EDUCATION AS THE FOUNDATION OF VIKSHIT BHARAT: 2047

Dr. KETNA J. CHAMPANERI

Principal I/c,

Naran Lala Law College

Navsari

Abstract:

India's vision of Viksit Bharat@2047—a fully developed nation by the centenary of independence—rests on education as its foundational pillar. Education is not merely a means of literacy but a transformative force that shapes human capital, strengthens democracy, and drives innovation. The National Education Policy (NEP 2020) has already laid the groundwork for a holistic, inclusive, and forward-looking system that aligns with global standards while preserving India's cultural ethos.

This paper explores how education can serve as the cornerstone of India's developmental journey. It argues that universal access to quality education, integration of technology, promotion of research and innovation, and alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG-4) are essential targets for 2047. Quotations from Indian thinkers such as Swami Vivekananda—"Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man"—reinforce the philosophical depth of India's educational vision.

By 2047, India must ensure that every child, regardless of socio-economic background, has access to holistic learning that nurtures critical thinking, creativity, and ethical citizenship. The article highlights challenges such as regional disparities, infrastructure gaps, and the need for teacher empowerment, while proposing policy recommendations to overcome them.

The conclusion emphasizes that education is not just one pillar among many but the very foundation upon which Viksit Bharat will stand. With robust educational reforms, India can truly emerge as a global knowledge superpower by 2047.

1. Introduction:

"The destiny of India is being shaped in her classrooms." — Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

India's aspiration of Viksit Bharat@2047 is not merely economic—it is civilizational. Education is the foundation upon which this vision rests. As of 2025, India has over 260 million students enrolled in schools and nearly 40 million in higher education, making it the largest education system in the world. Yet challenges of quality, equity, and employability remain.

2. Historical Perspective:

- **Ancient India**: Universities like Nalanda and Takshashila attracted scholars worldwide, emphasizing holistic learning in philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and arts. This tradition showcased India's role as a global knowledge hub.

- **Colonial Era**: The British introduced a system focused on clerical training, sidelining indigenous knowledge. Macaulay's Minute (1835) shifted emphasis to English education, creating a disconnect between traditional wisdom and modern needs.

- **Post-Independence**: India prioritized mass literacy and equity. The Kothari Commission (1964–66) stressed education as a tool for social transformation, laying the foundation for national development.
- **NEP 2020**: A landmark reform aiming to integrate technology, vocational training, and holistic pedagogy, aligning India's education system with global standards while preserving cultural ethos.

3. Education as a Driver of Development :

- **Economic Growth:** Studies show that every additional year of schooling increases productivity and GDP. India's IT and service sector boom is directly linked to educational expansion.
- **Social Equity:** Education empowers marginalized groups, reduces poverty, and enhances gender equality. Female literacy correlates strongly with improved health and reduced child mortality.
- **Democracy:** An educated citizenry strengthens democratic institutions by fostering informed participation, tolerance, and accountability.
- **Innovation:** Research-driven education creates entrepreneurs and innovators, positioning India as a leader in science and technology.

4. Targets for Viksit Bharat@2047 :

- **Universal Literacy:** Achieve 100% literacy and ensure every child completes secondary education.
- **Digital Classrooms:** Integrate AI, VR, and digital tools to modernize pedagogy and bridge rural-urban divides.
- **Global Universities:** Place at least 10 Indian universities in the world's top 100 rankings.
- **Research & Innovation:** Establish hubs that make India a top 5 nation in the Global Innovation Index.
- **Inclusive Education:** Ensure equitable access for rural, tribal, and differently-abled communities, fulfilling SDG-4.

5. Challenges Ahead :

- **Regional Disparities:** Literacy rates vary widely—Kerala at 96% versus Bihar at 71%—highlighting uneven progress.
- **Infrastructure Gaps:** Many rural schools lack internet, libraries, and laboratories, limiting quality learning.

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- **Teacher Training:** Only about 60% of teachers are trained in modern pedagogy, affecting classroom outcomes.
- **Dropouts:** Secondary school dropout rates remain high, especially among girls in rural areas due to socio-economic barriers.

6. Policy Recommendations :
- **Strengthen NEP 2020:** Ensure effective implementation with measurable outcomes and accountability mechanisms.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Mobilize resources to expand infrastructure, especially in underserved regions.
- **Increase Investment:** Raise education spending from 3% to 6% of GDP to match global benchmarks.
- **Global Collaboration:** Encourage joint research, faculty exchange, and international partnerships to enhance competitiveness.

7. Philosophical Foundations :
- **Swami Vivekananda:** Advocated that education should manifest the inherent perfection in individuals, focusing on character and spirituality.
- **Rabindranath Tagore:** Emphasized creativity, freedom, and holistic learning, blending art, nature, and science.
- **Mahatma Gandhi:** Championed Nai Talim—education for self-reliance, moral development, and community service.
- **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar:** Saw education as the key to social justice and empowerment of marginalized communities.

8. Conclusion :
Education is the bedrock of Viksit Bharat@2047. By ensuring universal access, fostering innovation, and nurturing ethical citizens, India can transform into a global knowledge superpower. The journey from literacy to leadership requires sustained investment, visionary policies, and commitment to inclusivity.

As Dr. Radhakrishnan rightly said, "The destiny of India is being shaped in her classrooms."

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