

Education, Social mobility and Empowerment Shamarao Nerlikar

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ABSTRACT:

Viksit Bharat 2047 is the vision of India's transformation into a developed, inclusive, and sustainable nation as it approaches the centenary of independence. This vision rests on the foundation of education, which is both an enabler of change and a driver of innovation. Quality education, accessible to all, is central to bridging socio-economic divides and creating a knowledge-driven economy. Alongside academic excellence, moral education plays a vital role in shaping character, ethical responsibility, and a sense of national duty among citizens. By nurturing values such as integrity, empathy, and social harmony, India can ensure that progress is not only material but also deeply human-centric.

A critical dimension of this journey is strengthening social mobility, enabling individuals from all strata to rise through merit, skills, and opportunities. This requires targeted interventions in rural education, skill development, digital inclusion, and equitable access to resources. Empowerment, especially of women, youth, and marginalized communities, lies at the core of creating an inclusive society. Encouraging entrepreneurship, encouraging innovation, and expanding access to decision-making processes are essential means of fostering empowerment in everyday life.

Strategies for achieving Viksit Bharat 2047 must integrate technological advancement with cultural values, sustainable economic growth with social fairness, and global competitiveness with local identity. Key strategies include restructuring learning systems to blend academic knowledge with vocational and digital skills, promoting decentralized governance for participatory development, and ensuring policies that balance rapid modernization with environmental stewardship. By investing in human capital and reinforcing democratic institutions, India can aspire toward becoming a developed nation that embodies prosperity, equity, and resilience.

Thus, Viksit Bharat 2047 envisions not just economic progress, but a morally enlightened, socially mobile, and empowered India, driven by holistic strategies of inclusive development.

KEYWORDS:

Education, Moral Education, Social Mobility, Empowerment, Strategies.

Introduction

India will complete 100 years of independence in 2047. The vision of “Viksit Bharat 2047” is to transform India into a developed, inclusive, self-reliant, and sustainable nation. It emphasizes holistic development – not only economic progress but also social equity, environmental sustainability, and global leadership.

Meaning of Viksit Bharat

“Viksit” means developed – free from poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and inequality. A nation where every citizen has access to education, healthcare, opportunities, and a high standard of living. Development with Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliance) and Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas (inclusive growth).

Visionary Indian leaders and thinkers

The following Indian leaders and thinkers who laid the foundation and who believed in the dream of India as a developed nation. Their combined insightful thoughts brought the vision ‘Viksit Bharat’ as a mission for 2047.

1. Swami Vivekananda (Spiritual Leader, Visionary Thinker)

- » He saw India rising with knowledge, strength, and spirituality.
- » “We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one’s own feet. Then and then only, we will have a developed nation.”

2. Mahatma Gandhi (Father of the Nation)

- » Gandhi’s vision of development was based on self-reliance, rural upliftment, and moral values.
- » “India’s development must begin from her villages. The soul of India lives in its villages. True independence and development lie in making each village self-sufficient.”

3. Rabindranath Tagore (Poet, Nobel Laureate)

- » His dream was of an enlightened, fearless, and progressive India.
- » “Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high... Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.”

4. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (Iron Man of India)

- » He dreamt of a strong, united, and developed India.
- » “Take to the path of Dharma, the path of truth and justice. Do not misuse your strength, do not be carried away by illusory ideas. Re-

main united. March forward in all humility, but fully awake to the situation you face, demanding your rights and firmness.”

5. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (Architect of the Indian Constitution)

- » He believed development must be inclusive and democratic.
- » “Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. Social democracy means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as the principles of life.”

6. Narendra Modi (Prime Minister of India)

- » Self-reliance & Innovation– India must be Atmanirbhar (self-reliant), promote “Vocal for Local,” and lead in critical technologies like clean energy and space to become a developed nation.
- » Youth & Inclusive Growth– The youth, women, and rural communities are the driving force, development must be inclusive, uplifting all sections of society.

Education in Viksit Bharat 2047

Education is the backbone of national development and plays a central role in achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047. It empowers individuals with knowledge and skills while shaping a progressive, inclusive, and innovative society.

a. Foundation of Human Capital

- » Builds knowledge, skills, and values for a productive workforce.
- » Drives innovation, entrepreneurship, and national competitiveness.
- » Utilizes India’s demographic dividend effectively.

b. Promotes Inclusive Growth

- » Ensures equal opportunities for all sections of society.
- » Reduces poverty and social inequality.
- » Empowers women and rural youth to participate in development.

c. Driving Economic Development

- » Strengthens industries, services, and digital economy.
- » Encourages startups and innovation through skilled manpower.
- » Aligns workforce with Industry 4.0 requirements (AI, robotics, data science).

d. Social Transformation

- » Builds awareness, tolerance, and responsible citizenship.
- » Promotes unity in diversity and cultural preservation.
- » Helps eliminate social evils and spreads awareness of health and environment.

e. Strengthening Democracy & Governance

- » Encourages informed and active participation in democracy.
- » Enhances accountability and governance.
- » Builds leadership for future India.

f. Innovation & Research Leadership

- » Expands higher education and research in science and technology.
- » Makes India a global hub for space research, renewable energy, and healthcare innovations.
- » Strengthens India's role in the global knowledge economy.

g. Sustainable Development

- » Spreads awareness about climate change and eco-friendly practices.
- » Encourages renewable energy adoption and responsible consumption.
- » Balances economic growth with environmental protection.

h. Global Competitiveness

- » Equips youth with global skills, languages, and technical expertise.
- » Positions India as a global leader in trade, technology, and diplomacy.
- » Enhances India's soft power through intellectual and cultural influence.

Education in India: Past, Present & Future (toward Viksit Bharat 2047)

Aspect	Past (Pre-Independence & Early Decades)	Present (2020s)	Future (Vision 2047 – Viksit Bharat)
Literacy Rate	12% in 1947; ~34% in 1971	81% (2023–24)	Near-universal literacy (100%), no gender gap
School Enrolment	Low enrolment, high dropout	Near-universal enrolment at primary level	100% completion across all levels
Gender Gap	Female literacy <10% (1947)	Female literacy 70.4% rural; 77% overall	Full gender parity
Higher Education GER	<5% till 1980s	27% (2019–20)	50%+ by 2035 (NEP 2020 target)
Focus of Education	Basic literacy, nation-building	Literacy + skill + digital education	Holistic: innovation, sustainability, research

Mode of Learning	Chalk-board, limited infra	Smart classrooms, e-learning	AI-driven personalized learning
Govt Role	Expanding schools, Operation Black-board	NEP 2020, Samagra Shiksha, Skill India	6%+ GDP, world-class universities
Social Inclusion	Large gaps rural/urban/gender	RTE Act 2009, scholarships, outreach	Fully inclusive, affordable, tech-enabled
Skill Development	Hardly emphasized	Skill India, coding & AI courses	Future-ready workforce (green, biotech, space tech)
Moral & Civic Education	Value-based Gurukul, eroded later	Re-emphasis on ethics & environment	Core of holistic responsible learning

Moral Education in respect to Viksit Bharat

1. Foundation for Value-Based Development

Moral education shapes citizens with values like honesty, empathy, discipline, and respect for diversity. A nation cannot become truly developed with only material progress; it requires ethical citizens who uphold justice, equality, and humanity.

2. Strengthening Social Harmony

India is a land of diverse cultures, languages, and religions. Moral education instills tolerance, mutual respect, and unity in diversity. These values reduce conflicts and promote inclusive growth, a vital step towards building Viksit Bharat.

3. Promoting Responsible Citizenship

A developed nation is not only built by policies but also by responsible citizens. Moral education nurtures qualities like responsibility, accountability, environmental consciousness, and respect for law, which are key to sustainable development.

4. Ethics in Innovation and Growth

As India grows in technology, economy, and global influence, moral education ensures that growth is guided by ethics. It prevents corruption, misuse of power, and exploitation, ensuring that development benefits all sections of society.

5. Nation-Building Through Youth

India's demographic strength lies in its youth. Moral education empowers the young generation with values of integrity, service, and patriotism, helping them contribute positively to India's vision of becoming a Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Social Mobility:

Some of the recent facts/trends:

Possible Improvements by 2047

1. Broader Middle Class & Improved Standard of Living

- » As many people move up out of poverty, a larger portion of the population will have access to better education, health, housing.
- » Consumption patterns, aspirations and lifestyle expectations will shift; hence mobility won't just be income but capability (e.g., life expectancy, education, digital access).

2. Education & Skill Access Becoming More Equitable

- » More people in rural & remote areas will have access to digital/quality education, reducing the urban-rural gap.
- » Vocational training, skill development aligned with industry 4.0 / AI / technology will help those without traditional elite education get better jobs.

3. Gender Gap Narrowing

- » Increased female literacy, better healthcare, policy focus on women's empowerment will help more women rise socially and economically.
- » More women in workforce, more entrepreneurship among women, which will help break intergenerational barriers.

4. Some Reduction in Caste & Identity Barriers

- » Legal protections, affirmative action, social attitudes may improve further.
- » Urbanization & migration tend to dilute rigid caste boundaries in some aspects.

5. More Geographic Mobility

- » Migration from rural to urban areas, even across states.
- » Better infrastructure (transport, telecommunications) allows people to

access opportunities further from their birthplace.

6. Digital & Social Capital Growth

- » As connectivity improves, people will have access to more information networks, markets, mentorship, which helps in upward mobility.
- » Use of platforms, social media etc., might help people from remote/poor backgrounds get exposure and opportunities.

7. Stronger Social Security & Safety Nets

If coverage continues expanding, vulnerability to shocks (health, climate, economic) can be reduced, letting people invest in long-term mobility (education,

What India Needs to Do to Maximize Social Mobility by 2047

To ensure that more people can move up, not just in income but in multiple dimensions (education, health, dignity), India likely needs to:

1. Ensure sustained high growth (7-8%+), especially inclusive growth across states.
2. Invest heavily in quality education (primary to higher), teacher training, infrastructure, digital access.
3. Strengthen vocational & technical training, and ensure linkage to jobs.
4. Improve healthcare access & quality, reduce disease burdens, maternal and child health.
5. Expand social protection so people can take risks (move, start businesses) without fear of catastrophic losses.
6. Accelerate reforms in land, labour, finance, so processes are easier, more opportunistic.
7. Encourage reductions in discrimination; promote social inclusion.
8. Improve urban planning, infrastructure, housing, so migration doesn't lead to slums but to improved livelihoods.
9. Harness technology — digital platforms, remote work, AI, mobile connectivity — to reduce place disadvantages.

Empowerment

If education and social mobility improve in India by the 2047. Then empowerment will not be a big issue. Education brings stability and improvement in economy, it develops skills, learning, confidence among

youths and it emphasis on social mobility.

- » It will reduce gender disparities
- » Equal opportunities
- » Reduces caste discrimination
- » Reduces male dominance
- » More skill oriented and learning oriented education.
- » Adequate use of Technology

All the above points describe about empowerment of women, empowering youths and other contributories of development of Nation.

Conclusion

“Viksit Bharat” is not just a vision its dream of every Indian who had made immense contributions for the development of our nation. So, they deserve better and developed tomorrow. Education, Social Mobility and Empowerment brings uniformity, unity and opportunities for the youths.

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3. Skill India Mission/PMKVY official Website.

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The Authors have no conflict of interest to declare that they are relevant to the content of this article.

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