

ANALYSIS AND SURVEY OF PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION OF INDIA UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

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Abstract:

India has achieved advanced recognition during the last decade globally. The Western and European countries have been influenced by the leadership of Modi and started believing and trusting in India. The stature of India has become an iconic face among all the Western, Asian, and European countries. The survey consists of people's perception of India's development, economic gains, and the magnitude of the direction of the country's progress. The results reveal that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has successfully uplifted India's overall social and economic stature across the globe, reinforcing the global citizens and countries to have confidence and faith in India that India is significantly contributing to the worlds' affairs. The latest study gathered data from 1596 persons throughout the country, and only those with a bachelor's degree or above were eligible to respond.

Introduction

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the most influential man in the history of politicians. He has proven himself to be the man of his words by transforming his revolutionary ideas into a vivid reality. It would be an understatement to call him just the 'Champion of Development' because he also excels in every other role of an ideal Prime Minister. Right after Modi was elected as Gujarat's Chief Minister in 2002, the Godhra riots broke out in which more than 1000 Indians were killed. It was a sensitive time which he handled well enough as a first-time CM. At the time of his governance in Gujrat, PM Narendra Modi demonstrated his extraordinary decision-making skills, a trait which is not seen too often in Indian politicians. His no-nonsense approach in making critical executive decisions and ensuring quick implementation is pivotal to his effective governance model.

Modi traveled to various countries and was dubbed the 'N.R.I. Prime Minister' by some. They did not note that by traveling so extensively, he was furthering three key agendas: improving relationships with countries, inviting investments, and winning support for India's permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). After traveling and inviting ambassadors and leaders from countries like the US, Germany, Russia, France, and Japan, he achieved almost

everyone's support for India's UNSC bid. This support directly resulted from his efforts to showcase India's eligibility for a position on this international platform (Mohan, 2015).

PM Modi has envisioned a "long jump" for changing India's economic and social face. Keeping the poor and underprivileged in the government policies' focus, he has developed a P2 G2 (Pro-Poor, Proactive, and Good Governance) approach. At a policy level, the Modi government will continue focusing on "Jan Dhan," or the financial inclusion of the poor. The two new aspects are included: "Jal Dhan" programs for increasing the agriculture network and "Van Dhan" programs for protecting forest resources.

Narendra Modi has an enormous mass appeal, and there is a strong reason why crowds gather in large numbers to hear him. His campaigns have been multidimensional, focusing on youth empowerment, fighting corruption, wiping out terrorism, and much more. He intends to replicate socio-economic success and connect with the masses deeper (Hall, 2015).

The NaMo government's focus on the country's economic development is undeniable. It is here that we should let numbers do the talking. In economic growth rate in 2013-14 was pegged at about 4.7 percent, a slight increase over the 4.5 percent growth of 2012-13.

Compare this with the G.D.P. growth of 7.6 percent reported for 2015-16. The average inflation of India in 2013 was estimated at 10.92 percent, and in 2016, it was estimated at 6.00 percent **(Kennedy, 2015)**.

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a wonderful example of how the PM has managed to reign in the country's children and youth to battle the issue of cleanliness and hygiene – a traditional concern of India. In the process, he has managed to introduce healthy competition by naming clean cities and clean railway stations and putting cleanliness on the national agenda **(Hall, 2016)**.

"Make in India" These three words declared by the PM from the ramparts of the Red Fort woke the nation up to its potential. For years, India has been grappling with the menace of unemployment. However, the PM's vision to transform India into the world's manufacturing hub has breathed new life into about 25 different sectors. Foreign investment is pouring in, with Ease of Doing Business rankings climbing steadily. Add to this Modi's flagship campaigns – Skills India and Digital India and the nation is turning into one of the best start-up incubation centers in the world.

India has been quite a docile follower despite its immense capabilities. Under PM Narendra Modi, India seems to have broken out of its shell. The BRICS bank or the PM Modi and French

President François Hollande launched an alliance of over 120 nations – the Solar Alliance – at the Paris COP21 climate summit. He volunteered to set up the headquarters in Gurgaon, India, once again bringing our nation to the forefront. Under NaMo, India has emerged from the shadows and taken the global space.

PM Modi-led government has laid unprecedented focus on agriculture. Several initiatives have been taken to improve productivity, safeguard farmers, augment their incomes, and improve their overall well-being. These significant steps of the government are helping farmers in many ways, including easy availability of fertilizers, improving irrigation facilities, easy access to credit, scientific help, and better price for their produce. PM Modi aims to double farmers' incomes by 2022 through multi-modal interventions.

While launching the Swachh Bharat Mission at Rajpath, New Delhi, in 2014, PM Narendra Modi had said, "A clean India would be the best tribute India could pay to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150-birth anniversary in 2019." While spearheading the nationwide movement for cleanliness, PM Modi urged people to fulfill Mahatma Gandhi's dream of a Clean India. As a result of that, this campaign became successful.

When the Narendra Modi-led government came into power in May 2014, millions of India did not have a bank account. Several decades had passed, but financial inclusion remained far-fetched to millions of Indians. So, to ensure financial inclusion to one and all, the Jan Dhan Yojana was launched as a mission.

As a result, 23.93 crore bank accounts have been opened within two years. Moreover, Rs. 41,789 crores have been deposited in these bank accounts. This will help secure the future and bring stability to the lives of millions of people with the savings they will have in their bank accounts. It has also opened doors to institutional credit affected by lenders and their high-interest rates. The Jan Dhan Bank account also comes with overdraft insurance, which is now being used widely.

India securing a third best place in the list of most trusted governments worldwide is evidence that the country is treading in the right direction of development under our Honourable PM Modi's leadership. The report reveals that almost three-quarters (74 percent) of Indians say they have confidence in their national government.

Review of literature

Over time, however, India's energy and initiative waned, as did its influence as a normative power. During the 1970s, along with other states in the global South, it tried and largely failed to rewrite the rules of the global economic order to redress the imbalance of wealth between developing and developed economies. By the 1980s, India's calls for changes to the normative order of international relations were much diminished. They only occasionally were fresh proposals advanced, such as Rajiv Gandhi's push for universal nuclear disarmament. When the Cold War ended, India became more of a 'norm taker' than a 'norm maker,' accommodating it (reluctantly) to the new liberal economic order and American hegemony (**Mohan, 2003**).

Modi and his government wish to make India a vishwaguru and a 'leading power.' However, on the whole, as Hindu nationalists opposed the political ideas and policies of the Congress party, they rejected the normative agenda set out by Nehru. Instead, they seek an alternative grounded in the Hindu nationalist tradition of thought. Nevertheless, as Pratap Bhanu Mehta has observed, the intellectual resources available to Indian leaders wishing to construct an alternative foreign policy to the Nehruvian one laid out in the postcolonial period—or, indeed, a new normative agenda—are limited (**Mehta, 2009**). The Hindu nationalist tradition is arguably more limited, as most of its critical thinkers have concentrated far more on domestic politics (especially social and cultural issues) and relations with Muslims in general (or Pakistan in particular) than on global issues. Where they do focus on international relations, Hindu nationalist thinkers tend to talk in terms of civilizational relations rather than interstate relations and religious rather than political categories, making it hard to assess them in terms of conventional international relations theories and hard to understand what they might contribute to foreign policy (**Sagar, 2009**).

Some relate that when Modi left his family (and a woman to whom he was betrothed) at the age of 18 and went wandering India for almost two years, he traveled first to the Ramakrishna Mission, the religious foundation Vivekananda created at Belur Math, Kolkata, supposedly intending to become a monk (**Marino, 2014**). Modi has turned away and told to commit himself to social work instead of a religious life—advice in line with Vivekananda's teaching about the importance of action as well as contemplative lives (**Verma, 2014**). Whether or not these stories are credible, it is the case that since the early 2010s, Modi has made repeated public appeals to Vivekananda as a guide and inspiration in his political life, in parallel with his broader effort to soften his image from that of an aggressive hardline nationalist to that of a Vikas purush ('development man') and more inclusive national leader (**Verma, 2010**).

Since becoming prime minister, Modi has worked hard to maintain the connection. He visited Belur Math once again in May 2015; he unveiled a statue of Vivekananda at the Ramakrishna Mission in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November 2015; and his speeches since coming to power are littered with references to the Bengali's thought (**Modi, 2016**).

Modi is not, of course, alone in appealing to Vivekananda or using his ideas to ground arguments in support of specific domestic or foreign policies. Earlier Hindu nationalists, including Golwalkar, were inspired by his thought; but Vivekananda's stock has risen significantly among the Hindu right in recent years (**Sharma, 2013**). In 2009 the Vivekananda International Foundation (V.I.F.) think-tank was founded in New Delhi by retired civil servants, military officers, and intelligence chiefs aligned with Hindu nationalist groups. Like Modi, as we shall see, the V.I.F. aims to promote Vivekananda as a 'truly global citizen' and 'global guru,' with a vision of a 'strong and vibrant India,' pursuing 'modernization alongside spiritual development,' that could once again be a global leader in the market place of ideas (**Hall, 2016**).

Research Methodology

The current study has collected nationwide data through an online survey for Oct 2020 to July-2021. The researcher has prepared the structured questionnaire and adopted the convenience and snowball sampling methods to collect the data through google forms. Bulk mailings were circulated among all the citizens, and more than 10000 emails, consisting of google links of a questionnaire, were circulated among all the Indians. Around 3200 mails were returned, and after scrutinizing the data and applying the data screening techniques to refine the responses, finally, 1876 respondents were found suitable for inferencing the results.

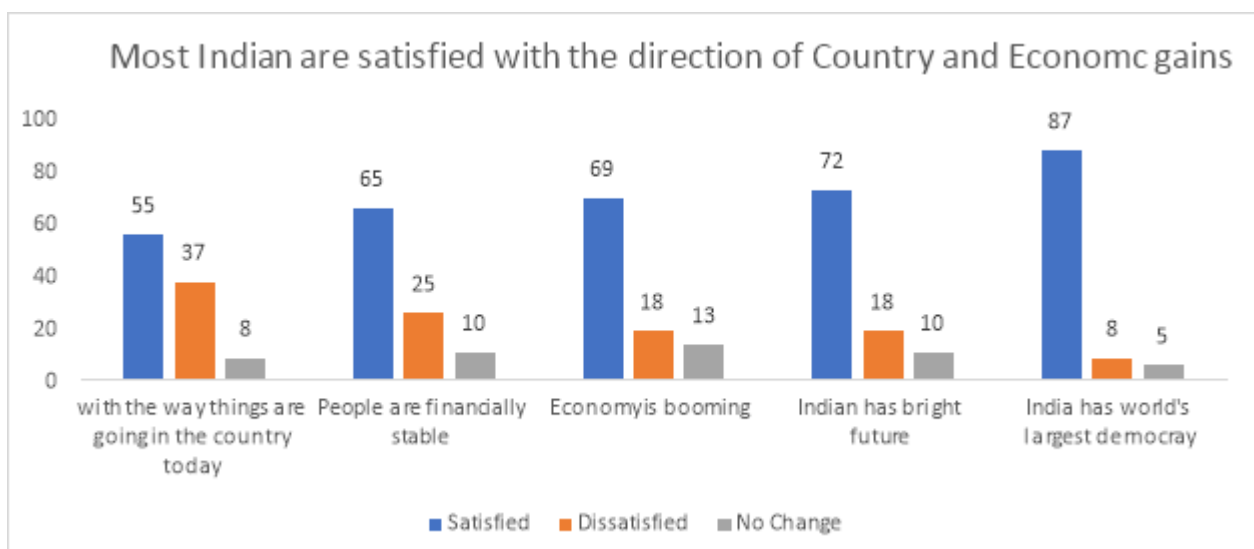
The final sample size was determined after reviewing the articles from the literature consultation with the educationists and the political experts. After that, the sample of 3500 was suitable to represent the country's perceptions towards the current government and Narendra Modi. During the pilot survey, the response was around 32%. Therefore the researcher has approached around 10,000 respondents through emails and social media sites such as Facebook links, Snapchat, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter, to collect the data. Finally, 3200 responses were collected, and after applying data screening and reduction techniques, 1876 respondents' responses were selected for final data analysis purposes. Those who are graduated and above and have a keen interest in politics or are aware of the state's current economic and financial conditions are approached.

The frequency distribution method is applied to know people's satisfaction level and perception for different workings of the government and Indian Prime Minister. The responses collected from those who were found to be hardcore followers of any party were deleted from the data for the final data analysis purpose. A questionnaire consisting of some questions demonstrating the hardcore behavior of political parties' followers was intentionally taken not considered for data collection. Only those who have the knowledge and were found to be neutral and unbiased are selected for the final survey.

The data consists of 63% male respondents and 37% female respondents. The data shows that 65% of the people are graduated and above whereas others have studied higher secondary or more. It was found that 34% of the respondents are self-employed, 36% are working in private organizations, whereas 18% are public servants, and the rest are studying in higher classes above graduation. The data consists of people based on their age, and people have aged less than 25 years are a majority in numbers (42%) whereas people between 25 to 45 years of age are 32% in numbers and 26% of people are older than 45 years. The majority of the people live in rural areas, whereas 39% of people belong to urban areas.

DATA ANALYSIS

Figure 1: People's perception towards economic gains of the country

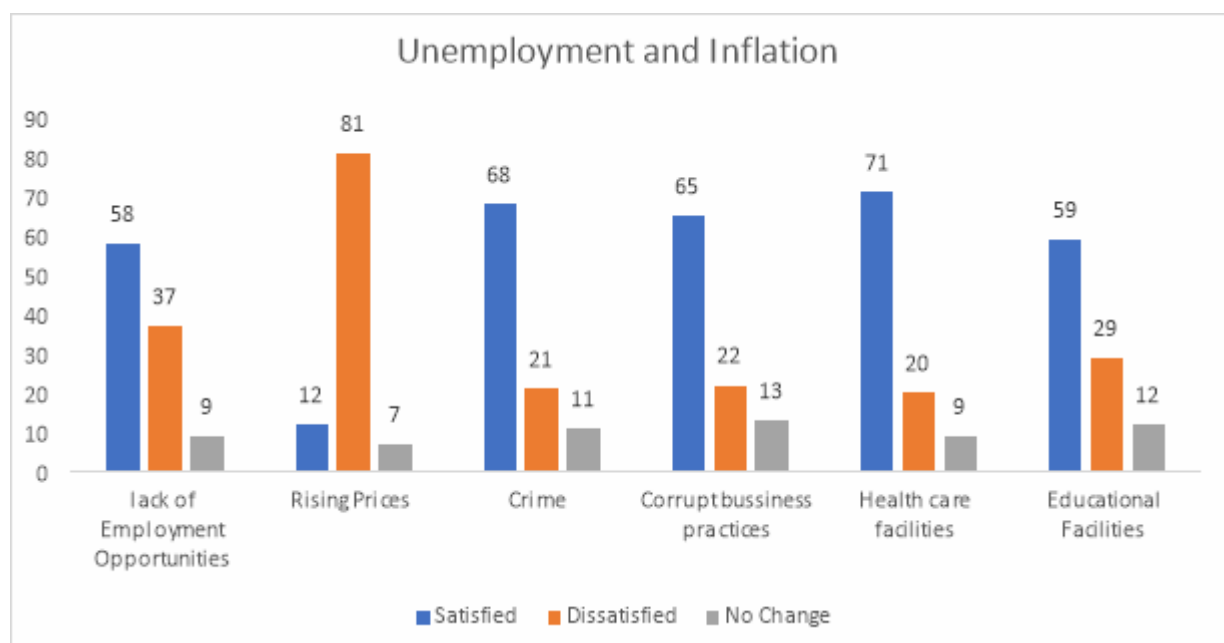


Source: Primary Survey

Figure 1 represents the opinions of 834 people about their perception and satisfaction level towards economic gains gained by the country. The majority of the people believe that India has emerged as the world's largest democratic country. Although, during the elections, people have shown their dissatisfaction with the nation's progress on some economic issues such as unemployment, inflation, trade deficit, negative trade balance, declined G.D.P. despite these worries, the majority of the Indians are satisfied with the current economic prospects of the country. They have witnessed that ongoing direction and economic gains establish a crucial platform for the brighter future of the next generations.

People perceive a lack of work prospects as India's most significant difficulty since many people lost jobs during the Pandemic and remain jobless. However, 69 percent of individuals are contemplating a return since the economy is expanding, indicating the country's improving financial and economic status. People are becoming more financially stable and believe that they are capable enough to survive during tiff situations, shown optimist viewpoint for the same notion. Roughly 55% of the people have indicated that government has limited control over their lives, and they are satisfied with the things going on in a country. In a nutshell, people have shown their satisfying behavior and attitude towards the working of the current government. However, contrary to this, they expect more advancements and policies in employment opportunities.

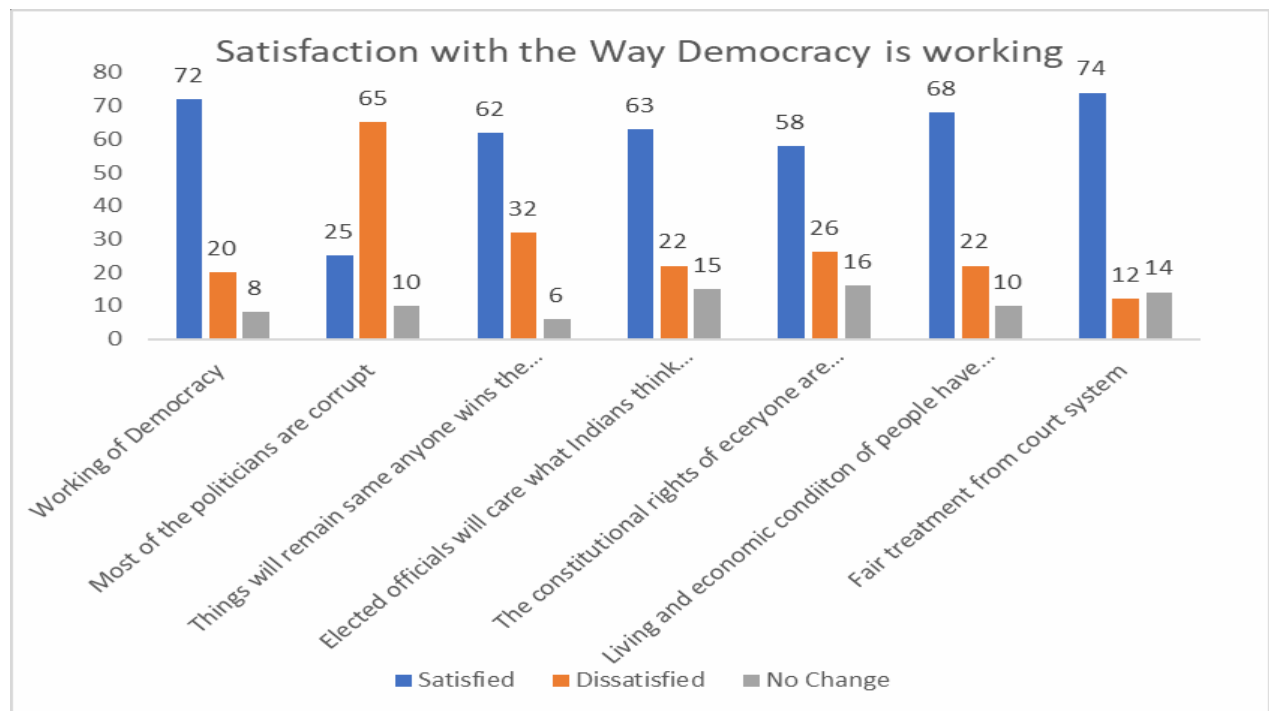
Figure 2: People's perception towards unemployment and inflation in the country



Source: Primary Data

Figure 2 reveals that lack of employment opportunities is the major concern and challenge seen by the public in India over the past few years. India faces a 3.5% unemployment rate, and more than 400 million people are engaged and working in poor-quality infrastructure exposed to vulnerable shifts. Although India is improving its literacy rate in terms of educational facilities, the drop-out rate is still higher than in other developing countries. India is also lacking in research and development. Therefore, it needs to work on the higher education and departmental research facilities. Notably, there is a partisan difference in views of these issues among Indians. Around one-third of the people say that the current government has been able to curb crime and corruption and stabilize law and order. The health care facilities have been improved a lot during the last two years, and people have witnessed tremendous improvement in the medical and pharma field in the country. The alarming situation of inflation in the country is again a threat to the livelihood of common people, which has significantly affected the purchasing power of people a lot. People earning more than Rs 50,000 face difficulty in survival, and earning below Rs 25,000 find it hard to survive and fulfill their basic needs. Rising prices of every product and service have threatened a common person's pocket to the most significant extent.

Figure 3 People perception towards working of Democracy in-country



Source: Primary Data

Figure 3 investigates people's opinions towards the functioning of Democracy in our country. The majority of people believe that Democracy is working efficiently and effectively in our country. Being the largest democratic country, people are delighted with the democratic system in our country. However, contrary to this, some have criticized the functioning and selection of the democratic system of our country. One-fourth of Indians have criticized the politicians due to their corrupt nature and unethical means of working in the system. In contrast, two-thirds of people believe that they have selected the correct politicians adhering to their judgment and feel satisfied with the working of public servants in their constituency.

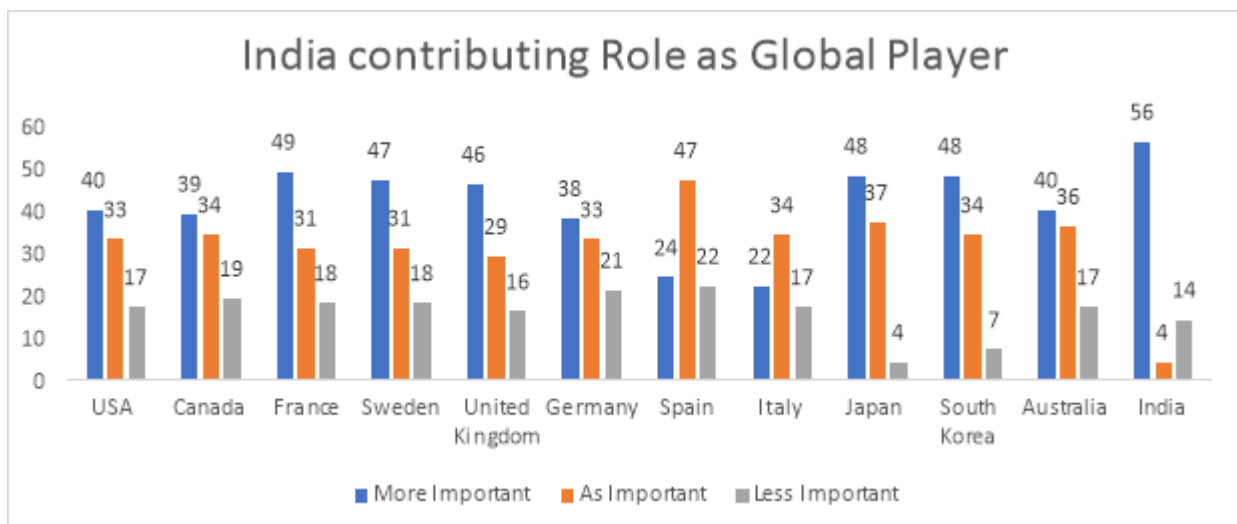
In addition to this, two-thirds of people believe that things will remain the same whosoever party wins the elections because they have witnessed the same scale and performance of the government during the last few decades. They believe that only a handful of people benefit from the government policies, whereas most people find it hard to survive during all the ruling parties. People believe that the elected officials are performing better and fulfilling their expectations. In contrast, one-third of people have criticized their functioning and raised questions on the ability of the elected politicians.

Furthermore, data examines that people are satisfied with enjoying and exercising their constitutional rights. People relish freedom and obey law and order to maintain the liberty to enjoy their own and others' constitutional rights. Despite the lack of employment opportunities, the economic and living conditions of the people have been improved a lot, and people feel more financially independent. The establishment of self-help groups' implementation of financial literacy and financial inclusion programs has uplifted the economic and financial conditions of people in the country. More than three fourth people are happy with the court system and believe that they are getting fair treatment from courts, and courts are almost free from corruption and biased decisions. It is believed that although the court produces the results after a long wait, the results are unbiased and based on the facts and sheets to protect the victim and punish the culprit. Lastly, people are satisfied with tribunals but expect normal court functioning to be improved, and results should be announced in a shorter duration. The establishment of more courts or extension of existing courts is required to strengthen the aw system in our country.

The report presented by Pew research center based on global attitudes survey have presented opinions of 900 million global people about India. Data has established a notable gap between a country's global stature and global perspectives. In totality, 56% of Indians believe that the country has been playing a more significant role in world affairs from the last decade and has

emerged as a global player in most fields. The majority of the western countries believe that India's role has tremendously grown over the last few years in advanced economies such as France (49%), Japan (48%), South Korea (48%), Sweden (47%), U.K. (46%) and Few countries think that India's stature has been marginally diminished during the last few years.

Fig 4 global perception for India emerging as a global player



Source: P.E.W. Research Centre (Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey)

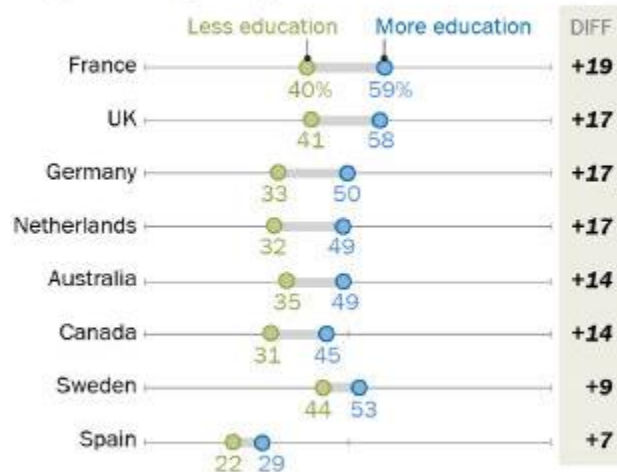
Note: Do not know response are not shown in the figure

Overall, the national survey reveals that India's global role has been advanced significantly, whereas fewer people believe that India is playing the same role as it was ten years ago.

Figure 5 India's Stature and Perception towards Narender Modi

Europeans with more education most likely to say India's stature increased

India plays a more important role in the world today compared to 10 years ago

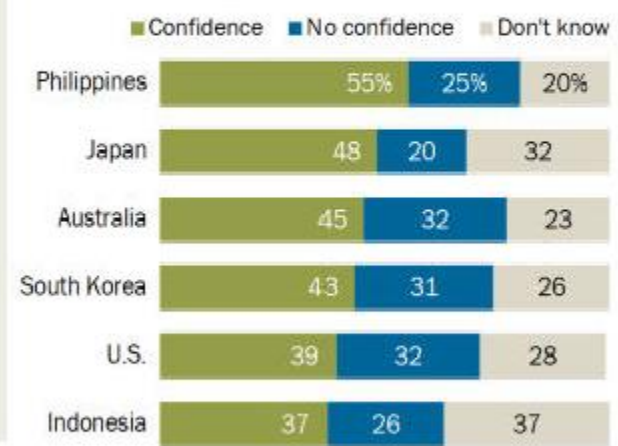


Note: Only statistically significant differences shown
Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey, Q32c.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Positive reviews of Modi on balance, though many have no opinion

Confidence in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to do the right thing regarding world affairs



Source: Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey, Q35g.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: P.E.W. Research Centre (Spring 2018 Global Attitudes Survey)

Note: Do not know response are not shown in the figure

The data in figure five analyze that the majority of the European nations are applauding India's stature and have witnessed significant improvements in India's global role. The people with post-secondary education have found that India's power has grown by leaps and bounds during the last decade. The data revealed that the difference has remarkably improved by 20 points when the responses have been collected from more educated people compared to less educated people. It has been observed that people living in France, the U.K., and Germany with higher education and income are more likely to believe that India is playing a significant role in global activities. In comparison, people living in Spain have contrary views to the above notion.

Furthermore, across the Asia-Pacific region and U.S.A region, people believe more in Narender Modi for his leadership, charismatic personality, and decisions taken by Modi than those who lack confidence in him. The majority of the people (68%) have perceptions about the Indian Prime Minister that they have confidence in Modi, whereas 32% have not shown any positive attitude towards Modi. In a nutshell, globally, people believe more in Modi than criticizing him about his deeds to handle world affairs. This demonstrates that Narender Modi has become the

face of India, and many countries are believing, trusting, referring, and showing confidence in him.

Conclusion and Future Directions

Current research indicates that globally people and countries support India and favor the fact that the country is growing in the right direction. The critical challenge is to mitigate the issues of unemployment and rising prices by introducing realistic employment opportunities in the country. On the other hand, the majority of the Indians believe that the country is enjoying the highest status of Democracy across the world. However, people have shown their confidence in the current politicians and their credibility despite things. The U.S.A., Canada, France, United Kingdom, and Germany have applauded India's role as a global player. Many Western and European countries have significantly trusted India and Modi that India's stature had been tremendously improved over the past few years. Globally, people have recognized and appraised India for a better future and lever world affairs. Indian citizens, along with global people from the Philippines, Japan, Australia, and the U.S.A., have appreciated the working of Modi and believed that Modi had become a renewed personality and iconic face of India. He has emerged as a truly global leader. The government needs to implement economic policies and generate more income generation activities in the country to improve the economic and living conditions of the people. Overall, People's Perception of India has changed considerably under the able and visionary leadership of Narendra Modi.

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