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Vikshit Bharat 2047 and the future of higher education in India

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Abstract
As India gets closer to its 100th anniversary of independence in 2047, it is at a crossroads. The goal of "Vikshit Bharat 2047" (Developed India 2047) is to turn India into a global powerhouse, and higher education will be a key part of that. This article examines the present condition, obstacles, and prospective chances for higher education in India, in accordance with the objectives of Vikshit Bharat 2047. It looks at how recent policy changes, especially the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, have affected things, and it lays forth a plan for how to make higher education better, more open to everyone, and a world leader.

Keywords: Higher education, NEP 2020, Vikshit Bharat 2047, policy reforms, global competitiveness, educational transformation

Introduction
India, the world's largest democracy, is poised to celebrate 100 years of independence in 2047. The vision of "Vikshit Bharat 2047" encompasses an inclusive, innovative, and globally competitive nation. Higher education is central to this vision, as it fuels human capital development, research, innovation, and socio-economic progress. This paper critically examines the transformative journey required for India's higher education sector to realize this ambitious vision.

1. Vikshit Bharat 2047: Vision and Goals
India will celebrate its 100th anniversary of independence in 2047: The Government of India has set a big goal for the country: to become a "Vikshit Bharat," or a developed, knowledge-based, and fair society. This vision aims to not only boost the economy, but also make sure that everyone, no matter where they live or what their social or economic background is, can benefit from development. A key part of this vision is the idea that higher education is a major factor in social progress, technological progress, and global competitiveness.

One of the main goals of Vikshit Bharat: 2047 is to make sure that everyone has access to high-quality education at all levels. The goal is to make higher education available, affordable, and welcoming to everyone, with a special focus on groups that are often left out or not represented. This means getting rid of obstacles that are based on gender, caste, disability, or socioeconomic status so that everyone has the chance to reach their full potential. Universal access also means that schools and colleges should be able to reach more people in rural and remote areas by using technology and digital platforms to fill in the gaps.

Global Leadership in Research and Innovation: The vision stresses the importance of building a strong ecosystem for research, innovation, and entrepreneurship in order to make India a knowledge superpower. This means building world-class institutions that do great basic and applied research, encouraging projects that involve people from different fields, and making partnerships between schools, businesses, and the government stronger. The goal is to make it possible for Indian universities and research centres to make big contributions to

the creation of new knowledge, new technologies, and new intellectual property. India wants to be a leader in fields like science, technology, engineering, healthcare, and the arts by developing talent and building up its research infrastructure.

Bridging Urban-Rural and Socio-Economic Divides: A key part of the vision is the promise to close the gaps that have long existed between urban and rural areas and between people of different social and economic backgrounds. In the past, most educational and developmental opportunities were in cities, which left many rural and poor communities behind. Vikshit Bharat 2047 wants to fix these differences by making educational resources more accessible, improving connectivity, and making sure that all areas have access to high-quality education and training. Policies aim to lower the number of students who drop out, help first-generation learners, and give financial aid and scholarships to those who need them. The bigger goal is to promote social cohesion and upward mobility by giving everyone equal access to opportunities.

The vision for 2047 also puts a lot of stress on growth that is both sustainable and inclusive: This means that all development projects, including those in higher education, must follow the rules of social justice, environmental sustainability, and economic inclusivity. Colleges and universities are expected to be very important in research and advocacy about climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable practices. The curriculum is also being changed to teach students about civic duty, ethical leadership, and social entrepreneurship.

In line with NEP 2020: The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is the most important part of reaching the goals of Vikshit Bharat 2047. NEP 2020 supports a research-based approach to education that is flexible and includes all subjects. It sets high goals for raising the Gross Enrolments Ratio, encouraging vocational education, and making Indian education more global. India is setting the stage for a dynamic, innovative, and inclusive higher education system that can help the country become a developed nation by 2047 (Ministry of Education, 2020) by making sure that policy changes fit with the country's larger vision.

2. Current State of Higher Education in India

The All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE, 2022) says that India has the third-largest higher education system in the world, with more than 1,000 universities and 40,000 colleges. The sector has grown a lot in the last few decades, as shown by the big rise in the Gross Enrolments Ratio (GER). This shows that higher education is becoming more accessible across the country. The rise in the number of technical and professional schools has led to a larger number of graduates, which is what a fast-changing economy needs.

Even with these successes, the sector still faces a number of problems that make it hard to reach its full potential. One of the biggest problems is that the quality of institutions varies a lot. Some top universities and institutes are known around the world, but most colleges have problems with their infrastructure, resources, and outdated curricula. This difference in quality has an effect on how well students learn and how likely they are to find work.

India's standing in global university rankings is relatively low, primarily attributable to constrained research output and inadequate focus on innovation and interdisciplinary studies. Most colleges and universities focus more on teaching than on doing original research, which makes them less competitive on a global scale.

Equity gaps are still a big worry. Access to higher education differs greatly depending on gender, location, and socioeconomic status, with marginalised groups frequently encountering substantial obstacles. There are programs in place to encourage inclusivity, but there is still a lot of work to be done to make sure everyone has the same chances.

Furthermore, there is an increasing apprehension regarding the disparity between graduates' competencies and labour market demands, resulting in unemployment and underemployment among degree holders (Agarwal, 2009). This necessitates immediate reforms in curriculum, pedagogy, and industry collaboration to enhance the alignment of educational outcomes with the requirements of the 21st-century workforce.

3. Key Drivers for Transforming Higher Education

There are a number of important factors that are changing higher education in India. Together, these factors are laying the groundwork for a modern, open, and globally competitive system.

Technology and Digitalisation: The use of technology in education has changed the ways that students can get and use information. Digital platforms like SWAYAM, NPTEL, and DIKSHA have made it possible for students all over the country to access high-quality educational materials, no matter where they live or how much money they have. The COVID-19 pandemic sped up the use of online education by a lot, which pushed schools to build strong e-learning systems. But differences in access to technology, especially in rural and remote areas, still make it hard for everyone to participate equally. This is why digital inclusion is so important.

India's investment in research and development (R&D): Is only about 0.7% of GDP, which is much lower than that of the world's leaders (NITI Aayog, 2021). To improve India's research capacity, it is important to strengthen partnerships between universities and businesses, reward research output, and create an environment that encourages innovation. This will not only improve India's standing in the world, but it will also lead to long-term economic growth and technological progress.

Collaboration between industry and academia: To make people more employable, it's important to close the gap between what people learn in school and what businesses need. Collaborative programs, internships, and research projects with industry partners give students the hands-on skills they need to get a job in today's fast-paced job market.

Internationalisation: To compare Indian higher education to global standards, it is important to have student and faculty exchanges, international joint research, and partnerships with schools in other countries. Internationalisation improves the quality of education, encourages new ideas, and makes Indian schools and colleges better known around the world. Governance and

Autonomy: NEP 2020 calls for more academic and administrative freedom, which lets institutions quickly respond to changes in the education and business worlds. More autonomy leads to more innovation, responsiveness from institutions, and accountability, which all help make higher education better.

4. Catalyst for Change: National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: Catalyst for Change

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a big change in India's education system. Its goal is to change the higher education system so that it fits with the country's vision for a developed and knowledge-based society by 2047. NEP 2020 gives a complete plan for solving long-standing problems and meeting the changing needs of students, businesses, and society.

One of the main goals of NEP 2020 is to move towards education that is multidisciplinary and holistic. The policy stresses breaking down strict barriers between fields, letting students choose from a wide range of subjects. The goal of this method is to help students become more creative, think critically, and learn a wider range of skills that will help them deal with problems in the real world.

The National Research Foundation (NRF) is proposed by NEP 2020 to improve India's research and innovation ecosystem. The NRF's goals are to fund and promote high-quality research in all fields, encourage institutions to work together, and create a culture of questioning and new ideas. This is very important for increasing India's research output around the world and encouraging technological progress.

The policy also says that vocational and skill-based education should be a part of higher education. NEP 2020 wants to close the gap between education and employability by adding practical skills and training that is relevant to the job market to school curricula. This will help graduates get ready for the workforce.

Another big goal is to raise the Gross Enrolments Ratio (GER) in higher education to 50% by 2035. The policy lists ways to reach underserved groups, like making access easier, encouraging flexible learning paths, and using technology.

Lastly, NEP 2020 promotes the internationalisation of Indian higher education by making it easier for students and teachers to move around, creating global partnerships, and allowing credit transfers. These changes are meant to give Indian schools and colleges the skills they need to compete with schools and colleges around the world and make India a leader in education (Ministry of Education, 2020).

5. Roadmap to Vikshit Bharat 2047 in Higher Education

A multi-pronged plan to make higher education more accessible, inclusive, and competitive on a global scale is necessary to reach the goal of Vikshit Bharat 2047.

To make sure that higher education is available to everyone, targeted scholarships and reservation policies are necessary to help groups that are economically and socially disadvantaged. Building up digital infrastructure in rural and remote areas helps close the gap between cities and rural areas. At the same time, gender mainstreaming and targeted support for marginalised communities help make higher education more diverse and fair.

Making sure that education is of high quality and focused on results: Quality assurance is at the top of the list, with agencies like NAAC and NBA leading the way in making changes to accreditation. Updating the curriculum and giving teachers on-going training make sure that education stays useful and relevant. Students are better prepared for real-world problems and jobs when they focus on experiential learning methods like internships, projects, and hands-on research.

Encouraging Research and Innovation: To create a strong ecosystem for innovation, it is important to give more money to research and development. Indian institutions can become centres of technological and social innovation by setting up interdisciplinary research centres and campus-based start-up incubators. These centres encourage creativity, entrepreneurship, and collaboration.

Using EdTech and digital platforms: Blended learning models, MOOCs, and AI-powered personalised learning tools are changing the way students learn. These platforms are flexible, scalable, and personalised, which makes high-quality education available to millions of people with different learning needs.

Faculty Development and Leadership: Faculty skills and leadership improve when they have opportunities for international exposure and collaboration, as well as ongoing professional development. Well-trained teachers are important for keeping up academic excellence and helping institutions grow.

Creating world-class institutions: To build institutions that are known around the world, they need to encourage healthy competition, take part in global rankings, and draw in students and faculty from other countries. When Indian higher education is compared to international standards, it helps improve its quality and reputation around the world.

6. Challenges and Barriers

Indian higher education is still facing a number of long-term problems that make it hard to change, even though there are ambitious policy frameworks and reform efforts in place.

Lack of resources is still a big problem because the government always spends less than the recommended 6% of GDP on education. This makes it harder to put money into infrastructure, research, and training for faculty. There are still differences in access and outcomes based on where you live (urban vs. rural), your gender, and your socio-economic status. This is especially true for marginalised groups, who often have few chances to go to college.

Another problem is regulatory bottlenecks. Too many rules that are too complicated can limit the freedom and creativity of institutions, making it hard for universities to quickly adjust to new global and industry standards. Brain drain, which is when top talent looks for work abroad, is another problem that makes it hard for India to build world-class institutions and keep skilled teachers and researchers.

Lastly, quality assurance is still a big worry. It is hard to make sure that all colleges and universities have the same academic standards and results because there are so many of them and they are all different. These problems show that Vikshit Bharat 2047's goals can only be reached with more investment, simpler rules, more help for disadvantaged groups, and a renewed focus on quality.

7. Case Studies and Best Practices

India's higher education system has many great schools and programs that show how to make progress and come up with new ideas. The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are known all over the world for their high standards in teaching engineering and technology. They are leaders in cutting-edge research, have produced important alumni, and play a big role in India's innovation ecosystem.

Working together with people from other countries is raising standards and getting more people involved around the world. Indian students are getting the best practices and different points of view from around the world through the opening of foreign university campuses in places like GIFT City and the start of international joint degree programs. This puts the system on the world stage.

Digital programs like SWAYAM and NPTEL have made it possible for millions of students across the country to get a high-quality education. These platforms let people learn at their own pace and in a way that works for them, and they help close gaps between regions and social classes.

The private sector is also very important. Ashoka University, which is known for its liberal arts programs, and BITS Pilani, which is known for its technical education, are examples of schools that set standards for academic quality, research, and the overall growth of students. These case studies show best practices that can be used to improve India's higher education system and make it more competitive on a global scale.

8. Policy Recommendations

A strategic change in higher education policy is necessary to make the vision of Vikshit Bharat 2047 come true. There are a few important suggestions that can bring about long-lasting and meaningful change in the industry.

Invest more in the Public and Private Sectors: Research and development (R&D), digital infrastructure, and overall quality need a lot more money. Investments to modernise campuses, improve labs, and make technology more accessible should be a top priority for both the public and private sectors. More money will also make it possible for more scholarships and better resources for schools that don't have enough.

Make Public-Private Partnerships stronger: Schools and businesses need to work together to make sure that their curricula match what the market needs, that internships are useful, and that students can develop their skills. Joint research projects and innovation hubs can help students go from learning about things to actually using them, which will make them more employable and ready for the workplace.

Encourage New Ideas in Teaching: The curriculum should be changed to focus on learning across subjects, solving problems, and thinking critically. Flipped classrooms, project-based learning, and experiential modules are some examples of new teaching methods that make learning more interesting and useful. To help teachers use these new teaching methods, they need training and development programs.

Increase Internationalisation: Making it easier for foreign collaborations and faculty exchange programs to happen can help Indian schools meet global standards. Making it easier for students to move around, creating joint degrees, and encouraging international research partnerships will make Indian higher education more well-known around the world and give students a wider range of views.

Focus on Lifelong Learning: Because technology and industry needs change so quickly, lifelong learning should be a top priority. Policies should help people keep learning new skills and relearning old ones so they can adjust to changes in the economy. Courses that are flexible and modular, as well as micro-credentials, can help people stay competitive in the job market.

If these suggestions are put into action as a whole, India's higher education system will stay dynamic, open to all, and competitive with other countries, which is what Vikshit Bharat 2047 wants.

Conclusion

The goal of achieving the vision of Vikshit Bharat 2047 through higher education is high but possible. It will take the dedication of all stakeholders, including policymakers, academic leaders, industry partners, and society as a whole. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has made a strong policy base and a detailed plan for how to change the sector. But these changes will only have real effects if they are carried out correctly, given enough money for a long time, and people are willing to learn from the best practices from around the world.

If India wants to become a knowledge superpower, it needs to make education more accessible and welcoming, make sure it is of the highest quality, encourage research and innovation, and be an active member of the global academic community. We need to work together and come up with new ideas to solve problems that keep coming up, like not having enough resources, differences, regulatory issues, and quality assurance.

India can change how its colleges and universities work if it uses the combined power of its institutions, uses technology, encourages partnerships between the public and private sectors, and is always ready to meet the needs of society and the global economy as they change. This change will help not only each student, but it will also help the country move faster towards sustainable, fair, and inclusive development. India can really make Vikshit Bharat 2047 come true by becoming a developed, knowledge-based, and well-respected country in the world.

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