

## Self-reliance paradigm: innate or conditioned

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Self-reliance is a clarion call today to meet out challenges of expeditiously growing society, and also an understanding of the natural inherent way of living. The globally acknowledged concept of self-reliance is to be understood with more clarity, whether it is an emerging hypothesis or something absolute or innate, although it is faded in imagination because of various dumped notions. This article suggests a worldview about self-reliance and facilitates the understanding of self-sufficiency, which is unlikely to lead to independence.

**Keywords:** self-reliance, self-sufficiency, independence, innate, development

### 1. Introduction

Humans are born with the desire to be self-sufficient and learn a variety of skills, such as standing on their own, walking, talking, holding, and so on. Every attempt toward self-reliance makes humans happy and satisfied. Self-reliance means working based on one's own decision-making, being motivated from within, taking care of themselves, and making their own efforts. Due to this quality, the individual does not beg for the help of others. Self-reliance requires a combination of a strong, determined mind and hard work. Rather than referring to the self-sufficiency of an individual's or group's physical needs (resources), it is more likely to refer to self-control in decision-making and self-organization in behavior.

Self-reliance is not asociality or isolation from interactions, but it is a determination of oneself for own self. A significant question rises about its possibility and mechanism in the present scenario. Philosopher KC Bhattacharyya described in his essay "Swaraj in ideas" (1) about the self-reliant nation, and Raghuramaraju (2) advocated that the essay "Swaraj in ideas" is significantly addressing to the crisis of organic thinking, and also providing natural resolutions against the problems of our society. Another thought is that "A reliance on internal resources to provide life with coherence (meaning) and fulfillment" (3). Independence of the mind is of great value, and it is not limited to political

independence only. A self-regulated self, which feels secure in the foundations of its knowledge and experiences, reflects the independence of the mind (4). An evidently proven notion is that self-reliance is a very important aspect and every individual should own it to live a happy life. It has been witnessed since the dawn of human civilization that only heartfelt decision compels humans to give hundred percent in the work. Right decisions in self and making programs accordingly become a reward of its own called satisfaction, and welfare of the whole mankind.

However, the lesson of self-reliance has neither been taught formally in any school nor does it come from any informal education. Although there are a few scattered references in the scriptures and history, it has never been found in human tradition. In today's educational system, an unnatural emphasis is placed on independence (doubting self-reliance) in terms of resources. In nature, every unit is interdependent and mutually enriching. Nothing is independent. Coexistence and harmony are quite apparent in nature/existence, and humans also inherently desire mutual fulfillment, cooperation, and harmony. Families that encourage their children's independence are more likely to have live-in relationships, single parenting, and nuclear families.

"Only a literate person is self-reliant" – it is not necessary. In today's time, there are many people who are not literate

or have received little school education, yet they are self-supporting. It is wrong to link self-reliance with literacy. The farmers of our country are not literate but are self-supporting. Education is very important for life; education leads to holistic development in our lives; our thinking and our country's policies change only through education. The country's working class, who do even the most menial tasks, is self-sufficient. A self-sufficient man is considered a prosperous man.

Mahatma Gandhi, while giving a "Jantar" to the policy-makers and reformers of India, called economic autonomy a tool toward self-reliance and the key to political independence. He believed that the Indian manufacturers had two options: increase production or increase production by more and more people. The first path will lead to new economic slavery, and the second will lead us to the path of economic self-reliance. After independence, unfortunately, the privilege of building a country was snatched from the hands of the poor, and the undeclared economic dependence on private economic establishments became a pandemic. Such an epidemic, whose victims are citizens of independent India, is standing below the poverty line. The point of decision-making, where in the absence of holistic vision, over-placement of economic profit occurred, has been noticed as the root cause, hindering the way forward toward self-reliance.

## 2. Opportunities for self-reliance

Modern India campaign with the slogan "Self-reliant India" is destined to make the nation and its citizens self-organized and self-reliant in all dimensions—thoughts, speech, and action. In this sequence, economy, infrastructure, systems, vibrant demography, and demand were highlighted as the five pillars of a self-reliant India. It uses the "Think Globally, Act Locally" concept and focuses on reducing dependence on imports by focusing on advanced safety adherence and replacement with indigenous products to attract the global market. This idea of self-reliance does not depict any isolationist strategies, but it does include a sense of supporting the whole of nature. The campaign focuses on promoting "local" products and natural living.

### 2.1 Indian case studies: COVID-19

"Aatmanirbhar Bharat" is important for India, leapfrogging into the future, and also contributing to the world at large. India developed the capacity of manufacturing 200,000 N-95 masks a day, relatively which was not a single number at the start of the pandemic (5). Even step toward vaccinating its mammoth population in record time is quite impressive. When COVID emerged in 2020, it was predicted that vaccination exercise would take years, and India hardly

could ever fully vaccinate its population. But, in July 2022, India applied two billion doses of vaccines to its citizens immediately about 18 months after the first vaccination. The World Health Organization and others organizations praised India, and the best practices were adopted all over the world. The nation also exported a large number of vaccines and PPE kits to countries all over the world and expressed that Self-Reliance 2.0 is not just for Indians, but for global welfare. The Co-WIN platform, a cloud-based IT solution for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating COVID vaccination in India, extended its support through an open platform available to all countries for their use, and in July 2021 in the Co-WIN global conclave, around 142 countries expressed interest in opting for this. In the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, India was able to give away food grains and lentils to 800 million of its own citizens, and also efficiently carried out modest exports of food grains to low-income countries in need. Unified Payments Interface (UPI), widely popular in India, is another amazing success story of self-reliance, which is a government-backed, centralized digital payment gateway.

## 3. Benefits of being self-reliant (Swavalamban)

Once an individual adopts the vision of self-reliance, his competence to contemplate the relationship, based on mutual values, striking a balance between his own needs and the needs of others, manifolds, which results.

### 3.1. Implement a continuous learning approach

The process of moving "inward" (self-exploration) while pursuing the program toward self-reliance helps to know the unknown and reflect this knowledge in right living with the outside world.

### 3.2. Boost the self-esteem of stakeholders

Stepping toward knowledge (existential truth, i.e., coexistence, not independence), as this unknown becomes clearer day by day, the feeling of self-evolution boosts self-esteem.

### 3.3. Improves decision-making competence

Self-exploration and self-evolution enhance the decision-making capacity and help to make the individual accountable and responsible.

### 3.4. Bearer's accountability and responsibility

Gradually, the individuals will be prepared to take ownership of their own imagination and participate more responsibly in various interactions with the outside world.

### 3.5. Harmonious balance of mind and definite human behavior

Approaching self-reliance phenomena, one becomes acquainted with absolute realities “within” and tries to maintain the harmonious balance of the mind. Realization of coexistence, understanding of inherent harmony in nature, and contemplation of justice in relationships all support mutual happiness.

### 3.6. Steps toward prosperity for individuals and nature both

Understanding of the inherent harmony in nature also facilitates mutual prosperity and sustainable development, despite accumulating the resources for economic upliftment and deluded independence.

### 3.7. Development of society and country

The concept of self-reliance nurtures a holistic vision for the development of society and the country.

### 3.8. Women who are self-sufficient, strengthen society, and the nation

For the female population, the concept of innate self-reliance will work as a boon in the current stereotypical society.

### 3.9. Encourage people to reach their full human potential

Right understanding, right feelings, and right conduct collectively contribute to the full human potential, a just and equitable society, and national development as a whole, which is the role of education in the new National Education Policy [NEP] (6).

## 4. Conclusion: way ahead

The vision of self-reliance has acquired great importance, and achieving it for a country like India, with about one-sixth

of the world's population, will require virtually micro-global interconnections and possibly even more dense global networks. Trustworthy connectivity, remarkable sources of materials and components, and flexible financial and trading arrangements are not simply words to glorify, but a strategic imperative requiring a consensus of all, including India's business community, lawmakers, and all stakeholders. Building a strategy for the future and succeeding on the path to self-reliance requires a long-term approach that considers regional supply chains and location decisions. India is becoming more and more open to free and fair trade. The country's priority is to develop and support innovators while also prioritizing sustainability. Various countries and trade groups around the world are aware of this fact and therefore increasingly integrating sustainability and human rights into their trade agreements and strategies.

In reality, small, decentralized, local communities and strong, interdependent relationships with one another are essential to self-reliance in many ways. However, it is important to understand its essence: “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” is a “national spirit” that has percolated down to the republic's villages, rather than an economic program. In today's closely connected and more “social” world with the availability of fast access to the Internet, apparently to be self-reliant may seem impossible, but simultaneously, it is contributing a lot. One can explore, learn, and move deeper into understanding “who we are” and challenge traditional thinking if it is not relevant in present circumstances. The necessity is to regulate ourselves and remain unaffected by external influences, pomp, and shows from time to time, step away from the technology that strikes our senses, and step away from the notions and voices of others in an effort to discern what our inner conscience is stating. All these influences and pre-conditionings are enslavement. The self generates a notion of the unity of the experiences that are part of our lives and gives us a sense of identity. It gives us a sense of “ownership” of our experiences (7). If we do this regularly, if we need it, if we trust it, gradually life becomes purposeful and begins to blossom into something that we most likely did not predict when asked in school, “What do we want to be when we grow up?” Certainly our lives will be bliss to experience while confronting self-reliance. In a nutshell, self-reliance empowers through increased indigenous production, giving, trading, and/or sharing. Self-reliance values and cares for the ignored ones, the weak, and the elderly. Self-reliance has the power to strengthen community connections and improve the health of our bodies and the overall planet's health. It is a desirable goal to proceed toward a long-lasting, sustainable, healthy society, and a strong progressive nation.

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