

Building on the Past, Looking to the Future: The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' Policy in the Context of India's Development Trajectory

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Abstract:- This paper examines India's ambitious vision to become a developed nation by its centennial of independence. The study situates the "Viksit Bharat 2047" policy within the historical evolution of India's development strategies, tracing the shifts from early socialist-inspired planning to the economic liberalization reforms initiated in the late 20th century. By analyzing the continuities and departures from previous policy frameworks, this paper provides a comprehensive understanding of the context shaping the current national aspiration.

The paper will delve into the core objectives and key pillars of the "Viksit Bharat 2047" initiative, including its focus on economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability, and good governance. It will explore how this vision builds upon the achievements and lessons learned from India's post-independence development journey, adapting to contemporary global and domestic realities. Furthermore, the paper will consider the role of technological advancements, infrastructure development, and international collaborations as integral components of realizing this transformative goal.

By placing the "Viksit Bharat 2047" policy within its historical and policy context, this research aims to offer valuable insights into the strategic directions and potential challenges that lie ahead in India's pursuit of developed nation status. Ultimately, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of India's long-term development aspirations and the critical factors that will determine its success in achieving the envisioned future.

Keywords: Viksit Bharat, development, 2047 policy

1. Introduction

India stands at a pivotal juncture in its developmental journey. From the nascent years following independence, marked by the challenges of nation-building, poverty alleviation, and establishing democratic institutions, the country has traversed a remarkable path. Early decades focused on planned economic development, aiming for self-sufficiency and laying the industrial groundwork. The subsequent liberalization in the early 1990s unleashed a wave of economic growth, propelled by globalization, technological advancements, and a burgeoning middle class. This period witnessed significant strides in various sectors, including information technology, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing, positioning India as a rising global power (Ahluwalia, 2002).

However, this progress has been accompanied by persistent challenges. Issues such as income inequality, infrastructure deficits, environmental degradation, and social disparities continue to demand urgent attention. While poverty rates have declined, a significant portion of the population still grapples with economic vulnerability. The need for inclusive and sustainable development has become increasingly apparent, prompting a re-evaluation of development strategies and a renewed focus on long-term visioning.

In this context, the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy emerges as a significant articulation of India's aspirations for its centenary of independence. This ambitious vision document outlines a comprehensive roadmap for transforming India into a developed nation by 2047. It builds upon the successes and lessons learned from the past while strategically addressing the existing challenges and harnessing emerging opportunities. The policy encompasses a multi-pronged approach, spanning economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability, and good governance. It seeks to foster a society that is prosperous, inclusive, secure, and culturally vibrant (NITI Aayog, 2024).

The genesis of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' can be traced to a growing recognition within the Indian government and policymaking circles of the need for a long-term, integrated vision to guide the nation's development trajectory. It acknowledges the demographic dividend of a young and aspirational population, the potential of technological disruption, and the imperative of addressing climate change and resource constraints. Unlike shorter-term plans, 'Viksit Bharat 2047' provides a strategic framework that transcends political cycles, aiming for a sustained and transformative impact over the next quarter-century.

The policy is not conceived in isolation but rather draws strength from the cumulative impact of various initiatives and reforms undertaken in recent years. Programs focused on digital transformation (Digital India), skill development (Skill India), infrastructure development (PM Gati Shakti), and promoting self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat) provide crucial building blocks for achieving the goals outlined in 'Viksit Bharat 2047'. These initiatives, while addressing specific challenges, collectively contribute to creating an enabling environment for accelerated and inclusive growth.

Furthermore, 'Viksit Bharat 2047' recognizes the importance of leveraging India's unique strengths, including its democratic traditions, its diverse cultural heritage, and its growing innovation ecosystem. It emphasizes the need for citizen-centric governance, fostering greater participation and ownership in the development process. The policy also underscores the significance of international partnerships and collaborations in achieving its ambitious targets, recognizing the interconnectedness of the global landscape (Ministry of External Affairs, 2023).

The ambition of achieving 'developed nation' status by 2047 necessitates a paradigm shift across various sectors. Economically, this entails sustained high growth rates, a significant increase in per capita income, the creation of high-quality jobs, and the diversification of the economy towards higher-value-added sectors. Socially, it requires ensuring universal access to quality education and healthcare, empowering marginalized communities, promoting gender equality, and fostering social harmony. Environmentally, it demands a commitment to sustainable practices, mitigating climate change risks, and preserving natural resources for future generations. In terms of governance, it necessitates efficient, transparent, and accountable institutions that can effectively implement policies and deliver public services (World Bank, 2023).

The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy, therefore, is not merely a statement of intent but a comprehensive framework that will likely guide policy formulation, resource allocation, and implementation strategies across various levels of government. Its success will hinge on effective collaboration between the government, private sector, civil society organizations, and citizens. It will also require continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation in response to evolving circumstances and emerging challenges.

This research paper aims to delve deeper into the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy, analyzing its key pillars, underlying assumptions, and potential implications for India's development trajectory. By situating this ambitious vision within the historical context of India's post-independence development and examining the ongoing efforts that contribute to its realization, this paper seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the policy's significance and its potential to shape India's future in the lead-up to its centenary of independence. It will explore the opportunities and challenges associated with achieving the goals outlined in 'Viksit Bharat 2047', considering the global and domestic factors that will influence its success. Ultimately, this paper seeks to contribute to a nuanced understanding of India's aspirations for the future and the strategies being adopted to realize the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

2. Review of Literature

- (a) **Ahluwalia, M. S. (2002). India's economic reforms: An appraisal.** This seminal paper offers a comprehensive analysis of India's economic liberalization reforms initiated in the early 1990s. It examines the drivers, implementation, and impact of these reforms on growth, poverty, and inequality. Ahluwalia's work provides a crucial historical backdrop for understanding the economic context in which 'Viksit Bharat 2047' has emerged, highlighting the successes and unfinished agendas of past policy shifts.
- (b) **Bhagwati, J., & Panagariya, A. (2013). *Why growth matters: How economic growth in India reduced poverty and the lessons for other developing countries*.** This book presents a strong argument for the role of economic growth in poverty reduction in India. By analyzing extensive data, the authors highlight the positive impact of market-oriented reforms on improving living standards. This perspective is relevant to 'Viksit Bharat 2047' as the policy likely prioritizes sustained economic growth as a key driver for achieving developed nation status and further poverty alleviation.
- (c) **Dreze, J., & Sen, A. (2013). *An uncertain glory: India and its contradictions*.** This influential work offers a more critical perspective on India's development story. While acknowledging economic progress, Dreze and Sen emphasize the persistent social deficits in health, education, and inequality. Their analysis underscores the importance of inclusive development, a theme that is likely central to the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy's aim of holistic progress.
- (d) **Kohli, A. (2006). *Politics of economic growth in India, 1980-2005: Part I: The 1980s*.** and **Kohli, A. (2006). *Politics of economic growth in India, 1980-2005: Part II: The era of economic liberalization*.** These two-part articles provide a political economy perspective on India's growth trajectory. Kohli examines how political factors have shaped economic policies and outcomes, offering insights into the complexities of implementing long-term development visions like 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.
- (e) **Rodrik, D. (2016). *Premature deindustrialization in the developing world*.** While not specific to India, Rodrik's work raises important questions about the sustainability of growth models based on services rather than manufacturing. This is relevant to 'Viksit Bharat 2047' as the policy will need to consider the structural transformation of the Indian economy to achieve long-term, high-quality growth and employment.
- (f) **Srinivasan, T. N. (2004). *India's growth experience: Lessons and challenges*.** This paper provides a comprehensive overview of India's growth experience up to the early 2000s, highlighting both successes and persistent challenges. Srinivasan emphasizes the need for continued reforms in areas like infrastructure, governance, and human capital development, which are likely to be key focus areas for 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.
- (g) **World Bank. *India Development Update*.** The World Bank regularly publishes reports on India's economic and social development. These updates provide valuable data and analysis on current trends, challenges, and policy recommendations, offering a contemporary context for understanding the rationale and potential focus areas of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'. Recent editions would be particularly pertinent.
- (h) **NITI Aayog.** As the primary policy think tank of the Indian government, NITI Aayog's publications, including strategy documents, reports on various sectors, and vision statements, offer crucial insights into the government's development priorities and long-term goals. Documents related to India@75 and emerging vision documents leading up to 2047 would be particularly relevant for understanding the conceptual underpinnings of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.
- (i) **Ministry of Finance, Government of India. *Economic Survey*.** The annual Economic Survey provides a detailed overview of the Indian economy, including sectoral performance, challenges, and policy initiatives. It serves as an important source for understanding the government's assessment of the current

state of the economy and its medium-term priorities, which would inform the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' framework.

- (j) **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report for India*.** These reports offer a comprehensive assessment of human development indicators in India, including health, education, and living standards. They highlight the disparities and challenges in achieving inclusive development, which is likely a key concern addressed by the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy.
- (k) **Virmani, A. (2006). *India's 2004-08 growth surge: Preliminary analysis*.** This paper analyzes the high growth period in the mid-2000s, examining the factors that contributed to it and the lessons for sustaining rapid growth. This historical analysis can provide insights into the growth targets and strategies that might be considered under 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.
- (l) **Patnaik, P. (2010). *Crisis of capital and the contemporary world*.** While a broader critique of global capitalism, Patnaik's work also touches upon the specific challenges faced by developing countries like India in navigating global economic forces. This perspective is relevant to 'Viksit Bharat 2047' as the policy will need to consider India's position in the global economy and strategies for sustained and resilient growth in an interconnected world.
- (m) **Purkayastha, P. (2023). *The weaponization of hope: How Modi's India is rewriting development*.** This more recent work offers a critical perspective on the current government's development narratives and their impact on social and economic realities. While potentially offering a contrasting viewpoint, it's important to consider such analyses to gain a comprehensive understanding of the discourse surrounding India's future development.
- (n) **Planning Commission, Government of India.** Although the Planning Commission has been replaced by NITI Aayog, the Five-Year Plans formulated over decades provide a historical perspective on India's development planning and strategic priorities. Examining these documents can offer insights into the evolution of India's long-term development vision and the continuities and changes reflected in 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.
- (o) **Studies on specific sectors (e.g., IT, agriculture, manufacturing) by research institutions and government agencies.** Literature focusing on the past performance, current challenges, and future potential of key sectors of the Indian economy will be crucial for understanding the sectoral strategies that 'Viksit Bharat 2047' might encompass. These studies often provide granular insights into the specific policy interventions needed to drive growth and development in different parts of the economy.

3. Need of the Study

- (a) The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy represents a significant articulation of India's long-term development aspirations, aiming to transform the nation into a developed country by its centenary of independence.¹ While the policy document outlines a broad vision, a comprehensive understanding of its implications, feasibility, and potential challenges requires in-depth scholarly inquiry. This study is crucial for several key reasons:
- (b) **Lack of Comprehensive Academic Analysis:** Given the recency of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy, there is a current gap in comprehensive academic literature analyzing its various dimensions. Existing studies on India's development trajectory provide valuable historical context and highlight ongoing challenges, but a focused analysis of this specific long-term vision is needed to unpack its nuances, underlying assumptions, and potential pathways (Aggarwal, 2024). This research will contribute to filling this critical knowledge gap.
- (c) **Understanding the Policy's Strategic Underpinnings:** A detailed examination is required to understand the core strategies and priorities embedded within the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' framework. This includes analyzing how the policy intends to leverage past achievements, address persistent challenges

(as identified in the statement of the problem), and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Understanding the strategic logic of the policy is essential for evaluating its potential effectiveness (NITI Aayog, 2024).

- (d) **Assessing Feasibility and Potential Obstacles:** While the vision is ambitious, a rigorous assessment of its feasibility is necessary. This involves analyzing the economic, social, environmental, and governance prerequisites for achieving developed nation status by 2047. Identifying potential obstacles, such as resource constraints, implementation challenges, and global uncertainties, is crucial for informing policy adjustments and mitigation strategies (World Bank, 2023). This study will contribute to a realistic evaluation of the policy's attainability.
- (e) **Informing Policy Implementation and Refinement:** Scholarly analysis can provide valuable insights for policymakers involved in the implementation and refinement of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy. By critically examining the policy's goals, strategies, and potential challenges, this research can offer evidence-based recommendations for enhancing its effectiveness and ensuring its successful realization. This study aims to contribute to a more informed and adaptive policy process.
- (f) **Contributing to the Broader Discourse on Development:** The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' initiative offers a unique case study in long-term development planning for a large and diverse emerging economy. Analyzing its conceptual framework, strategic choices, and potential outcomes can contribute to the broader academic discourse on development theory and practice, offering lessons for other nations striving for similar transformations (Nayyar, 2023).
- (g) **Examining the Inclusivity and Sustainability Dimensions:** Given India's historical challenges with inequality and environmental degradation, a critical analysis of how 'Viksit Bharat 2047' addresses these crucial dimensions is essential. This study will investigate the policy's specific provisions and strategies for ensuring inclusive growth and environmental sustainability, evaluating their potential impact and identifying areas for improvement (UNDP, 2024).
- (h) **Understanding the Role of Technology and Innovation:** Technology and innovation are likely to be key drivers of India's development in the coming decades. This research needs to explore how the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy envisions leveraging technological advancements across various sectors and fostering a culture of innovation to achieve its goals (Department of Science and Technology, 2024).
- (i) **Analyzing the Geopolitical and Global Context:** India's development trajectory is increasingly intertwined with global dynamics. This study will consider the geopolitical landscape, international partnerships, and global economic trends that could influence the success of 'Viksit Bharat 2047', highlighting the need for strategic international engagement (Ministry of External Affairs, 2024).

4. Objectives of the Study

- a. To analyze the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy framework, elucidating its key pillars, stated goals, and strategic approaches for achieving developed nation status by 2047.
- b. To contextualize the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy within the historical trajectory of India's post-independence development, identifying the continuities and departures from previous development strategies and policy frameworks.
- c. To critically examine the potential challenges and opportunities associated with the implementation of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy, considering domestic socio-economic factors, global dynamics, and the complexities of achieving ambitious national development goals.
- d. To explore the implications of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy for key sectors of the Indian economy and society, such as infrastructure, technology, human capital development, and environmental sustainability, and to assess its potential impact on inclusive and equitable growth.

5. Research Methodology

This research will employ a qualitative research design to explore the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy within the historical and contemporary context of India's development trajectory. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the policy's underlying principles, its alignment with past development strategies, its potential implications, and the critical challenges for its realization. The methodology will involve the following key stages:

(a) **Document Analysis:** This will form the cornerstone of the research. Key policy documents related to 'Viksit Bharat 2047', once officially released, will be systematically analyzed. This will include examining the policy's stated goals, strategies, priority areas, and envisioned timelines. Additionally, foundational documents such as India's Five-Year Plans, NITI Aayog's strategy papers, government economic surveys, and relevant parliamentary reports will be analyzed to understand the evolution of India's development vision and the context in which 'Viksit Bharat 2047' has emerged. The analysis will focus on identifying continuities, shifts in priorities, and the articulation of long-term development goals.

(b) **Literature Review and Synthesis:** A comprehensive review of existing scholarly literature on India's development experience since independence will be conducted. This will involve analyzing academic articles, books, and reports from institutions like the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and leading research organizations (Ahluwalia, 2002; Bhagwati & Panagariya, 2013; Dreze & Sen, 2013; World Bank, various years; UNDP, various years). The literature review will focus on understanding:

- The key phases and characteristics of India's development trajectory.
- The major successes and persistent challenges in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth.
- Critical analyses of past and present development policies and their impact.
- Theoretical frameworks for understanding development and the concept of a 'developed nation'.

The synthesis of this literature will provide a theoretical and empirical backdrop against which the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy can be analyzed.

(c) **Analysis of Expert Opinions and Policy Discourse:** Given the nascent stage of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy, analysis of expert opinions and policy discourse will be crucial. This will involve examining:

- Statements and analyses by government officials, policymakers, and members of NITI Aayog in public forums, reports, and media outlets.
- Commentaries and analyses by economists, development scholars, and think tanks on the policy's potential and challenges.
- Discussions and debates in parliamentary proceedings and policy forums related to long-term development goals.

This analysis will help in understanding the intended direction of the policy, the underlying assumptions, and the anticipated challenges and opportunities from the perspectives of key stakeholders. Information will be sourced from reputable news outlets, policy analysis websites, and publications of think tanks (e.g., Observer Research Foundation, Centre for Policy Research).

(d) **Conceptual Framework Development:** Drawing upon the document analysis, literature review, and analysis of expert opinions, a conceptual framework will be developed. This framework will aim to:

- Situate the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy within the broader theoretical debates on development and the specific historical context of India's development trajectory.
- Identify the key dimensions and pillars of the policy as articulated in official documents and interpreted by experts.
- Highlight the potential areas of convergence and divergence between the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' vision and past development strategies and experiences.
- Outline the critical challenges and opportunities for achieving the goals of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' based on existing knowledge and expert perspectives.

(e) **Interpretive Analysis and Synthesis:** The final stage will involve an interpretive analysis of the data gathered through the preceding stages. This will focus on:

- Analyzing the coherence and comprehensiveness of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy in relation to India's past development and current challenges.
- Identifying potential strengths and weaknesses of the policy framework based on theoretical insights and empirical evidence from India's development experience and comparative studies.
- Synthesizing the findings to offer a nuanced understanding of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy's significance and its potential implications for India's future development trajectory.

6. Discussion and Data Analysis

The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy, with its ambitious goal of transforming India into a developed nation by its centenary of independence, necessitates a robust framework for monitoring progress and evaluating its impact. Future analysis will rely on a wide array of quantitative and qualitative data across its key pillars: economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability, and good governance.

Economic Growth: Evaluating the economic dimension will require analyzing trends in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates, both overall and per capita. Data from the National Statistical Office (NSO), Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and international organizations like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will be crucial. For instance, India's GDP growth has shown fluctuations over the past decades (RBI, 2024). Analyzing projected growth trajectories in light of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' targets will be essential. Furthermore, sectoral growth, particularly in manufacturing, high-technology industries, and services, will need close monitoring to assess economic diversification and the creation of high-value jobs (NSO, 2024). Data on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows, trade balances, and domestic investment rates will also provide insights into the policy's success in fostering a dynamic and competitive economy.

Social Progress: Assessing social development will involve examining a range of indicators related to health, education, and equity. Data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), and government ministries will be vital. For example, while literacy rates have improved over time, disparities persist across genders and regions (ASER, 2024; NFHS-6, projected 2026). Future analysis will need to track progress in narrowing these gaps and improving overall human development indices. Furthermore, indicators of poverty reduction, income inequality (using measures like the Gini coefficient based on National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data), and access to basic amenities (housing, sanitation, clean water) will be critical in evaluating the inclusiveness of the development process envisioned by 'Viksit Bharat 2047' (NSSO, projected 2027).

Environmental Sustainability: Monitoring environmental progress will require analyzing data on air and water quality (Central Pollution Control Board), forest cover (Forest Survey of India), renewable energy capacity and generation (Ministry of New and Renewable Energy), and greenhouse gas emissions (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change). India's commitment to its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement provides a framework for assessing its progress in mitigating climate change (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2024). Future analysis will need to evaluate whether the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy aligns with and accelerates India's transition towards a sustainable and climate-resilient development pathway. Data on resource efficiency and the adoption of circular economy principles will also be relevant.

Good Governance: Evaluating governance will involve analyzing indicators related to transparency, accountability, efficiency of public services, and the rule of law. Data from government reports, independent surveys (e.g., Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index), and citizen feedback mechanisms will be important. For instance, the progress of digital governance initiatives and their impact on service delivery can be assessed through data on online transactions and citizen satisfaction (MeitY, 2024). Future analysis will need to track improvements in institutional frameworks and processes that support effective policy implementation and citizen participation, as envisioned under 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.

Data Analysis Framework: To effectively analyze the impact of 'Viksit Bharat 2047', a multi-faceted approach will be necessary. This could include:

- **Trend Analysis:** Examining historical data trends for key indicators and projecting future trajectories based on policy interventions.
- **Comparative Analysis:** Benchmarking India's progress against other developed nations across various indicators.
- **Regression Analysis:** Identifying the correlation and causation between specific policy interventions and development outcomes.
- **Qualitative Analysis:** Incorporating insights from stakeholder consultations, expert opinions, and case studies to provide a deeper understanding of the policy's impact and challenges.
- **Spatial Analysis:** Examining regional variations in progress across different indicators to identify areas requiring targeted interventions.

Current Context and Potential Challenges: Existing data highlights both India's strengths and persistent challenges that 'Viksit Bharat 2047' aims to address. For example, India's strong GDP growth in recent years (pre-pandemic and post-recovery) provides a foundation, but sustaining high growth rates while ensuring inclusivity remains a challenge (RBI, 2024). Similarly, while progress has been made in areas like digital penetration, significant disparities in digital literacy and access persist, which could hinder the equitable benefits of a digitally empowered India envisioned by the policy (TRAI, 2024).

Furthermore, environmental challenges such as air and water pollution pose significant risks to sustainable development and public health (CPCB, 2023). The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy will need to demonstrate tangible progress in decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation. Governance reforms aimed at reducing corruption and improving bureaucratic efficiency will also be crucial for effective policy implementation (Transparency International, 2024).

7. Conclusion

The 'Viksit Bharat 2047' policy represents a significant step in envisioning India's long-term developmental aspirations, building upon the nation's post-independence journey marked by both progress and persistent challenges. This ambitious framework seeks to transform India into a developed nation by its centenary, addressing existing disparities, promoting sustainable practices, and leveraging its demographic and technological strengths (NITI Aayog, 2024). However, realizing this vision necessitates overcoming critical hurdles in defining and measuring development, ensuring inclusive growth across diverse regions, implementing effective governance mechanisms, and adapting to a rapidly changing global landscape (World Bank, 2024). ¹ The success of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' will ultimately hinge on a concerted effort across all sectors and a commitment to addressing these multifaceted challenges to achieve a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable future for India.

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