



## 24. Role of Media in Viksit Bharat 2047

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Media is not just a tool. It's a voice. A loud one. On the path to Viksit Bharat 2047, media slowly turns into something more—like a quiet guide, or maybe a mirror we don't always notice. I still recall sitting with my family, watching news, where small stories somehow became big conversations. And maybe, that's where it really begins. Formally speaking, media spreads awareness, shapes opinion, and holds power accountable.*

*But honestly, it also influences what we think is "important." One trending topic, and suddenly everyone cares. Strange, but true. In villages, cities, everywhere—digital platforms are connecting people faster than ever. Information flows quick. Sometimes too quick, without checking if it's fully right.*

*That's a risk we don't always talk about. Still, media have the power to educate, to inspire youth, and to push development narratives. It can highlight success stories. Or failures. Both matters. For India to become "Viksit," media must act responsibly. Not just chasing TRPs, but building trust. Because at the end, development is not only about economy. It's about mindset. And media, in its own messy way, helps shape that. And maybe the real test is yet to come.*

*As technology grows, AI enters the scene, and attention spans get shorter, media will have to adapt—fast, but carefully. Not everything viral is valuable, and not every silence means absence. Somewhere between noise and truth, media will have to choose its role again and again. Because in 2047, a developed India won't just need fast news, it will need honest storytelling. And if media gets that balance right, it won't just report change—it will quietly become a part of it.*

**KEYWORDS:** Media influence, Viksit Bharat 2047, Public awareness, Digital platforms, Information flow, Social change



### **Introduction:**

India has this vision — Viksit Bharat 2047. A developed India by the time we hit 100 years of independence. Sounds huge, right? It is. But what does "developed" even mean for a country like ours — with 1.4 billion people, hundreds of languages, and gaps between rich and poor that are honestly hard to even put into words.

Development isn't just roads and GDP numbers. Somewhere it's also about what people believe, what they talk about at the dinner table, what they think is possible for themselves and their children. And that — that part — is shaped heavily by media.

Think about it. Where do most people get their information from? News channels. WhatsApp. YouTube. Instagram pages that somehow explain budget sessions in 60 seconds. Media is everywhere now. It's loud, it's fast, and sometimes it's not even fully accurate. But it's there, constantly, quietly telling people what matters and what doesn't.

India's media has changed so much in the last two decades. It went from a handful of channels to thousands of platforms. Regional media grew. Digital media exploded. More people than ever are consuming content — in their own languages, on their own phones, at their own pace. That's genuinely remarkable. But growth also brought problems. Misinformation. Sensationalism. Stories that get ignored because they don't get clicks.

So the real question this paper is asking is simple — is Indian media actually helping India develop? Not just reporting on development, but genuinely contributing to it? Or is it getting distracted somewhere between TRP chasing and viral content?

This study looks at exactly that relationship — between media and India's developmental goals. The objectives are straightforward: understand how media builds awareness around Viksit Bharat, examine how it shapes public opinion, identify where it's failing, explore digital media's role in engaging younger Indians, and think about what responsible media actually looks like going forward.

The research stays focused on Indian media — traditional and digital both — roughly from 2014 to now. It's not about media economics or global comparisons. It's about one simple thing — does media help India grow or not.

That question, honestly, felt worth exploring.

### **Literature Review:**

A lot of people have thought about this before. Researchers, scholars, journalists — they've all had something to say about media and development. Some of it is old. Some of it is surprisingly relevant even today.

- a) **Lerner (1958)** in *The Passing of Traditional Society* argued that media helps modernize developing countries. His idea was simple — when people consume media, they start imagining lives beyond their immediate surroundings. And honestly, when you see a first



generation smartphone user in a small village accessing a government scheme through YouTube, Lerner doesn't feel outdated at all.

- b) **Rogers (1962)** and his diffusion of innovations theory said media is the channel through which new ideas travel — from the few who adopt them first, to everyone else eventually. It explains why some awareness campaigns actually work and why others just disappear. Spreading information once isn't enough. Media has to keep showing up.
- c) **Schiller (1976)** had a harder take. He argued media mostly serves whoever is already in power — not the public. In India, when prime time news spends hours on a Bollywood controversy and barely minutes on a drought in Vidarbha, Schiller's argument doesn't feel wrong.
- d) **Robin Jeffrey (2000)** wrote about India's newspaper revolution and showed how regional language newspapers brought communities into public conversation that were previously invisible. People who never saw themselves in national media finally had something written for them. That shift mattered more than most policy changes did.
- e) **Sevanti Ninan (2007)** documented how commercial pressure slowly pushed editorial integrity aside in Indian television. TRPs started driving content more than public interest did. She saw that gap coming early.
- f) **UNESCO's reports on Communication for Development (2011 onwards)** kept making one point — media shouldn't just deliver information, it should create dialogue. Communities should participate in their own development narratives. India's government campaigns still haven't fully figured that out.
- g) **Reuters Institute's Digital News Report (2023)** found something interesting — Indians consume a lot of news but trust it less and less. High consumption, growing skepticism. People scroll endlessly but believe fewer things. That contradiction sits at the heart of what this paper is worried about.

And then there's newer research around AI, misinformation, and digital literacy post-2020 — which shows that information now travels faster than anyone can fact-check it. For a country still developing media literacy at scale, that's a right now problem. Not a future one.

But none of this literature looks specifically at media's role in Viksit Bharat 2047. That's the gap. And that's exactly what this paper is trying to fill.

#### ➤ **Research Methodology:**

So here's the part where you explain how you actually went about doing the research. And honestly, methodology sections in most papers feel very dry — like someone just listing steps in a manual. This one is going to be a little different. Not because the process was dramatic, but because the choices made here actually matter for understanding what this paper is and what it isn't.

#### **Research Design:**

This study is primarily exploratory and descriptive in nature. Now that sounds very textbook, so let me explain what it actually means here. Exploratory because the specific angle —



media's role in Viksit Bharat 2047 — hasn't really been studied directly before. There's no large existing body of work to simply build on. So the research had to go looking, connecting dots that weren't obviously connected yet.

Descriptive because the goal isn't to prove a cause and effect relationship. It's to understand and describe what's happening — how media is functioning, what people think about it, and whether that aligns with the kind of development India is aiming for by 2047. Sometimes just describing a situation clearly is itself valuable. Especially when that situation is as complex and layered as media in India today.

There's also an analytical element — because collecting information without making sense of it isn't really research. So while the design is largely descriptive, the interpretation goes deeper than just presenting facts.

#### **Data Collection:**

The research used both primary and secondary data. Both mattered. Neither alone would have been enough.

#### **Primary Data:**

Primary data was collected through a structured survey. The survey was designed to capture real opinions — from actual people — about how they consume media, how much they trust it, and whether they feel it's contributing to India's development in any meaningful way.

The questionnaire had a mix of close ended and open ended questions. Close ended for the quantitative stuff — frequency of news consumption, preferred platforms, trust levels. Open ended for the more honest, messier answers — what do you think media gets wrong, do you feel informed about government schemes, does media make you feel like development is actually happening or just being talked about.

Alongside the survey, informal interviews were conducted with a small group of respondents — mostly to understand the "why" behind their survey answers. Sometimes a tick in a box doesn't tell you much. A five minute conversation does.

#### **Secondary Data:**

Secondary data formed a significant part of this research. And there was a lot of it to go through.

Academic journals and research papers on media, development communication, and Indian media landscape were reviewed extensively — some of which were already discussed in the literature review section. Books like Jeffrey's *India's Newspaper Revolution* and reports from UNESCO on communication for development provided strong theoretical grounding.

Government sources were also used — press releases, official Viksit Bharat vision documents, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting reports, and data from the Telecom



Regulatory Authority of India on digital penetration and internet access. These helped understand the official narrative around media and development.

News articles, media criticism platforms, and annual reports from organizations like the Press Trust of India and Reuters Institute gave a more ground level picture of how Indian media is actually functioning versus how it's supposed to function.

Websites like the Internet and Mobile Association of India and various fact checking organizations provided data on misinformation trends and digital literacy levels. That context was important — because any conversation about media in 2024 can't ignore misinformation.

### **Sampling:**

Now here's the honest part. This is an undergraduate research paper. The sample size isn't massive. And that's okay, as long as it's acknowledged clearly.

The survey was conducted with 100 respondents. The sampling method used was purposive and convenience sampling — which basically means respondents were selected based on availability and relevance, not randomly. Most respondents were between the ages of 18 and 35, from urban and semi-urban backgrounds, with at least a basic level of digital literacy. This was intentional — because this demographic is arguably the most active media consumer in India right now, and also the generation that will see 2047 actually arrive.

The respondents included students, young professionals, and a smaller group of educators. Gender distribution was kept reasonably balanced. Geographically, the sample skews towards North India — which is a limitation of this study and is acknowledged as such.

For the informal interviews, 10 to 12 individuals were spoken to in more depth. These weren't formal structured interviews — more like guided conversations. The goal was to get qualitative texture that a survey form can't always capture.

### **Why This Approach?**

Someone might ask — why not a larger sample? Why not formal interviews with media professionals or policymakers? Fair question. The honest answer is time, access, and scope. This paper isn't trying to be a comprehensive national study. It's trying to open a conversation — to put something on the table that hasn't quite been put there before in the context of Viksit Bharat 2047.

A mix of primary responses and strong secondary literature felt like the right balance. Real opinions grounded in real research. Neither purely theoretical nor purely anecdotal.

And maybe that's the point. Development isn't just happening in policy documents or prime time debates. It's happening — or not happening — in the everyday relationship between people and the information they receive. Understanding that relationship, even in a limited way, feels like a worthwhile place to start.

The data collected through both methods has been analyzed and interpreted in the following sections of this paper.

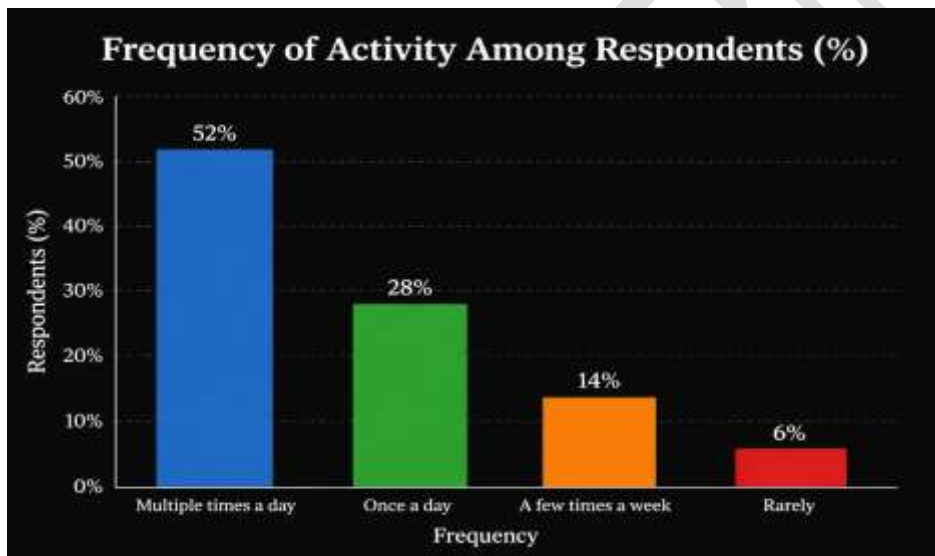
**Data Analysis & Interpretation:**

So this is where the actual findings come in. All that data collected — surveys, responses, secondary sources — now needs to make sense. Some of it confirmed what was already suspected. Some of it was surprising. Let's go through it properly.

**1. Media Consumption Habits:**

The first thing the survey asked was simple — how often do you consume news?

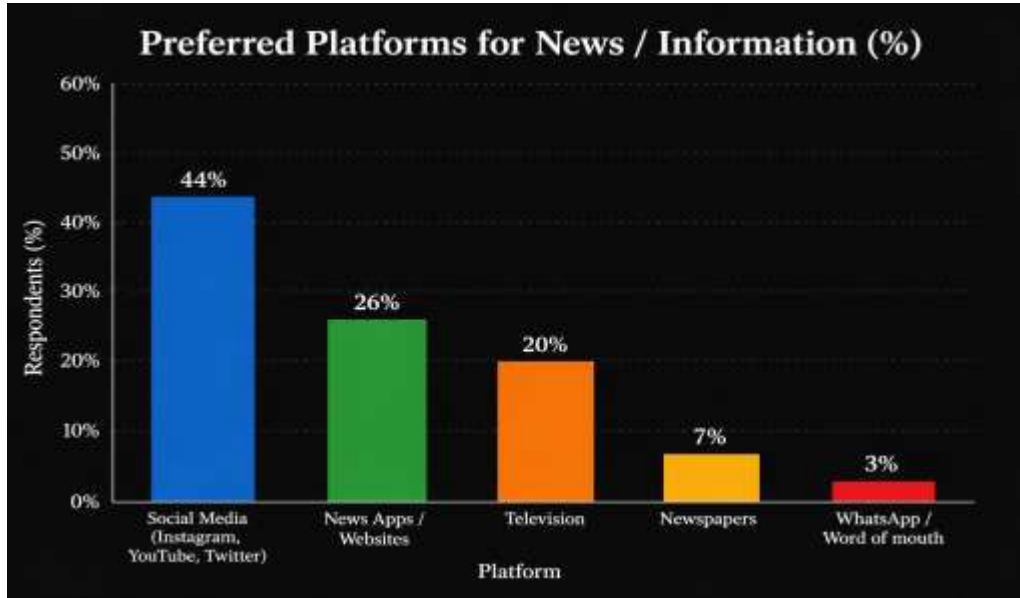
Frequency	Respondents (%)
Multiple times a day	52%
Once a day	28%
A few times a week	14%
Rarely	6%



80% of respondents consume news at least once daily. People are clearly engaged. But engagement and trust are two very different things — and that distinction becomes important ahead.

**2. Preferred Platform for News:**

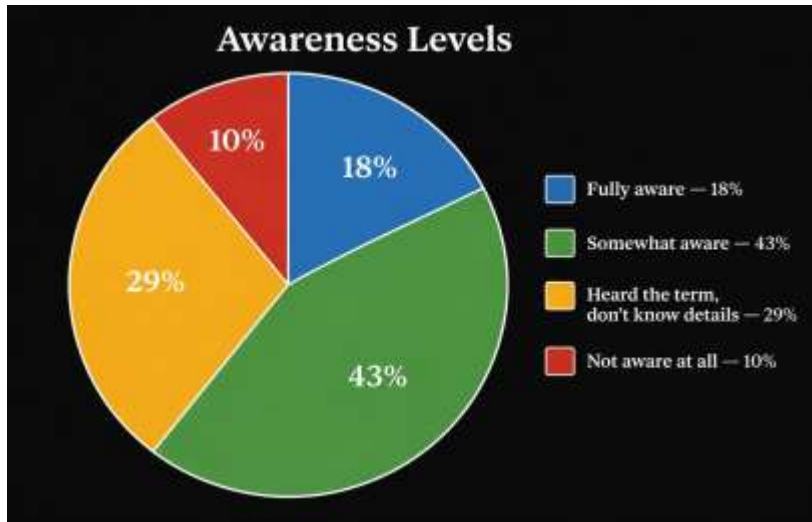
Platform	Respondents (%)
Social Media (Instagram, YouTube, Twitter)	44%
News Apps / Websites	26%
Television	20%
Newspapers	7%
WhatsApp / Word of mouth	3%



Nearly half get their news from social media. Not newspapers. Not television. That shift changes everything — how news is packaged, how long it is, how verified it actually is. A generation consuming development news in 60 second reels is a very different situation from one reading long form journalism.

### 3. Awareness About Viksit Bharat 2047:

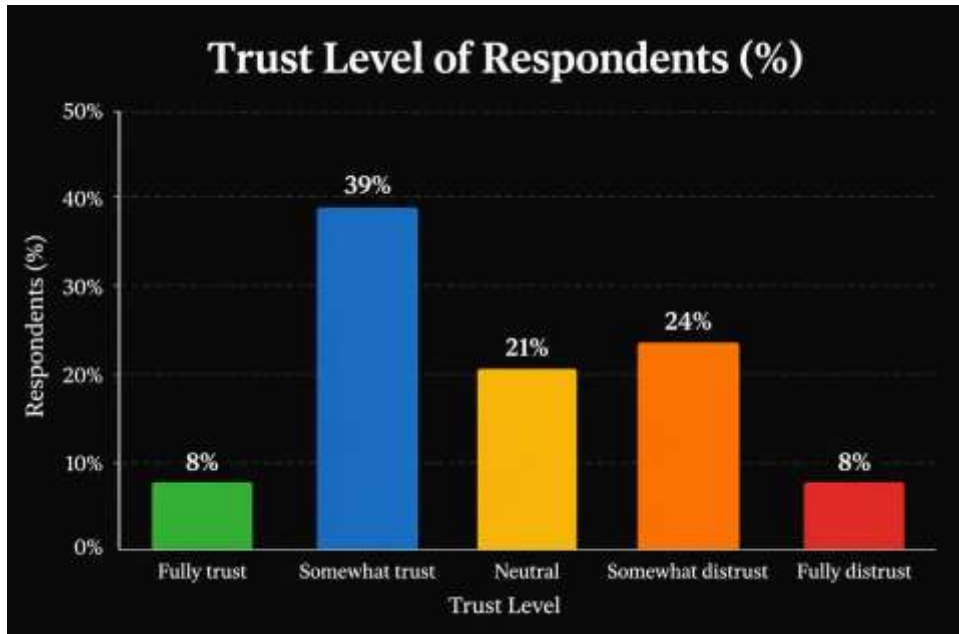
Awareness Level	Percentage(%)
Fully aware	18%
Somewhat aware	43%
Heard the term, don't know details	29%
Not aware at all	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>



Only 18% felt fully aware of what Viksit Bharat 2047 actually involves. Almost 40% either barely knew or didn't know at all. And these are educated, digitally active young people. If this demographic isn't informed, something is clearly missing in how media is communicating this vision.

**4. Trust in Media:**

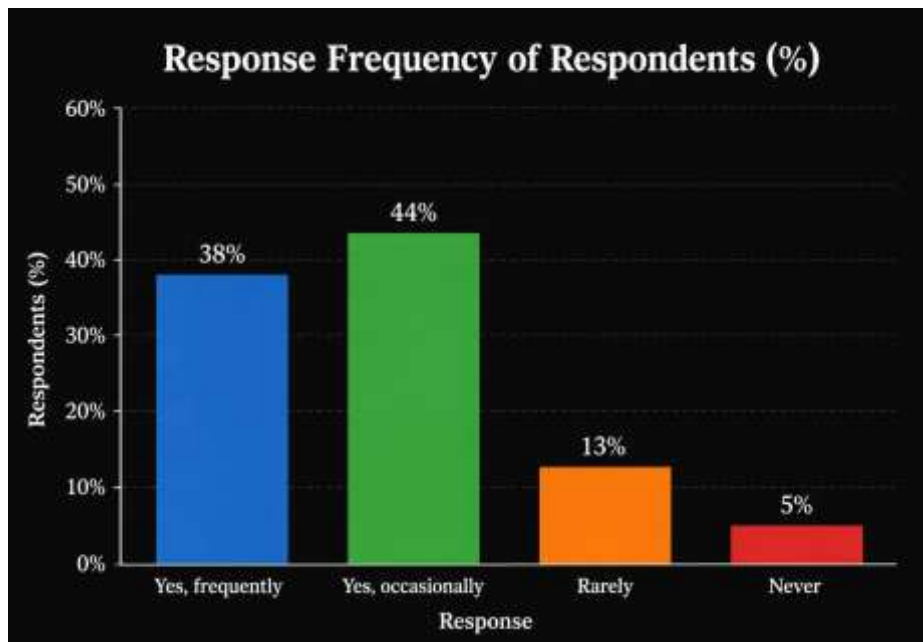
Trust Level	Respondents (%)
Fully trust	8%
Somewhat trust	39%
Neutral	21%
Somewhat distrust	24%
Fully distrust	8%



Only 8% fully trust media. Almost half sit somewhere between neutral and distrust. People haven't stopped watching. They've just stopped fully believing. That gap between consumption and trust is genuinely concerning for a country trying to build a shared developmental vision.

#### 5. Misinformation Experience:

Response	Respondents (%)
Yes, frequently	38%
Yes, occasionally	44%
Rarely	13%
Never	5%



82% have encountered misinformation at least occasionally. In the context of development communication, misinformation isn't just annoying — it actively undermines trust in genuine progress. That's a real developmental cost nobody talks about enough.

### Overall Interpretation:

Stepping back and looking at all of this together — a few things become clear.

Media consumption is high. People are online, engaged, looking for information. That part is working. But the quality of communication is where things fall apart. Trust is low. Awareness about national vision is patchy. Misinformation is widespread. And the platforms people actually use aren't always built for depth or accuracy.

For Viksit Bharat 2047 to be more than just a slogan, the gap between consumption and trust needs to close. Between information and understanding. Between what media is doing and what it could actually do.

The data doesn't say media has failed. It says media hasn't finished figuring itself out yet. And honestly, neither has India. Maybe that's the most human thing about both of them.

### Findings, Suggestions & Conclusion:

#### • Key Findings:

So after going through all the data — surveys, secondary research, informal conversations — here's what actually came out of this study. Not in a dry bullet point way. But in a way that actually means something.



Media consumption is high but shallow. 80% of respondents consume news daily. That sounds great. But nearly 44% of them are getting that news from social media — reels, shorts, tweets. Quick. Fast. Often incomplete. People are informed on the surface but not always in depth. And depth is exactly what development communication needs.

Awareness about Viksit Bharat 2047 is surprisingly low. Only 18% of surveyed respondents — educated, digitally active young Indians — felt fully aware of what this vision actually involves. 40% barely knew or didn't know at all. For a national goal this significant, that's a communication failure. Not a public failure. A media failure.

Trust in media is genuinely broken. Almost half the respondents sit somewhere between neutral and distrust. Only 8% fully trust what they consume. People haven't switched off — they've just stopped believing. That's actually worse. Because distrust while still consuming means misinformation fills the gap that credible journalism leaves behind.

Misinformation is everywhere. 82% of respondents encountered false or misleading information at least occasionally. In a country trying to build a unified development narrative, misinformation doesn't just confuse — it divides. It makes people cynical about real progress.

Regional and rural voices are still underrepresented. Secondary data consistently showed that mainstream media — especially English language television and digital platforms — skews heavily urban. Development stories from villages, small towns, tribal regions rarely trend. And yet that's where the most significant developmental changes need to happen.

Social media is the new front page — ready or not. Whether mainstream media likes it or not, the next generation of Indians is getting their information from platforms that weren't designed for journalism. That's not a complaint. It's a reality that needs to be worked with.

• **Suggestions & Recommendations:**

Based on everything this study found, here's what actually needs to change. Not ideally. Practically.

Media houses need to invest in development journalism seriously. Not as a CSR activity or an occasional special segment. As a core beat. Dedicated reporters covering schemes, rural infrastructure, health outcomes, education access — with the same energy given to political drama and celebrity news. Development is a story. It just needs people willing to tell it properly.

Digital literacy needs to be treated as a national priority. Government campaigns under Viksit Bharat should include media literacy — teaching people, especially in smaller towns and villages, how to verify information, identify credible sources, and critically consume what they see. An informed citizen is the foundation of a developed nation.

Regional and vernacular media needs more support and recognition. Some of the best development reporting in India happens in regional languages — and nobody talks about it.



Platforms, funding, and policy attention should flow towards regional media that's already doing the work mainstream media ignores.

Social media platforms need accountability frameworks. This is a harder ask but an important one. Platforms that allow misinformation to spread without consequence are actively working against development communication. Some form of regulatory framework — not censorship, but accountability — needs to be part of the conversation around Viksit Bharat.

Government communication needs to become more honest and less promotional. Right now a lot of official media around Viksit Bharat feels like advertising. Glossy. Optimistic. Disconnected from ground reality. That actually hurts trust more than it builds it. Honest storytelling — including acknowledging what isn't working yet — builds far more credibility than polished campaigns do.

Community media and citizen journalism should be encouraged. Hyperlocal reporting, community radio, local YouTube channels covering village level development — these aren't alternatives to mainstream media. They're complements. And they fill gaps that national media will never reach.

### **Conclusion:**

So what does all of this add up to?

This paper started with one central question — is Indian media actually helping India move towards Viksit Bharat 2047, or is it getting in its own way somewhere. And the honest answer that came out of this research is — both. At the same time.

Media is reaching more people than ever before. That's real. Digital platforms have broken barriers that print and television never could. Regional voices are louder. Information is faster. Access is wider. These are genuine achievements and they matter.

But reach without trust is just noise. And right now, Indian media has a trust problem it hasn't fully reckoned with. Low credibility, high misinformation, shallow development coverage, urban bias — these aren't small issues. They're structural ones. And structures take time and intention to change.

Viksit Bharat 2047 is not just an economic target. It's a mindset shift. A collective belief that India can be — and is becoming — something greater. Media is one of the most powerful tools for building that belief. Or breaking it.

The findings of this study show that media is currently somewhere in the middle. Not failing completely. Not succeeding fully. Just figuring it out — like India itself.

And maybe that's okay. As long as the figuring out happens faster than the deadline.

2047 isn't that far away.

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