not oppose modern constitutional democracy. Instead, when interpreted carefully and inclusively, they can strengthen democratic citizenship by reminding us that rights and duties must exist together.

The Constitution of India gives citizens rights, protections, freedoms, and democratic opportunities. It also reminds us of Fundamental Duties and the importance of preserving the nation's unity, dignity, culture, environment, scientific temper, and public spirit. However, in everyday life, civic education often remains theoretical. Many citizens know about rights but do not always internalise duties. Public spaces, community institutions, local governance, digital platforms, and educational institutions frequently reveal a gap between constitutional ideals and actual civic behaviour. This book attempts to address that gap.

The book is written as a policy-oriented and educational monograph. It is intended for policymakers, educators, school and college leaders, teachers, students, civil society organisations, public administrators, youth leaders, researchers, and citizens interested in strengthening India's civic culture. It may also be useful for curriculum developers, teacher educators, NGOs, local governance bodies, institutional leaders, and scholars working in the areas of citizenship education, Indian Knowledge Systems, public policy, inclusive governance, ethics, and civic responsibility.

The chapters move from conceptual understanding to practical application. The book begins by explaining the need for a National Civic Charter and then explores the Indian civilisational foundations of civic duty. It examines Fundamental Duties as civic principles, proposes civic charters for schools and colleges, families and communities, and public institutions, and then identifies behavioural indicators of responsible citizenship. Finally, it offers an implementation roadmap for taking the idea of a National Civic Charter from vision to practice.

This book does not claim that ancient wisdom alone can solve modern governance problems. Nor does it suggest that constitutional democracy should be replaced by traditional frameworks. Its position is more balanced: India's civic future can become stronger when constitutional values, democratic institutions, modern governance, civic education, community participation, and Indian civilisational wisdom work together. The aim is not to romanticise the past, but to draw from it responsibly while responding to the needs of the present and future.

A National Civic Charter can help India build a shared language of citizenship. It can help schools teach civic duty through action, families transmit values through practice, communities solve local problems through participation, public institutions become more accountable, and citizens become more aware of their role in national development. It can also help develop a culture where public spaces are respected, diversity is honoured, digital conduct is ethical, and service to society becomes a normal part of citizenship.

The hope behind this book is simple: India's democratic strength will depend not only on institutions, policies, and laws, but also on citizens who act with responsibility, dignity, compassion, discipline, and public spirit. Responsible citizenship is not a slogan. It is a daily practice. It begins with how we speak, behave, participate, serve, disagree, use public resources, care for the environment, engage online, and respond to the needs of others.

This book is therefore an invitation—to think, reflect, discuss, teach, implement, and act. It invites readers to imagine a civic culture where rights and duties are balanced, where education builds character along with knowledge, where public institutions serve with transparency, where communities participate actively, and where Indian Knowledge Systems contribute meaningfully to democratic citizenship.

If this book encourages even a small number of readers to see citizenship as a responsibility rather than merely a status, its purpose will be fulfilled.

Dr. Harshvardhan Singh

New Delhi, India

2026

Acknowledgements

This book is an outcome of reflection on India's constitutional values, civilisational wisdom, democratic responsibilities, educational needs, and contemporary governance challenges. I express my gratitude to all intellectual, cultural, institutional, and civic traditions that have shaped the idea of responsible citizenship in India.

I acknowledge the profound contribution of Indian Knowledge Systems, which continue to offer deep insights into duty, ethical conduct, self-discipline, social harmony, collective welfare, public responsibility, and the relationship between the individual and the larger social order. Concepts such as dharma, kartavya, seva, satya, nyaya, ṛta, lokasaṅgraha, and rashtra dharma have provided an important philosophical foundation for this work.

I also acknowledge the Constitution of India, which remains the most important modern framework for democratic citizenship, justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, rights, duties, public institutions, and national integration. The constitutional vision of India has guided the civic and policy orientation of this book.

I am grateful to teachers, students, researchers, parents, public servants, civil society workers, community leaders, and young citizens whose everyday actions keep the idea of citizenship alive. Their role in classrooms, communities, institutions, and public life demonstrates that responsible citizenship is not only a matter of theory but also a matter of practice.

I extend my gratitude to Educators Plus and Elite Research Press for supporting the publication of this book and for encouraging policy-oriented, educational, and socially relevant writing.

I also acknowledge the wider community of readers, educators, scholars, policymakers, and citizens who are committed to building a more ethical, participatory, inclusive, and responsible India. This book is dedicated to all those who believe that national development begins with responsible citizenship and that every citizen has a role in strengthening the moral and democratic fabric of the nation.

About the Book

National Civic Charter: IKS-Based Framework for Responsible Citizenship presents a policy-oriented and educational framework for rethinking citizenship in India. The book argues that citizenship should not be limited to legal identity, voting, or individual rights. It must also include civic duty, ethical conduct, community participation, institutional accountability, digital responsibility, environmental care, constitutional values, and service to society.

The book draws upon Indian Knowledge Systems and connects them with contemporary democratic citizenship. Concepts such as **dharma**, **kartavya**, **seva**, **satya**, **nyaya**, **ṛta**, **lokasaṅgraha**, and **rashtra dharma** are interpreted as civic principles that can guide personal behaviour, institutional conduct, community life, and national development. These ideas are placed alongside constitutional values such as justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, dignity, unity, and public responsibility.

The central proposal of the book is the creation of a **National Civic Charter** for India. Such a charter can serve as a shared civic framework for citizens, families, schools, colleges, communities, public institutions, civil society organisations, and policymakers. It can help translate abstract ideals of citizenship into practical expectations, behavioural indicators, educational activities, institutional commitments, and community-level action.

The book is organised around a clear movement from concept to implementation. It first explains the need for a National Civic Charter, then explores the civilisational foundations of civic duty, examines Fundamental Duties as civic principles, and proposes separate civic charter frameworks for schools and colleges, families and communities, and public institutions. It also identifies behavioural indicators of responsible citizenship and provides an implementation roadmap for making the charter practical and measurable.

The book is especially relevant for:

- Policymakers and public administrators
- Teachers, principals, and teacher educators
- School and college students
- Civil society organisations and NGOs
- Researchers in education, governance, and Indian Knowledge Systems
- Youth organisations and community leaders
- Public institutions and local governance bodies
- Citizens interested in ethical public life and national development

The book's main message is that India's democratic future depends not only on institutions and policies but also on the quality of civic behaviour practiced by citizens. A strong nation requires citizens who respect rights, perform duties, protect public spaces, participate in communities, act ethically online and offline, care for the environment, honour diversity, and contribute to collective welfare.

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Abbreviations

AI – Artificial Intelligence

CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility

DPSP – Directive Principles of State Policy

GNH – Gross National Happiness

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

IKS – Indian Knowledge Systems

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NEP – National Education Policy

PRI – Panchayati Raj Institution

RWA – Resident Welfare Association

SDG – Sustainable Development Goal

ULB – Urban Local Body

Note: The term “National Civic Charter” is written in full throughout the book wherever necessary to avoid confusion with other commonly used abbreviations.



Glossary of Key Terms

Adhikara

Adhikara refers to rights, entitlements, or legitimate claims available to an individual. In the context of responsible citizenship, adhikara must be balanced with kartavya, or duty.

Civic Charter

A civic charter is a guiding document that defines the values, responsibilities, expectations, rights, duties, and participatory commitments of citizens, institutions, and communities. In this book, the civic charter is understood as a living social contract.

Civic Duty

Civic duty refers to the responsibilities of citizens towards the nation, society, public institutions, environment, community, and fellow citizens. It includes both legal and moral obligations.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement means active participation in public life. It may include voting, community service, participation in local governance, environmental action, public dialogue, digital responsibility, and social problem-solving.

Civic Responsibility

Civic responsibility refers to the ethical and practical responsibility of individuals to contribute to the welfare of society. It includes respect for public spaces, honesty, lawfulness, service, cooperation, and accountability.

Constitutional Morality

Constitutional morality refers to respect for the values, principles, procedures, rights, duties, and institutions established by the Constitution. It requires citizens and institutions to act in ways that protect justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, dignity, and democratic order.

Dharma

Dharma refers to righteous conduct, duty, moral order, and responsible action. In this book, dharma is interpreted as a civilisational principle that connects individual conduct with social welfare and public responsibility.

Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship refers to responsible, ethical, safe, respectful, and informed participation in digital spaces. It includes truthfulness, privacy awareness, respectful communication, responsible sharing, and protection from misinformation.

Fundamental Duties

Fundamental Duties are constitutional duties expected from citizens of India. They remind citizens to respect the Constitution, preserve national unity, protect public property, value cultural heritage, develop scientific temper, protect the environment, and strive for excellence.

Indian Knowledge Systems

Indian Knowledge Systems refer to the knowledge traditions, philosophical concepts, ethical frameworks, social practices, educational insights, ecological wisdom, and civilisational values that have developed in India across centuries. In this book, IKS is used to support responsible citizenship and civic ethics.

Kartavya

Kartavya means duty or responsibility. It refers to the actions that an individual is expected to perform in relation to self, family, community, society, nation, nature, and humanity.

Lokasaṅgraha

Lokasaṅgraha means the welfare, stability, and collective holding together of society. It represents the idea that individual action should contribute to the well-being of the larger community.

Nyaya

Nyaya means justice, fairness, reason, and ethical judgement. In civic life, nyaya requires citizens and institutions to act fairly and uphold the dignity and rights of others.

Participatory Governance

Participatory governance refers to a system in which citizens are actively involved in decision-making, consultation, monitoring, feedback, local planning, and public accountability.

Public Accountability

Public accountability means that institutions, officials, and citizens must be answerable for their actions, decisions, conduct, and use of public resources.

Rajdharma

Rajdharma refers to the duty of rulers, leaders, administrators, and public authorities to govern ethically, fairly, transparently, and in the interest of public welfare.

Rashtra Dharma

Rashtra dharma refers to duty towards the nation. It includes commitment to national unity, public welfare, constitutional values, social harmony, environmental responsibility, and responsible citizenship.

Responsible Citizenship

Responsible citizenship refers to the practice of rights with duties, freedom with accountability, participation with discipline, and individual development with collective welfare.

Rta

Rta refers to cosmic order, harmony, balance, and natural law. In civic terms, it suggests that individual and collective life must remain aligned with order, balance, and sustainability.

Satya

Satya means truth. In civic life, satya requires honesty, transparency, responsible speech, factual communication, and resistance to misinformation.

Seva

Seva means selfless service. It refers to voluntary action for the welfare of others without selfish motive. In this book, seva is treated as a practical foundation of civic responsibility.

Social Responsibility

Social responsibility refers to the obligation of individuals, families, communities, organisations, and institutions to act in ways that support the welfare of society.



Methodological / Source Note

This book is a conceptual, educational, and policy-oriented monograph. It does not present itself as an empirical research report based on field data collection. Instead, it develops a framework for responsible citizenship by drawing upon constitutional values, Indian Knowledge Systems, civic education, public administration, community participation, institutional accountability, digital citizenship, and comparative examples of civic practice.

The book uses an interpretive and integrative approach. It brings together ideas from Indian civilisational traditions, constitutional principles, education, governance, public ethics, and contemporary civic challenges. The purpose is to develop a practical and culturally rooted framework that can support civic education, public responsibility, community participation, and institutional reform in India.

The manuscript is based on the following broad source foundations:

1. **Constitutional Foundation**

The book draws upon the constitutional vision of India, especially the relationship between rights, duties, democratic participation, justice, liberty, equality, fraternity, dignity, and national unity.

2. **Indian Knowledge Systems Foundation**

The book interprets selected Indian Knowledge System concepts such as dharma, kartavya, seva, satya, nyaya, ṛta, lokasaṅgraha, rajdharma, and rashtra dharma as ethical resources for responsible citizenship.

3. **Civic Education Foundation**

The book treats schools, colleges, universities, families, and communities as important spaces for civic learning. It emphasises experiential learning, community service, student participation, democratic school culture, and value-based education.

4. **Governance and Public Institution Foundation**

The book discusses public institutions as important sites of civic responsibility. It emphasises transparency, accountability, service standards, grievance redressal, citizen feedback, and participatory governance.

5. **Community and Behavioural Foundation**

The book recognises that responsible citizenship becomes meaningful only when reflected in daily behaviour. Therefore, it proposes behavioural indicators related to public discipline, environmental responsibility, digital conduct, social harmony, respect for law, service orientation, and community participation.

6. **Comparative and Illustrative Foundation**

The book uses selected Indian and global examples to show how civic engagement, direct democracy, community participation, environmental responsibility, indigenous knowledge, and citizen-centred governance can inform the idea of a National Civic Charter.

This book does not claim that Indian Knowledge Systems should replace constitutional democracy, modern governance, or legal frameworks. Instead, it argues that IKS-based ethical insights can

complement constitutional values and help build a more responsible civic culture. The approach is therefore integrative rather than oppositional.

The transliteration of Indian terms has been kept simple for readability. Some terms may appear in commonly used forms such as dharma, kartavya, seva, satya, nyaya, and rajdharma. Where necessary, diacritical forms such as ṛta and lokasaṅgraha are used to preserve conceptual accuracy. The meanings provided in this book are interpretive and civic-oriented rather than purely theological, ritualistic, or sectarian.

All tables and figures in the book should be treated as the author's conceptual synthesis unless otherwise stated. Where official constitutional, policy, historical, or institutional references are used in the final edited manuscript, proper citations should be included in the reference section.

The primary purpose of this book is to provide a framework that can be used for discussion, teaching, policy reflection, civic education, institutional planning, and community-level implementation. It is intended to encourage responsible citizenship as a lived practice in Indian democracy.





National Civic Charter: IKS-Based Framework for Responsible Citizenship presents a timely and deeply Indian framework for rethinking citizenship in contemporary India. The book argues that citizenship should not be limited to legal identity, voting, or individual rights. It must also include civic duty, ethical conduct, constitutional morality, community participation, environmental responsibility, digital responsibility, public accountability, and service to society.



Drawing upon Indian Knowledge Systems and constitutional values, the book connects concepts such as dharma, kartavya, seva, satya, nyaya, ṛta, lokasaṅgraha, and rashtra dharma with modern democratic citizenship. It proposes a National Civic Charter that can guide citizens, families, schools, colleges, communities, civil society organisations, public institutions, and policymakers.



The book includes civic charter models for educational institutions, families and communities, and public institutions. It also provides behavioural indicators, implementation strategies, monitoring tools, checklists, and practical appendices.



This book is useful for policymakers, educators, students, researchers, civil society organisations, public administrators, youth leaders, and all citizens interested in building a more responsible, ethical, participatory, inclusive, and accountable India.



सत्यमेव जयते

A CITIZEN TODAY,
A NATION TOMORROW

