

Reimagining Teacher Education with Global Citizenship Education: A Roadmap Towards Viksit Bharat

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Abstract

The current socio-educational situation demands epistemic innovations in Teacher Education Programme to make the globally competent, ethically grounded teacher educators. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is essential as a vital pedagogical and philosophical framework for preparing educators who can cultivate inclusive, Sustainable and global citizens. This article places GCED not just an addition to the curriculum, but as a structural and moral necessity for the vision of Viksit Bharat, a developed, self-reliant, and globally responsible nation by 2047. As per National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, and global educational frameworks advocated by UNESCO and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the article critically analyses GCED as a vital pedagogical and philosophical tool in promoting values such as peace, sustainability, equity, critical thinking, democratic participation, and human rights, which are increasingly vital for Vikshit Bharat-2047. This would prepare the future leaders of India with the necessary skills, values, and knowledge to survive in a globalized world. This paper proposes a localized roadmap to harmonize India's civilizational ethos of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" with inclusion of twenty-first-century global competencies by analysing curriculum, pedagogical methods, institutional capacity building, assessment practices and continuous professional development of the teachers on global issues. In this way, by revisiting teacher education in line with GCED, India will be able to produce citizens who are contributing to their nation as well as the world at large.

Keywords: Global Citizenship Education (GCED), Vikshit Bharat, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), NEP 2020, Teacher Education

1. Introduction

India's vision of becoming a **Viksit Bharat 2047**—marking a century of independence a developed, self-reliant, and globally influential nation—places education at the epicenter of national progress. As India is approaching the historic milestone, policy discourse recognizes that rapid economic growth alone is insufficient for holistic development. The Social harmony, ethical leadership, environmental sustainability, and global cooperation are equally essential. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 acts as a blueprint for transforming India into a "Global Knowledge Superpower," emphasizing the need to cultivate citizens who are critical thinkers, technologically fluent, and morally grounded. Education creates skilled, values-based individuals essential for a peaceful, sustainable, and cooperative world. Consequently, integrating

Global Citizenship Education (GCED) into teacher training is vital, as it goes beyond technical skills to instill the core values needed to address global challenges like poverty, conflict, and environmental crises. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 places educators at the heart of systemic transformation, asserting that high recruitment standards, elevated professional status, and rigorous training are the linchpins of its vision (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2020). To realise this the policy mandates a radical restructuring of Teacher Education Programs (TEPs) to prepare educators for the complex, interdisciplinary and values-driven teaching environment for *Viksit Bharat*. A critical element of this mandate is the integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCED), which is officially acknowledged within the NEP framework as a vital pedagogical vehicle to address transnational challenges and empower learners to foster peaceful, inclusive, and sustainable societies (UNESCO, 2015; MoE, 2020). By embedding GCED into teacher preparation, TEPs move beyond conventional content delivery, ensuring that future educators are equipped to shape responsible, locally rooted, and globally conscious citizens (Baxi, 2021). However, a persistent structural tension characterizes India's educational landscape: while national policy aspires toward a holistic, multidisciplinary, and values-driven architecture emphasizing empathy and planetary consciousness (Kumar, 2022), the operational reality of TEP curricula and school systems remains tethered to high-stakes, standardized, and strictly cognitive examination frameworks (NCERT, 2021).

Bridging this gap between policy vision and classroom reality requires actionable curricular reform, as GCED transcends traditional skill acquisition by fostering the attitudes, values, and behavioural required to navigate contemporary crises—ranging from climate vulnerability and digital disinformation to socio-economic inequalities and geopolitical polarization (Bourn, 2020). Because NEP 2020 positions the teacher at the foundation of all educational reforms, restructuring TEPs through the lens of GCED ensures that future educators are equipped not merely to deliver content, but to shape responsible, locally rooted, and globally conscious citizens for *Viksit Bharat 2047*.

2. Conceptual Framework

1. Concept of Global Citizenship Education

The term "global citizenship education" refers to all humanitarian pedagogies, including those that promote peace, the environment, human rights and sustainable development. Duties of a global citizen involve accepting differences, interacting with others, comprehending local and international issues, and acting accordingly. According to the definition provided by UNESCO, GCED enables learners to take an active part in dealing with and solving global issues and creating a peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, and sustainable world. By integrating GCED into teacher education, we ensure that the NEP 2020 teacher is equipped to interpret the Indian philosophical tenet of "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**" (The world is one family) into practical classroom pedagogy and life skills. The objective is to impart certain values, attitudes, and behaviours necessary for becoming responsible global citizens; these include creativity, innovation, and the quest for peace, human rights, and sustainable development. The goals of GCED are to impart universal values and motivate young people to become socially engaged by understanding global problems.

UNESCO explains that Global Citizenship Education seeks to help learners:

1. Understand global governance and interdependence, rights and responsibilities at the global, national, and local levels.

2. Recognize and respect cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, and identity diversity while affirming our shared humanity.
3. Cultivate critical civic skills such as inquiry, digital and media literacy, problem-solving, decision-making, and peace-building.
4. Analyse the impact of personal and societal beliefs and values on politics, social justice, and citizenship.
5. Foster empathy, appreciation of the environmental, and respect for diversity in personal and social relationships.
6. Promote fairness and social justice by critically analysing inequalities across gender, socio-economic, cultural, religious, and age groups.
7. Support involvement in local, national, and world affairs as an informed global citizen.

Core Conceptual Dimensions of Global Citizenship Education

According to UNESCO, there are three fundamental aspects of Global Citizenship Education – namely cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural. The mentioned aspects are interrelated and integrated within the education process.

1. **Cognitive:** Acquiring knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking about global, regional, national, and local issues and the interdependence of different countries and their populations.
2. **Socio-Emotional:** Having a feeling of unity of humanity, the same values, attitudes, and responsibility, empathy, solidarity, and respect for diversity; the ability to form affective, psychological, and physical development in order to live with other people respectfully and peacefully.
3. **Behavioural:** Effective and responsible actions at the local, national, and global level in order to make our world more peaceful and sustainable.

2. Concept of Vikshit Bharat-2047

Viksit Bharat @2047 is the long-term vision of the Government of India that seeks to make India a well-developed country by 2047, 100 years after achieving its independence. This concept emphasizes on transforming India into a prosperous, inclusive, and globally competitive country. It emphasizes economic growth along with social justice, sustainability, and good governance, ensuring that development benefits every citizen. The vision is built on the idea of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas” (collective effort for inclusive growth). It is a national mission that calls for participation from citizens, institutions, and the private sector to build a self-reliant, inclusive, and developed India by 2047 (Government of India, 2023 & NITI Aayog, 2026).

Aims of Viksit Bharat @2047:

- Achieve high and sustainable economic growth
- Eradicate poverty and inequality
- Ensure quality education and healthcare for all
- Promote women empowerment and youth skill development
- Build transparent and technology-driven governance
- Ensure environmental sustainability and clean energy
- Establish India as a responsible global leader (Government of India, 2023; NITI Aayog, 2023).

3. Teacher Education in India: Present Scenario

Teacher education in India is undergoing significant transformation, reflecting the growing demand for

quality education and skilled educators. Currently, teacher training is offered through programs like B.Ed., M.Ed., and various diploma courses, regulated by bodies such as the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). While efforts are being made to modernize curricula and integrate technology, challenges like outdated teaching methods, shortage of trained faculty, and uneven access in rural areas persist. Recent initiatives focus on continuous professional development, digital learning, and competency-based training to prepare teachers for a dynamic and inclusive classroom environment (Ministry of Education, 2020; NCTE, 2021; UNESCO, 2023).

- **Evolution of Teacher Education-** Teacher education in India has evolved through various commissions and policies, including the Kothari Commission (1964-66) and subsequent reforms. Institutions such as the National Council for Teacher Education (2009) regulate teacher preparation programmes, including D.El.Ed., B.Ed., and integrated teacher education courses. Despite these reforms, teacher education often remains disconnected from contemporary global realities and societal needs (Education Commission, 1966; Government of India, 1986; NCTE, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2020).
- **Key Challenges in Teacher Education-** Some of the major challenges include:
 1. Excessive focus on theoretical content and examinations
 2. Limited exposure to global perspectives and international issues
 3. Inadequate integration of values, ethics, and citizenship education
 4. Traditional, teacher-centred pedagogical practices
 5. Insufficient opportunities for reflective practice and innovationThese challenges limit teachers' ability to prepare learners for complex global and national challenges (NCTE, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2020; UNESCO, 2023; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

4. Importance of GCED in Teacher Education Programme

UNESCO reports highlight that Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is not yet a mandatory component of teacher education in many countries (McEvoy, 2016). Studies from the United States indicate that teacher education programmes have been ineffective in developing pre-service teachers' global competencies and critical engagement with social justice and global media (Aydarova & Marquardt, 2016; Valencia et al., 2022). Scholars recommend reforms such as integrating global studies courses, experiential learning, international exposure, and professional learning communities within teacher education (Zhao, 2010; Reimers et al., 2016; Saperstein, 2019).

In contrast, countries such as Canada and Japan have made significant progress in embedding GCED within teacher education (Guo, 2014; Howe, 2013). Notably, the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI), in collaboration with UNICEF Canada, introduced a mandatory undergraduate course titled *Educating for Global Citizenship*, which significantly enhanced teacher candidates' analytical skills, appreciation of diversity, and commitment to social action (Guo, 2014). Research further suggests that integrating GCE into pre-service and in-service teacher training, professional development programmes, and online professional learning communities strengthen teachers' capacity to nurture globally competent learners (Saperstein, 2019; Harshman & Augustine, 2013).

Experiential learning approaches, including service-learning, fieldwork, and international education programmes, have also been found effective in advancing GCE objectives (Saperstein, 2019). Conceptually, GCE is operationalized through education for sustainable development, intercultural education, and citizenship education, offering an integrated framework to promote social justice,

environmental sustainability, intergroup empathy, and responsible global action (Akkari & Maleq, 2020; Miller & Reysen, 2019).

5. Operationalizing GCED: Policy Realities and Curricular Harmonization

The sustainable implementation of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) necessitates localized, context-driven models rather than standardized, top-down approaches (DVV International, 2015). Successful integration requires policy-level embedding, long-term institutional commitment, multi-dimensional scoping, and robust pre-service and in-service training rooted in transformative pedagogies (Education Above All [EAA], 2012; UNESCO, 2018). While international frameworks offer diverse models—such as UNESCO’s cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral dimensions (UNESCO, 2015) and the European Council's emphasis on democratic empowerment and civic entrepreneurship (Council of Europe, 2016; Hartung, 2015)—developing nations like India must navigate conceptual overlaps between GCED, civic education, and multicultural studies (Akkari & Maleq, 2019).

To overcome these structural ambiguities and advance the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*, GCED is best operationalized as an overarching umbrella spanning three distinct pillars: Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), inter/multicultural education, and traditional citizenship education (North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, 2012; Akkari & Maleq, 2019). Implementing this synthesis through a spiral curriculum ensures that future educators develop the critical competencies necessary to foster intergroup empathy, social justice, and environmental sustainability (EAA, 2012; Katzarska-Miller & Reysen, 2019).

6. Rationale for Integrating GCED in Teacher Education

Integrating GCED in teacher training education prepares teachers in fostering global awareness, social responsibility, and active citizenship in learners. Here are some major points for which GCED should be a part of Teacher Education Programme. (UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO, 2018; Ministry of Education, 2020; Oxley & Morris, 2013).

- **Addressing Global and Local Challenges-**

In the twenty-first century, teachers need to equip learners with the ability to comprehend and act upon the interrelated problems faced by both the global and the local communities such as climate change, pandemics, digital disinformation, social inequalities, and warfare. Global Citizenship Education (GCED) is an all-encompassing education approach that empowers learners to acquire knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes required to handle such complicated problems through critical thinking and responsible action (UNESCO, 2015). Through combining global insights with local conditions, GCED helps learners to realize their common humanity and respect for diversity (UNESCO, 2023).

- **Strengthening Democratic and Constitutional Values**

GCED is aligned with the principles of democracy, human rights, social justice, and appreciation of diversity, which are very much entrenched in the Constitution of India. It encourages critical thinking, ethical reasoning, civic action, and responsible participation in the processes of democracy, thus helping learners develop into informed and active citizens (UNESCO, 2015). NEP 2020 too recognizes the importance of constitutional values, international mindedness, and responsible citizenship in the learning outcomes of students, stressing on the importance of developing such skills in the students by their teachers (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020).

- **Enhancing Professional Competence of Teachers**

The Global Citizenship Education facilitates reflective pedagogy, intercultural competency, empathy, and lifelong learning in educators. Educators who are endowed with GCED competencies are in a better position to provide inclusive and learner-centered classroom settings that encourage dialogue and collaborative problem-solving. Such competencies increase the effectiveness of teachers in their profession, allowing them to cope with the challenges of a complex and dynamic world (UNESCO, 2015; OECD, 2018). Therefore, integration of GCED in the education of teachers plays a critical role in enhancing the quality of education.

7. GCED in the Context of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

The NEP 2020 considers education as a tool that can contribute to sustainable development, world welfare, and conscientious citizenship. Holistic development, constitutional values, scientific outlook, ethics, and global competencies become the core focus areas, providing learners with an opportunity to solve problems at both national and global levels (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020). These learning goals are strongly associated with the main ideas underlying GCED and its commitment to fostering critical thinking, multicultural awareness, diversity appreciation, and civic engagement in building sustainable societies (UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO, 2023).

- **Teacher Education Reforms under NEP 2020**

NEP 2020 proposes:

1. Multidisciplinary and integrated teacher education programmes
2. Four-year integrated B.Ed. as the minimum requirement
3. Continuous professional development for teachers
4. Emphasis on values, ethics, and experiential learning

These reforms create a conducive policy environment for integrating GCED into teacher education by equipping future teachers with the competencies required to promote global awareness, democratic values, and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO, 2023).

8. Strategies for Integrating GCED in Teacher Education

- **Curriculum Enrichment.**

The teacher education curriculum should be inclusive of topics on Global Citizenship Education (GCED) like sustainability, peace, human rights, global ethics, and cultural diversity. Using an interdisciplinary curriculum, where local, national, and international concerns are considered, allows future teachers to build critical awareness and responsible citizenship while adhering to the SDGs (UNESCO, 2023; United Nations, 2015).

Research indicates that the integration of GCED themes across disciplines is instrumental in building systems thinking, intercultural competence, and sustainability literacy among prospective teachers, instead of making global citizenship an independent topic (Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2022; UNESCO, 2023).

- **Pedagogical Transformation**

In addition to being learner-centred, GCED involves inquiry-based, project-based, and problem-based learning approaches, which foster dialogic learning and reflective thinking, and encourage collaboration and participation. These learning approaches enable student teachers to develop into reflective practitioners who can effectively tackle global issues (OECD, 2018; Boix Mansilla & Jackson, 2022).

There is evidence that learner-centred learning approaches such as inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, and service-learning enhance critical thinking, collaboration, empathy, and civic engagement – all important elements of GCED (OECD, 2018; Council of Europe, 2018).

- **Capacity Building of Teacher Educators**

Efficient incorporation of GCED requires the enhancement of professional skills of teacher educators through professional development, international cooperation, and engagement with best practices around the world. The promotion of research, innovations, and intercultural competencies of teacher educators contributes to the preparation of globally competent teachers (UNESCO, 2023).

The recent research focuses on the idea that continuous professional development and international cooperation help teacher educators incorporate innovative approaches to teaching and GCED into classroom practice (Darji & Lang-Wojtasik, 2023).

- **Assessment Reforms**

The practice of assessment needs to shift from knowledge-centered tests to competency-based assessments that can gauge the critical thinking, values, attitudes, and civic involvement of learners. There are calls for using the competency-based approaches such as reflective journals, portfolios, service learning, and community-based projects since they can better assess learners' attitudes and civic involvement and offer authentic assessment for competencies under GCED (OECD, 2018; Council of Europe, 2018).

- **Institutional and Policy Support**

Successful implementation of GCED needs an institution's commitment, the right policies from the institutions, adequate financing, flexible curriculum, quality assurances, and cooperation between governments, universities, and educational institutions and leadership for long-term sustainability. This is how the success of integrating GCED in the teacher education program can be ensured (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

9. GCED as a Catalyst for Viksit Bharat

GCED acts as a catalyst for achieving the objective of “Viksit Bharat” through cultivating global citizenship and socially/ethically responsible citizens. Through instilling values such as social justice, sustainability, democracy, intercultural awareness, and respect for diversity, GCED increases national solidarity along with developing the skills of individuals to deal with global issues (UNESCO, 2023; Kim, 2021). Teacher education programs, which include GCED competencies, enable teachers to help their students develop critical thinking skills, empathy, collaboration, and responsible decision-making skills that can help in socio-economic, political, and environmental development (Lourenço, 2021; Waghid, 2023). Moreover, research shows that teacher education programs which incorporate GCED increase the level of democratic engagement, global competence, and civic responsibility of future educators, leading to better education and sustainable development (Estellés & Fischman, 2021; Smith et al., 2024). Furthermore, consistent with the Indian civilization value of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ and the vision of the NEP 2020 of India, GCED helps in inclusive growth and sustainable development along with global leadership which is essential for achieving “Viksit Bharat” (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020; UNESCO, 2023).

10. Discussion: Bridging Policy Intentions and Practical Realities

The integration of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) in the context of Viksit Bharat @2047 is a game-changing approach to Indian teacher education but poses some major systemic challenges which require

serious academic consideration. Though the policies such as NEP 2020 lay down a visionary policy agenda through the inclusion of multidisciplinary education, value-based approach and global skills, putting these ideas into classroom practice is not an easy task. One major aspect of criticism on the conflict exists between the deep-rooted traditional philosophy such as “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (the world is one family) and highly competitive examination-based format of TEPs. Traditionally, teacher education in India has focused on cognitive knowledge and pedagogic skills and syllabus completion than on socio-emotional aspects and affective development.

According to both international and local experts, integrating GCED should not simply mean adding a new topic into an existing curriculum; instead, it should involve a paradigm shift in fundamental structure and the organizational culture as well.

However, preparing educators for Viksit Bharat also requires resolving structural inequities in the Indian education system. While elite institutions in urban areas can easily integrate global competencies into their teaching practices, but those teacher training institutes in rural areas often struggle with insufficient resources, lack of internet access, and limited faculty exposure with international frameworks. Thus, localization of GCED involves the adaptation of international ideals such as the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in light of local socio-economic contexts like regional disparities, climate vulnerability, and social inclusion.

Finally, for GCED to act as a catalyst for Viksit Bharat, then teacher education requires to break down of narrow academic boundaries. It is time that teacher educators themselves were re-tooled through sustained professional development that appreciates the importance of critical questioning, democratic participation and planetary consciousness. By bringing together the policy mandates and values-based pedagogy, only then India can build its cadre of globally competent teacher educators and socially responsible citizens for 2047.

Conclusion

Achieving Viksit Bharat will call for a paradigm shift in the notion of education which not only considers excellence in academics but also includes values and ethical considerations of being a global citizen. Reconsideration of teacher education in the context of Global Citizenship Education is highly significant and timely.

By embedding GCED into teacher education, India can prepare teachers who are globally aware, culturally rooted, and ethically committed. Such teachers will play a decisive role in nurturing responsible citizens capable of addressing complex global and national issues. The integration of GCED is therefore essential for building an inclusive, sustainable, and developed India.

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