



AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON “VIKSIT BHARAT SHIKSHA ADHISHTHAN (VBSA) BILL, 2025”

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Introduction: Higher education forms an integral part of a democratic polity like India. Its democratic provision through an effective regulatory framework being the hallmark of the State. The role of the State in regulating higher education in India becomes even more important, given the manifold expansion of the sector, with its market now constituting different kinds of providers, adding to the regulatory complexity of the sector as a whole.

As far as Indian higher education is concerned, 1857 marked the first initiative for developing higher education in India, with the coming up of the first three universities, at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Post-independence, the strong regulatory role of the State in higher education, led by planning, was evident in the five- year plan perspectives, as well as in the way it was committed to funding it. Now India’s higher education system is on the brink of a massive transformation. In the year 2025 the Union Cabinet has cleared the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan Bill, a landmark reform that proposes to replace three major regulators — UGC, AICTE, and NCTE — with one single body for almost all higher education sectors in the country. The regulator will be responsible for regulation, accreditation, and setting professional standards for higher education across India. Medical and law education will remain outside the new body’s jurisdiction. This change aligns with the broader push under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 to create a simplified, technology-driven regulatory architecture that reduces red tape and promotes quality across the higher education ecosystem. It aims to enhance GER, research, employability, and global competitiveness while promoting interdisciplinary, flexible, and student-centric higher education. The present study plans to study major changes in higher education regulation.

Statement of the study

India’s higher education system is on the brink of a massive transformation. In the year 2025 the Union Cabinet has cleared the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan Bill, a landmark reform that proposes to replace three major regulators — UGC, AICTE, and NCTE — with one single body for almost all higher education

sectors in the country. The regulator will be responsible for regulation, accreditation, and setting professional standards for higher education across India.

India's higher education system is on the brink of massive transformation. The government of India changed the education policy as and when it requires. Now a landmark reform that proposes to replace UGC, AICTE and NCTE with one single body for regulating higher education sectors in the country. Therefore the present paper focusing on study the various aspects of new bill called as "Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishtan 2025".

Objectives of the study

1. To study the present regulatory body in India's higher education system.
2. To analyse the new regulatory bill "VBSA 2025".
3. To study the probable impact of the new bill.

Scope of the study

The present study covers major recommendations in the new bill and it also covers the study of existed regulatory body in higher education system.

Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data. Information was collected from journals, Central Government website, books, VBSA bill, newspapers and from other reliable sources.

Recent academic discussions, policy analyses, and institutional reports have examined the Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishtan (VBSA) Bill, 2025 as a major reform in India's higher education system. The literature mainly focuses on its structural transformation, alignment with NEP 2020, governance model, and potential implications.

History of Education Commissions for the development of Education in India

University Education Commission was established in the year 1948-49 to review the whole system of education in the country. Later on Kothari Commission was appointed by the union government and the reports of these two commissions made the base for the New Education Policy, 1986. The Government decided to review the growth and development of Higher education through five years plans which paid rich dividends in promoting education in India including higher education. Higher education may include education in general or specialized or professional areas. At the time of Independence of India in 1947, there were only 20 Universities and 500 Colleges in the country with 2,10,000 students enrolled in higher education institutions. But in the last fifty years, India has made remarkable progress in the field of education and has seriously attempted to decrease the number of people in illiterate bracket. The numbers now have increased many times in the case of the Degree awarding Universities, Colleges and the student's enrolment. In India at present 60531 higher education institutions, 46624 colleges, 504 state universities, 145 deemed universities, 57 central

universities, 12548 independent education institutions, 512 private universities and 146 national prominence Institutions were existed. In these institutions more than 4 crore students are studying.

ANALYSIS OF VIKSIT BHARAT SHIKSHA ADHISHTHAN BILL, 2025

The government of India introduced VBSA Bill 2025 in order to regulate higher education institutions in India. The above said Act is applicable to all the universities in India including state, central, private, deemed universities and colleges coming under these universities. The Act also includes IIT, NIT, IISER, IIM, IIIT and other higher education institutions in India. But the Act is not applicable to medical education, law education, paramedical, veterinary and other professional education.

The UGC Act 1956, Indian Technical Act 1987 and 1993 National Teachers Education Parishad Act has been cancelled. The institutions set up under Architecture Act 1972 has been identified as Standard Grading Authority for these institutions. This authority is responsible for framing of syllabus and fixing of various criteria's for evaluation of these institutions. However, it has no control over the institutions.

VBSA is responsible for the following

1. Giving directions for comprehensive development of higher education system in India.
2. It has the responsibility to give directions and maintain the cooperation among three main institutions such as Viksith Bharath Sikshan Manak Parishad, Viksith Bharath Sikshan Viniyaman Parishad and Viksith Bharath Sikshan Gunvatta Parishad.
3. Giving financial and administrative assistance to these institutions in order to have effective administration.
4. Giving suggestions to central and state governments on the matters related to higher education in India.

VBSA in future will be the soul regulatory body in order to control all the higher education institutions in India. This council includes one president and maximum 12 members. The president will be nominated by the president of the country as per the recommendations of the union Government. The term of the chairman is initially 3 years and that can be extended up to 5 years. The Act also gives provisions for renomination of president of the council for the next term. Under Section 15 of VBSA it has provision for formation of 3 separate councils. Each council headed by a President and includes 14 members. For all these councils the president of India will nominate the members. The Act states that the members of the council should include education experts, persons involved in education field, representatives from central government and state administration, state higher education institutions and other representation from Institutions of national prominence. Three sub councils are

1. Viksit Bharat Shikshan Manak Parishad

It has a chairman and 14 members. Their duty is to fixing the parameters for measuring the quality of education and co-ordination.

2. Viksit Bharat Shikshan Viniyaman Parishad

It will headed by a chairman and 14 members. They have the responsibility to take action to improve the quality of the education and encouraging for internationalisation of education system and to look after whether education institutions are following the quality criteria fixed by Viksit Bharat Shikshan Manak Parishad.

3. Viksit Bharat Shikshan Gunvatta Parishad

This Parishad also controlled by a chairman and 14 members. Their responsibility is to give accreditation to the education institutions and supervising Independence accreditation process.

Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhikshan funding will come from Parliament approved central grants to run the Commission, Councils, staff, secretariats, and regulatory functions nationwide efficiently. The Central Government will provide grants to VBSA after Parliamentary approval under Clause 38, ensuring lawful and accountable public funding. A dedicated Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Fund is created to manage salaries, allowances, administration, and operational expenses. Budgetary support will not exceed existing funding levels of UGC, AICTE, and NCTE, ensuring fiscal continuity and stability. All assets and staff of UGC, AICTE, and NCTE transfer to VBSA with unchanged pay, service conditions, and retirement benefits. Funding of centrally funded institutions remains outside VBSA, protecting institutional autonomy and separating regulation from grant disbursement.

Challenges Facing India's Higher Education System

India has the world's 3rd-largest higher education system, yet its GER is approximately 28% is the lowest among G20 nations.

Faculty Shortage and Vacancy Crisis: Even prestigious institutions face major faculty shortages, with IITs having 40% and IIMs 31% vacancies. Furthermore, only 36.7% of Indian HEIs offer postgraduate programs and a mere 3.6% run PhD programs, severely limiting the pipeline of qualified teachers. While IIT Delhi and IIT Bombay secured places within the top 150, no Indian university featured in the top 100 of the QS Rankings 2024.

Inadequate R&D Investment: India's research spending is approximately 0.7% of GDP, nations like China (2.4%) and the US (3.5%). It also lags in research quality, as measured by H-index scores (for productivity and impact) and citation counts.

Poor Graduate Employability and Industry Disconnect: India's overall employability was 50.8% in 2023, while the India Skills Report 2024 shows a 60–73% demand-supply gap for key roles like ML engineer, data scientist and data architect. In the Global Employability University Ranking and Survey 2025, only 10 Indian institutions rank among the top 250 universities globally for graduate employability.

Outdated and Inflexible Curriculum: India's higher education curriculum is outdated, rigid, and disconnected from 21st-century interdisciplinary skills. Most universities lack syllabi for fields like AI and data science, and less than 5% of students are exposed to vocational education.

Probable impact of the bill

From the study on the new bill it is expected that single regulator system will reduce duplication and confusion in governance and faster decision-making through a single-window system. It will help for quick approvals and compliance for universities. Introduction of uniform academic standards and accreditation systems helps for outcome-based education and performance evaluation. However, it raises concerns about funding for state institutions, potential centralization of oversight, and a complex implementation process, especially for smaller or state-run colleges.

Conclusion: The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025, is a transformative step to replace fragmented regulation with a unified, transparent system. It aims to actualize NEP 2020's vision, boost research and employability, and enhance global competitiveness, thereby revitalizing India's higher education to meet 21st-century demands.

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