

# Viksit Bharat@2047: Initiatives and Challenges in Education

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## Abstract

The vision of “Viksit Bharat@2047” implies the overall development of India into a developed country by the year 2047, marking its hundred years of independence. This ambitious goal, introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, covers multiple dimensions of development, including economic growth, environmental sustainability, social improvement, and effective governance. Education thus emerges as the key element for this transformational lifecycle moment and serves as the foundation for achievement and mobility. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 highlights the major challenges that affect India as a country and are the main barriers to the education system in the country, listing a financial crisis and a lack of infrastructure as some of the barriers. The proposed National Education Policy 2020 also includes a lofty goal of increasing spending on education to 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which can only be achieved through planned efforts. This paper aims to discuss the measures taken and the problems faced in the educational sector of Viksit Bharat@2047 highlighting the need for an overhaul of the existing educational system. By addressing these challenges and implementing innovative strategies, India can leverage education’s transformative capacity to advance its journey towards development and prosperity.

**Keywords:** Viksit Bharat@2047, Quality Education, Initiatives, NEP 2020 and Challenges.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION`

Today, as we stand on the threshold of a new era, every individual, every institution, and every organisation must heed the call to contribute to the realisation of a developed India. Similar to how the youth of previous generations devoted themselves to the pursuit of freedom, we must now commit ourselves to the progress and development of our nation . Drawing inspiration from our historic struggle for freedom teaches us a valuable lesson about unity, dedication and collective action. In the same way that our forefathers fought tirelessly with immense zeal to acquire freedom, we now need to concentrate on the construction of a developed India. On December 11, 2023, the honourable Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi, introduced the “Viksit Bharat @2047” campaign for the youth of India, This campaign was initiated to make India a developed nation in the 100th year of its independence. This campaign includes various aspects of development, such as economic growth, environmental sustainability, social progress, and good governance.[1]

The processes, impacts, and outcomes of these developmental endeavours necessitate academic involvement to reassess and reconceptualize them within the framework of "Viksit Bharat@2047," as

envisioned by our Honourable Prime Minister. This vision of "Viksit Bharat" is continuously evolving, aligned with our Sankalp (commitment) to the five pillars, or "Panch Prana," which embody the essence of India's developmental ethos. These five pillars, encompassing liberation from colonial legacies, pride in our culture and heritage, fostering national unity, fostering progress, and nurturing a sense of duty, collectively form a holistic paradigm of development. Such a paradigm aims to foster equality, contentment, and collective well-being across the nation.

Education stands as a cornerstone of progress and prosperity in developing nations. Its significance transcends individual benefits, extending to societal, economic, and political realms. Educated citizens are better prepared to navigate the complexities of the modern world, adapt to changing circumstances, and seize opportunities for personal and professional growth. This important role of higher educational institutions is described by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the vision of a developed India. He further stated the very important role of renowned universities like Kashi Hindu University, Lucknow University, Visva Bharati, Gujarat Vidyapith, Nagpur University, Annamalai University, Andhra University, and University of Kerala in the Indian Freedom Movement.[10]

There is a strong academic interest in contemplating and discussing the "development of the nation". The landscape of the "Amrit Kaal" has been shaped by numerous successful development initiatives conceptualised and put into action over the past nine years. "Sankalp Se Siddhi" emerged as one of our guiding principles during this transformative period to ensure the effective execution of developmental schemes, collectively resulting in a narrative of development achievement.

A large number of ground-breaking initiatives/programmes have been undertaken by the Government of India during the last 9 years. These initiatives have substantial social and economic impact that transformed the way of life in the country. The various research studies have documented these social and transformational impacts, culminating in implementation of governmental development initiatives and schemes. These initiatives transformed the tangible and intangible domains of development universe of the nation and need to be discussed by academic community, researchers, youths and students. At the national and state levels, numerous initiatives have been implemented to enhance the education system. These include flagship programmes such as the **National Education Policy 2020, the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Saksham Anganwadi** and so on. Additionally, the efforts are encouraged by collaboration with various stakeholders and partners, including UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank.

### **1.1 EDUCATIONAL THEMES , SCHEMES , INITIATIVES AND POLICIES -“VIKSIT BHARAT @2047”**

Some educational themes , schemes , initiatives and policies taken by the Indian Government are elaborated as follows-

#### **Rising Nari Shakti Women Empowerment in India**

The growing empowerment of women in India, known as Nari Shakti, reflects the changing social and cultural scene of the country. In recent years, efforts from various groups have pushed women into more influential roles, breaking old ideas about gender and making society more fair and inclusive. Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, Stand Up India, PM Mudra Yojana, PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, Sarvada Shaktishali: Breaking the Glass Ceiling in Armed Forces, Women Technology Parks and S&T for Women Empowerment, and Encouraging meritorious girls to pursue careers in underrepresented areas of STEM through Vigyan Jyoti are schemes introduced by the Indian Government.

### **Educational context**

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has brought a new era in Indian education system, which is under “Viksit Bharat@2047” establishing a strong base for development in this significant sector. The strategic plan provided by NEP 2020 does not only deal with current problems but also sets up aspirations indispensable for producing incredible and effective changes in education for the present and the future. The drastic changes in the curriculum as embraced by NEP 2020 are geared towards enhancing flexibility, comprehensiveness, and relevance in twenty-first-century society. [6]

The policy also emphasises the need to bring a balance and integration of focuses where students benefit from the development of skills through experience, life skills, and vocation education and training. Admitting the change that technology has brought to the future of education, NEP 2020 makes use of a large number of digital tools and platforms in the educational process. To cater to this need, it has initiated the creation of the **National Educational Technology Forum (NETF)** with the purpose of boosting creative EdTech solutions. The use of technology under NEP 2020 aims to bridge the digital divide between urban and rural settings and the rich and the poor in providing quality education. .

To draw and keep excellent teachers, the policy supports significant teacher preparation programmes, ongoing professional development, and the creation of teacher recruitment boards. NEP 2020 aims to improve learning outcomes and teaching standards nationwide by funding teacher capacity-building[6].

**Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (National Education Mission), Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0, National Initiatives for School heads and teachers' holistic advancement (NISHTA), PM USHA, Study in India, Maddhyamik and Uchchar Shiksha kosh (MUSK), Education Quality Upgradation and Inclusion Programme, Study webs of active learning for young aspiring minds (SWAYAM), and SWAYAM Prabha** (Educational TV programme) are few instances of such types of programmes.

### **Empowering Divyang Jan**

Divyang Jan's empowerment represents a critical aspect of inclusiveness and societal advancement. The Indian government is always striving to ensure that Divyangjan people have equal rights and are fully integrated into society. The following are some of the steps that the government has taken to make this happen:

**UDID (Unique ID for Persons with Disability), Law for Transgender, Restoring Janjatiya Gourav through Heroes, Van Dhan Vikas Kendra, Technology Interventions for Disabled and Elderly: Assistive Technologies for Divyangjans.**

### **Skill Development**

Skill development represents a pivotal aspect of the nation's socio-economic growth and human capital enhancement. Through skill development programmes, there has been an increased push in recent years to close the skills gap between workforce capabilities and industry requirements. The government has started a number of programmes to promote skill knowledge in our young people:

National Skill Development Mission, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna, Recognition of Prior Learning, Synergizing Skill University with the industries and Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), Integration of skilling, education, industry and technology for transition towards knowledge-based economy, bolstering national economy through innovative entrepreneurship.

### **Tech Powered India**

Tech-Powered India captures a revolutionary story of digital empowerment and technical growth in a variety of fields. Using technology to promote equitable growth, increase efficiency, and stimulate

innovation has received a lot of attention in recent years. The Indian government has successfully launched the following significant initiatives:

**Aadhar, Digi-Locker, Jeevan Parman Patra, Digital India, Aatmanirbhar India through Unified Payment interface (UPI), UNG Unified Mobile App for new age technology, State Spatial Data infrastructure (SSDI), Digital financial literacy Campaign, Geospatial Technologies for SMART cities, and the National Academic Depository (NAD).**

There are some other initiatives and programmes that lead to expansion of knowledge and technological infrastructure in India:

**Global initiative of academic network (GIAN), Operation Digital board, Flipped classroom, E-Pathshala, National Programme on technological enhanced learning (NPTEL), National Mission on Education through information and communication Technology (NMEICT), N-list Programme of INFLIBNET, All School Monitoring Individual tracing analysis Yojana (Shala ASHMITA), Shala Gunvatta (Shagun Portal), Rashtriya Avishkar abhiyan, De-Novo Institution, Shodh Chakra.**

## 1.2 EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES AND “VIKSIT BHARAT @2047”

India aims to excel in education on a global scale and wants to become a "Vishwa Guru Bharat," driven by a belief in the transformative potential of learning [6]. However, achieving this vision is hindered by numerous challenges. Despite its diverse population, India faces significant obstacles on its path to becoming a developed nation.

### Access and Quality Education

In recent years, there has been a growing concern surrounding the dual challenge of access and quality of education in India. While significant progress has been made in expanding educational opportunities across the country, particularly in terms of increasing enrolment rates and establishing more schools, disparities persist, and the issue of quality remains a major concern.

Education access is still a major concern, especially in underserved and isolated places. Many children, especially those from impoverished households, still face obstacles to education despite efforts to increase access, including a lack of close schools, limited transportation options, socioeconomic limitations, and cultural norms that place other obligations before education. In consequence of this, a significant number of children continue to skip school or leave early, which fuels the cycles of inequality and poverty. According to the results of the National Achievement Survey, over 12% of Indian rural households lived five kilometres from the nearest secondary school. More than 12% of rural Indian households did not have access to a secondary school within five kilometres, according to the National achievement survey report. [4]

The suggestion to launch special campaigns in every university and college across India reflects a commitment to inclusivity and broad based participation in the “Viksit Bharat @2047” initiative. By reaching out to educational institutions nationwide, the government aims to mobilise a diverse range of perspectives and voices, ensuring that youth from all walks of life have the opportunity to contribute to the national development agenda. [10]

### Higher Dropout Rates

Dropout rates refer to the percentage of students who leave school before completing their education. This issue of high dropout rates in India is a significant challenge that impedes the country's efforts to ensure universal access to education and promote social and economic development.

According to the AISHE 2023 report, there are some dropouts noted among the disadvantages group-

- OBC students dropped to 35.8% in 2020-21 from 37% in 2019-20.
- Muslim students enrolling in higher education dropped from 5.5% in 2019-20 to 4.6% in 2020-21.
- Other minority students' dropping from 2.3% in 2019-20 to 2% in 2020-21.
- Students in the Persons with Disabilities category dropped in 2020-21 to 79,035 from 92,831 in 2019-20.[3]

### **Low literacy rates**

The issue of low literacy rates in India is a significant challenge that hampers the country's socio-economic development and perpetuates cycles of poverty and inequality. Despite efforts to improve literacy rates, particularly through initiatives such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the Right to Education (RTE) 2009 Act, several factors contribute to the persistence of low literacy rates in India. Based on data from the National Statistical Office (NSO), India's average literacy rate as of 2021 is 77.70%, at the national level, male literacy stands at 84.70% and female literacy stands at 70.30%[4]. According to the National Family Health Survey 2019-21 (NFHS-5), adult women (aged 15-49) have a literacy rate of 71.5%, while adult men (aged 15-49) have a literacy rate of 87.4%. [2]

As per the National Statistical Office (NSO) data on state-wise literacy rate in the country, Andhra Pradesh ranked lowest in the list with 66.2%, followed by Rajasthan (69.7%) and Bihar (70.9%). [4]

### **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy**

Foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) are fundamental skills that serve as the building blocks for learning and development throughout a child's life. According to the economic advisory council on foundational literacy and numeracy report, the period from 0 to 6 years, known as the foundational years, holds immense importance for every child, as opportunities lost during this time cannot be regained. [5]

However, in India, there are significant challenges associated with FLN that hinder children's educational attainment and overall well-being. "Various governmental, as well as non-governmental surveys, indicate that we are currently in a learning crisis: a large proportion of students currently in elementary school - estimated to be over 5 crore in number - have not attained foundational literacy and numeracy." (NEP 2020)[6]. According to UNESCO, nearly two-thirds of 10 year olds are unable to read and understand a simple text. As per the 2023 Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER)-

- Approximately 25% of 14-18 age groups are unable to fluently read a text at the level of Standard II in their regional language.
- Additionally, over half of them face challenges with division problems, specifically those involving a three-digit number divided by a one-digit number.
- Only 43.3% of 14-18-year-olds demonstrate proficiency in solving such problems, a skill typically expected by Standards III or IV.
- Furthermore, just over half of the children can read sentences in English, with approximately three-quarters of them able to comprehend their meanings. [3]

Under NEP 2020, the government launched the **NIPUN Bharat mission** to address the issue of low literacy and numeracy skills among children. This **National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN)** aims to establish an inclusive and supportive environment for children by the end of 2026-27. The objective is to ensure that every child in the nation attains foundational literacy and numeracy skills by the completion of Grade 3, which involves children aged 3 to 9 years. [6,7]

## Girl's Education

Investing in girls' education is widely recognised as a cornerstone of national development and progress. The transformative power of education extends far beyond individual benefits, impacting economies, societies, and future generations. By ensuring equal access to quality education for girls, nations can unlock a wealth of opportunities for economic growth, social cohesion, and gender equality. Numerous pieces of literature have shed light on the obstacles faced by girls in accessing education. Financial constraints, familial preference for male offspring's education, and the absence of functional toilet facilities are commonly identified barriers. Siddhu's (2011) study in rural Uttar Pradesh highlights the significant influence of primary-level participation on the transition to secondary education. While the transition from elementary to secondary schooling remains challenging for many girls nationwide, completing secondary education emerges as an even greater hurdle [9]. Santhya et al. (2016) conducted a study in rural Gujarat aimed at enhancing girls' attendance and a successful transition to secondary education by involving parents and communities. While they observed a slight improvement in girls' school attendance, there was no notable impact on transition rates. The authors recommend the need for a comprehensive approach to creating an inclusive and supportive school environment.[8]

Gender norms dictate the subjects girls choose to pursue throughout their education journey. Research underscores the lower probability of girls opting for STEM subjects, often attributed to the perception that men are more adept in this field than women. These societal expectations regarding girls' academic choices can constrain their career options (UNICEF, ITU, 2020).

The National Education Policy 2020 makes clear that in order to meet all of these issues, our educational system still lacks the necessary capacity and needs some significant adjustment. According to the most recent data available, the gross domestic product (GDP) allotted to education in India is 2.9% as of this date. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 suggests a target of 6% of GDP to be allocated to education in India. Indeed, increasing the allocation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) towards education from 2.9% to 6% poses a considerable challenge. Such a substantial rise in funding would demand careful planning, strategic investment, and collaboration among various stakeholders. [6] As educators, we must consider how we can contribute to India's journey towards a developed nation. As universities, we must contemplate how we can accelerate the pace of progress within our respective zones of influence. And as members of various communities, we must reflect on how we can propel India forward on its path of development.

## Conclusion

India is a country with a rich past and a diversified culture. There are many obstacles to overcome, and this transition is not an easy task. The journey has been arduous and winding for India to a certain extent, and this shows how large the task at hand is. India dreams of transforming into a developed country, but the harsh reality bites back every time in the social and economic structure.

Education is the foundation of the concept around which the answer to many problems are centred, it serves as the cornerstone around which societies construct their future and deal with urgent problems. The key factor promoting positive change and sustainable development is education, which is seen to be accountable for everything from poverty and inequality to unemployment, environmental degradation, and disparity in healthcare. Behind Prime Minister Modi's vision for a developed India (Viksit Bharat@2047) lies a fundamental principle: achieving this ambitious goal requires more than just

government actions. It requires the active participation and shared responsibility of all Indian citizens. (Viksit Bharat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Vision for a Developed India - News18, 2024).[11]

In conclusion, the vision "Viksit Bharat@2047" includes immense potential as well as challenges for the educational system, as India is on its path towards fulfilling the goals of a developed nation by the year 2047. The required changes demand a complete reform of the country's educational system, from basic numeracy and literacy to advanced abilities and creativity. Digitalization, inclusive education, and skill development represent some of the agendas that have the potential to drive growth, however, they are not without challenges. Among them are; "Equity", that is, addressing differences; "Quality & Standards", that is, enhancing the quality of education offered; "Effective Implementation", that is, ensuring the policies put in place are executed as planned among others. Hence, it must be the collaborative actions of legislators, educators, communities, and several stakeholders from various fields to accomplish the vision of "Viksit Bharat@2047".

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