# INDIAN PERCEPTIONS OF EUROPE AND GERMANY

## A Report

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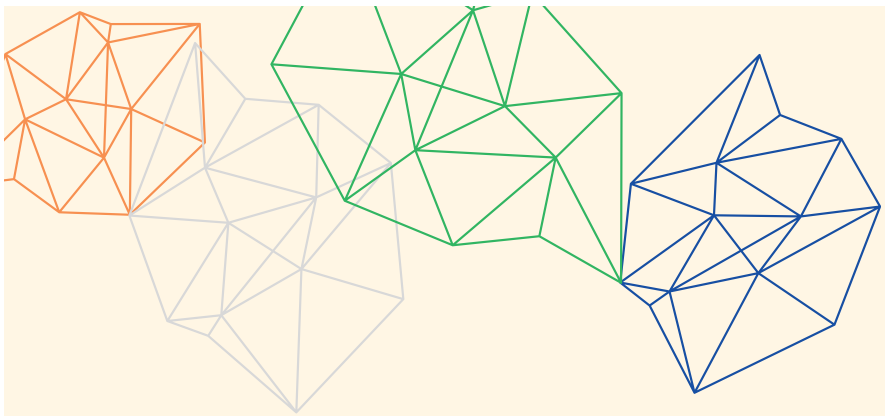

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# Introduction

CHAPTER 1

# Introduction

India's interaction with the 'Western world' goes back many centuries. Indus Valley Seals in Mesopotamia and parts of modern-day West and Central Asia underscore the strong historical connections between India and 'Western' civilisations. Over the past four centuries, India's interactions with the West have been defined by the period of colonisation. While the British controlled large parts of the Indian Sub-Continent, the French, Dutch, and Portuguese held onto their pockets of influence. The colonial period has shaped India's perspective towards the West. On one level, it exposed ordinary Indians to the wrath of Western imperial rule. The 1857 War of Independence and the prolonged freedom struggle underscored the deeply unpopular nature of the Western Colonial project. At the same time, the colonial period also exposed Indians to the concept of Western modernity. Responses to this were two-fold. On one end of the spectrum was Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj, which called for social reforms and embraced the concept of Western education (Kopf, 2015). At the other end was Dayanand Saraswati's Arya Samaj, which called for a return to the Vedic knowledge systems (Rai & Sharma, 1967).

In the initial few decades after independence, the Indian states and an ordinary Indian's view of the West was shaped by the colonial experience. There was a marked effort to assert Indian independence. The motivations of Western powers were always viewed through a colonial lens. This explains India's firm commitment to the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM). The underlying objective of the NAM was to assert India's strategic autonomy and exercise her choice not to be drawn into the Communist or Capitalist camp. Similarly, the Indian state's cautious approach to foreign and private enterprise must be viewed. The goal of becoming self-sufficient drove state control over various sectors of the economy. Reducing dependency on external powers was key to safeguarding India's independence.

Economically, the policy of protectionism ensured that foreign and private investment in the Indian economy was tightly controlled. Key sectors were almost wholly closed out to the private sector. This meant the average citizen had limited exposure to foreign labels and products. Basic facilities like getting a phone connection and a new car or scooter involved long waiting periods. The 'protection' of the domestic economy from foreign capital goes back to the government's goal of building self-sufficiency.

As a result, India's approach towards Western powers in the decade following independence was marked by caution and an element of suspicion. This was most evident during the crisis in East Pakistan in 1970-71, when the USA and other Western Powers sided with Pakistan, overlooking concerns over human rights violations. This period marked the lowest point in India's relations with the West. Besides, India's foreign policy took a strong anti-colonial stance, providing vocal support for the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa and strong support for the Palestinian cause.

## 1.1. Last Two Decades of The 20th Century: A Period of Transformation

India witnessed essential changes in the last two decades of the 20th century. These changes encompassed social, demographic, economic, and political landscapes. Post-independence, India was seen primarily as an agrarian society, with most of its population in rural areas. The divide between rural and urban India had significant implications. The inflow of foreign capital and industries tended to be concentrated in urban areas. As a result, urban areas enjoyed a more substantial share of economic prosperity. Development and economic prosperity were slower to trickle down to rural regions. Migrating to the 'big cities' was seen as a ticket to financial prosperity and upward mobility. In the decades following independence, the percentage of the national population living in urban areas began to increase. The metropolitan population percentage increased from 18 percent in 1960 to 26 percent in the 1990s (World Bank, ND). As more Indians live in urban areas, metros like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Hyderabad have expanded. At the same time, smaller urban centres, tier 2 and tier 3 towns have emerged, further transforming the urban landscape.

On the economic front, the benefits of liberalisation slowly started to tickle down. The initial impact was

felt in large urban centres. The opening of the first McDonald's in Delhi in 1996 and its quick expansions to other major metro cities highlighted the presence of a growing urban middle class with increased disposable income (Fernandes, 2000; Fernandes, 2006; Gilbertson, 2017; Sridharan, 2004). Like McDonald's, the expansion of other major Western food chains like KFC, Burger King, and Starbucks, amongst others, further underscores the economic transformation of urban centres in India. By mid to late 2010, this growing urban middle class was not concentrated just around significant metros like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Kolkata. The increased disposable income in tier 2 to tier 3 towns has transformed the economic landscape (Naidu, 2023).

On the societal front, economic transformation leads to social transformation. The 'New India' that grew up during the era of liberalisation has been socialised into a new financial order with greater access to international markets and products. Socially, this has led to the rise of an 'aspirational' middle class, which is upwardly mobile and with increased disposable income. The aspirational element is prominent amongst two categories of people. Firstly, the generation that entered the workforce around liberalisation in the 1990s and 2000s and the generations born after liberalisation.

The impact of social and economic transformation informs individual choices and preferences. Besides, it also shapes how India looks at the world, particularly 'Western' countries. Increased disposable income and upward social mobility are often characterised by a willingness to be associated with Western norms, tastes, and consumption practices. (Ksheerasagar, 2024; Srivastava, 2023). Commercially, Western products, brands, and food often become associated with greater social prestige. The increased disposable income means that the aspirational foreign vacation is not a distant dream but an annual reality. The increasing outbound foreign tourism from India strongly indicates this trend (Thomas, 2024).

However, the growing popularity of Western products, brands, and foreign vacations may sometimes impact an individual's cultural identity. While Western consumer practices influence the new generation of Indian youth, they still appear rooted in Indian cultural norms. The same positive attitude towards Western consumer choices and a more lukewarm reception to Western cultural norms have emerged. This dichotomy is a critical feature representing attitudes and public perception of the West.

Politically, the late 1980s and early 1990s saw essential changes. The political equilibrium in Indian politics began to alter. What was initially a one-party dominant system slowly shifted towards an era of coalition politics. Nationally, the Congress party fell into a decline, and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and other regional political parties became essential players in national politics. On one level, the decline of Congress opened the door for regional parties to play a more influential role in the centre.

Regarding foreign policy, the collapse of the USSR was a pivotal movement. Bill Clinton's visit to India in March 2000 represented a strategic shift, with the two sides working towards closer ties (Mishra, 2005). During the Cold War, India did not have a close relationship with the US and the other Western powers. Despite the Non-Alignment (NAM) Doctrine, India, for all practical purposes, was aligned towards the Soviet bloc (Stein, 1967). This is why Clinton's state visit in March 2000 was a significant turning point. Since then, India's ties with the US and other Western powers have steadily improved. The India-US Nuclear Deal signed under UPA's first tenure was a watershed moment in India's relations with the USA. Today, India is viewed as an important strategic and economic partner, with Western powers pushing for closer strategic and economic ties (Kurup, 2023b; Kutty & Basrur, 2021).

The rapid transformation witnessed since the new millennium's turn has reshaped how Indians view the 'West.' For today's India, the experience of colonial rule has limited influence on how we view Western powers. Advancements in technology and economic liberalisation have resulted in today's youth having far greater exposure to Western cultural practices, products, and cuisine. This is bound to shape the attitude of an ordinary Indian towards 'Western' countries. This study helps capture some of these perspectives.

## 1.2. Understanding Public Perception of the 'West'

Nearly 25 years into the new millennium, the layers of transformations discussed above have shaped and continue to shape public attitudes towards the 'West.' Has the political and economic realignment translated into a more positive attitude towards Western powers? Indians growing up in the 1960s and 1970s would have been socialised into a foreign policy environment where the West was viewed as an adversary. On the other hand, the generation growing up after the 1980s would have been socialised into a very different geo-political environment in which Western powers are seen as allies. These changes are

not just limited to the foreign policy environment. The generation born after the 1980s grew up when the economy was liberalised. They had greater access to Western products, movies, and cuisine. The growth in transport and communication technology has also meant that the post-1980s generation is more likely to have travelled to Western countries. Do some of these changes translate into a broader public perception of Western powers? This is an important question that needs to be addressed.

On the economic front, how does the increased disposable income, access to Western branded products, cultural practices, and media transform consumer tastes? Are more Indians watching Western movies, listening to Western music, and eating Western food? Is consuming such products associated with higher social status and a sign of upward mobility? Consumer behaviour and spending patterns are often closely connected to notions of social progress. For example, buying expensive luxury goods is not just a niche of the social elites. Increasingly, middle-class Indians, traditionally viewed as a 'price sensitive' market, are today more likely to spend on expensive luxury goods.

Changes on the economic front have also made foreign travel more accessible to the average Indian. In a July 2024 report published by the RBI, between April and June 2024, as many as 80 lakh Indians travelled abroad. This exceeds the pre-Covid high of 54 lakh foreign visits. The data indicates that foreign travel is more than a privilege to which only some have access. This aspirational element has become a tangible reality for the emerging middle class. How does this translate in numbers? What percentage of urban Indians aspire to travel abroad, and which countries are most popular on their list? Besides, does foreign travel come to be associated with increased social status?

Outbound travel is wider than short-term tours and vacations. Young Indians are increasingly exploring options outside the country for their higher education. In 2023, around 13 lakh (1.3 million) Indian students were enrolled in higher educational institutes abroad (Chadha, 2024). That year, India was the largest source of international studies, surpassing China. Despite the growing affluence amongst sections of the urban population, what motivates Indian students to go abroad to study? Are Western societies associated with better quality of education and quality of life? Are employment prospects better in the West?

Finally, what impact do these social, economic, and political changes have on an individual's cultural choices? Financial liberalisation and greater access to international travel and foreign consumer products have the potential to shape cultural preferences. Western TV shows, movies, and music have a growing fanbase in India. The recent scramble to secure tickets for a Cold Play concert in Mumbai underscores this point (Economic Times, 2024). At the same time, restaurants serving 'Western' food have mushroomed in tier 2 (mid-sized cities) and tier 3 (small) cities outside the major metros. This begs the question, has the growing popularity of Western cultural symbols come at the expense of Indian products? Are today's youth more likely to embrace Western cultural norms vis-à-vis Indian norms? Put more directly, do urban Indians view Western cultural practices as being 'superior' to Indian practices?

Surveys to understand Indian public perception of the 'West' will need to address these questions. These questions capture multiple lenses through which the broader public views Western societies and cultures. When analysing perceptions towards Western countries, the public cannot be viewed as a monolith. Breaking down these responses will help uncover multiple layers of nuances. Understanding broader public perception of the West requires careful understanding and analysis of these nuances.

Recent research on the economic, social, and cultural transformation India is witnessing underscores key background variables that could influence popular views on the West. Four variables will play a critical role in the upcoming analysis. Firstly, the size of the urban centre where the participant stays is essential. The survey divides settlements into small, mid-sized, and large categories. Secondly, social class is a vital background variable in urban areas. At the same time, social class is also connected to the type of occupation, economic class and level of education. The analysis will break down the responses based on each of these variables. Thirdly, age group is another essential variable that is analysed. Younger Indians, for various reasons, have different worldviews than older people. Each of these three variables is discussed in further detail below.

### 1.3. The Rise of Aspirations in Small Towns

While the early 2000s witnessed the rise of an aspirational middle class in major metro cities, the decade of 2010s saw the rise of a similar middle class in smaller tier 2 and tier 3 towns (Kurup, 2023a; Kurup, 2023b). The attitudes of these emerging groups in smaller areas are very different from those in larger metros and tier 1 cities. An emerging pool of social

science research has focused on the quiet social transformation that is taking place in small towns (Guin, 2019; Swerts, 2017). While large metros like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad have often been associated with a growing middle-class and upper-class elite, smaller urban centres are where rapid changes occur. At a policy level, the central government has increased its focus on emerging urban centres over the past decade. The Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) has benefitted nearly 5,000 urban centres across India (Panwar, 2024). As a result, facilities that were once only seen in large metros today have trickled down to smaller metropolitan areas.

In addition, smaller towns have also witnessed a steady increase in income levels. Reports indicate that the compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of income levels in tier 2 and tier 3 towns is 7.8 percent. This is almost on par with the all-India figure of 8.4 percent (Chander, 2024). The rising levels of affluence in smaller urban centres have had a transformative effect on people's attitudes and choices. Data indicate that consumer spending in smaller towns has increased significantly. Spending on e-retail is expanding at a CAGR of 37 percent in tier 2 and tier 3 towns. This is higher than the average for all urban areas, around 20 percent. Tier 2 and tier 3 towns are also emerging as the new start-up hubs (Kampani, 2021; Free Press Journal, 2024).

The increased disposable income also translates to greater aspirations among people in these smaller urban regions. Traveling or studying abroad and buying foreign branded products are not just a distant dream but a tangible reality. These aspirations can shape popular attitudes towards Western countries as people can get greater exposure to Western culture and ways of life.

Keeping this in mind, place of residence is an important variable used to analyse responses in this survey. We have classified urban centres into three categories: a big city (population above 10 lakh), a mid-sized city (population between 5 to 10 lakh), and a small city (population between 1 to 5 lakh). This categorisation will help us capture and compare people's attitudes in smaller and emerging urban centres.

## 1.4. India's Middle Class: Social Class as an Important Category

While caste has been an extensively studied social indicator, class is also emerging as an essential socio-economic category in urban settings. Since the turn of the new millennium, the middle class has emerged as a crucial urban socio-economic group (Economic Times, 2023). Reports suggest that by 2024, the middle class in India will be around 400 to 600 million (Fernandes, 2000; Ghani, 2024). Aspirations for upward social mobility are necessary for the urban middle class. Another essential feature is the increased disposable income. Recent projections by the government of India suggest that the income levels of the middle class will likely double over the next five years. Increased disposable incomes have translated into increased consumer spending. India's consumer market is projected to overtake China's by the end of this decade, primarily fuelled by the expanding middle class (Cheung, 2024).

Through increased purchasing power, middle-class individuals are more likely to be exposed to Western cultural symbols, lifestyles, and consumer products. For example, the recent boom in the number of outgoing foreign tourists from India is primarily driven by the urban middle class. This is also the audience likely to be exposed to Western media, movies, and music. Such exposure is likely to significantly impact an individual's perspective towards Western countries.

The class category is also strongly connected to education levels and occupations. Higher social classes are associated with higher levels of education. Higher classes are more likely to be employed in professional and specialised occupations. Both of these factors can impact a person's perspective of Western societies. Those with higher levels of education and those in specialised occupations are more likely to consider migrating abroad in search of employment.

A holistic measure has been used in this study to determine the social class of respondents. Educational levels, place of residence (size of the city), nature of the occupation, and the list of assets owned are all considered when classifying individuals into particular social classes. This study classifies respondents into four economic classes: poor, lower, middle, and upper. Regarding educational levels, there are four categories: non-literate, some schooling, intermediate-undergraduate, and college and above. Finally, respondents are classified into eight occupations: higher professionals, lower professionals, government employees, big and medium businesses, small businesses, students, homemakers/stay-at-home, and others.

## 1.5. The Evolving Aspirations of Indian Youth

Age groups are another social indicator that will be important in analysing public attitudes towards the

West. Age is important for two reasons. Firstly, in the Indian context, younger individuals are more likely to be socialised in an environment with easy access to Western cultural symbols, media, and consumer products. The younger generation, particularly those born in the 1990s and after, has grown up in a political environment where India views Western countries as friendly partners rather than adversaries. Secondly, the younger generation is more likely to be aspirational, given the rapid social and economic changes over the last two decades. These factors are likely a significant impact on younger individuals' attitudes towards Western countries.

Previous studies conducted by Lokniti-CSDS have highlighted how Indian youth have very different attitudes compared to other age groups. In a 2009 study titled 'Indian Youth in a Transforming World,' more educated and urban youth showed greater awareness of international issues (De Souza, Kumar, & Shastri, 2009). The study found that urban youth are at the 'cusp of change' with a complex mix of aspirations and anxieties. More interestingly, the most change was observed in youth residing in tier 2 (mid-sized cities) and tier 3 (small cities), where the socio-economic transformation was the most significant.

2017 and 2021 studies by Lokniti-CSDS and KAS provided some critical insights. While Indian youth are more educated, there is much anxiety regarding financial security and employment. At the same time, youth are highly aspirational. A significant proportion of Indian youth aspire to study and work outside India. This is fuelled by the belief that educational and employment opportunities are better outside the country (Kumar, 2021; Virk & Sahani, 2017).

Considering these factors, age will be an essential variable in the upcoming analysis. The study classifies respondents into five age groups: 18 to 25, 26 to 35, 36 to 45, 46 to 55, and 56 and above.

## 1.6. Chapterisation Structure

The report is divided into a total of eight chapters. Chapter 2 deconstructs the responses to broader questions on what Indians understand by the term 'Western Countries.' Chapter 3, analyses responses to questions regarding Western culture. The responses help us look at how far and to what extent Western cultural practices (food, dressing, music, movies, and media) influence the lifestyle choices of Indians. The questions also help us understand how Indians view Western culture vis-à-vis Indian culture. Chapter 4 dissects responses to questions related to economic opportunities, working environments, and quality of life in the West compared to India. Chapter 5 discusses responses related to people's motivations for travelling to Europe. Responses will examine four motivations: education, employment, permanent settlement, and leisure travel. The chapter will also investigate whether travel to the West is associated with higher social status. Chapter 6 examines popular foreign policy perceptions. The questions will determine if Indians view the West as a reliable partner. It will also look closely at popular perceptions of the West vis-à-vis Russia. Chapter 7 focuses more closely on popular perceptions of Germany. There seems to be widespread awareness of the German education system, immigration policies, and industries. At another level, it also assesses the public perception of Germany as a strategic partner to India. Chapter 8 concludes by placing the findings within a larger context.

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2

# What is the West for Indians?

CHAPTER 2

# What is the West for Indians?

## 2.1. Introduction

The concepts of the 'West' and the 'East' are not just abstract entities or geographical labels; they are deeply embedded in historical thought, cultural traditions, and deep-rooted associations. Some literature has, over time, established that both these ideas have an imagery and a vocabulary that give them reality and a presence (Goody, 1998; Said, 2003; Moldagaliyev et al., 2014). Without a precise opposite, like a 'non-West' or 'non-East,' both have developed and continue to develop a relationship with each other. They are not simply opposites but are reflections of one another, constantly influencing and reshaping perceptions of identity, progress, and culture (Seo & Lee, 2019).

The West is often portrayed as a model of modernity, technological progress, and economic strength, setting benchmarks that nations worldwide aspired to emulate (Wagner, 2012). At the same time, contestations have seen the East as more spiritually or culturally rich in certain aspects (Bozeman, 2017). This dynamic creates a subtle hierarchy, where one region's idea of living becomes another's aspiration. This chapter aims to uncover perceptions about both of these narratives.

For this chapter, the idea of the East is only limited to India. Similarly, the West is explored broadly, including multiple countries that shape the popular notion of Western identity. The chapter is structured into three sections: a) defining the geographies of the West – an understanding of the countries and regions that constitute the Western world; b) perception of technology, infrastructure, and standards of living – this section draws a comparative analysis between India vs Europe in all these parameters; c) cultural perceptions – exploring how Indians perceive their cultural values in comparison to those of the West.

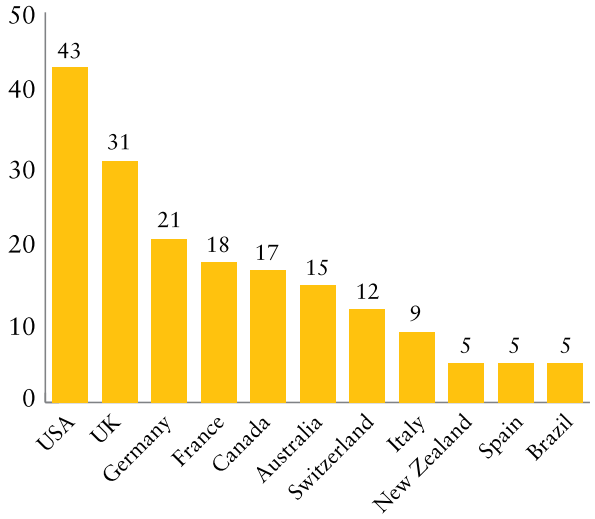
## 2.2. Defining the Geographies of the West

The term "the West" is complex and carries multiple meanings, encompassing geographic and historical dimensions. Although the definition is not fixed and remains a topic of debate, it is generally accepted that the Western world or the 'West' includes various nation-states spread across regions of Western Europe, North America, and Australasia (specifically New Zealand and Australia) (Stearns, 2008; Espinosa, 2017). Thse nations share similar political structures, economic systems, and cultural norms that stem from the Enlightenment and Judeo-Christian traditions. The Western world's roots are often traced to the Greco-Roman civilisations and to the European Renaissance and Enlightenment cultural legacy. These intellectual movements laid the foundation for Western philosophies, governance, and law, which later spread through colonialism and global trade (Cartledge, 2002). Moreover, there is an academic debate surrounding the boundaries of the West, particularly concerning Eastern European nations and certain parts of Latin America (Espinosa, 2017). The inclusion of Australia and New Zealand in the West is also frequently debated, given that their Westernised societal structures contrast with their non-Western geographic locations. The difficulty in situating the West geographically highlights the contentious nature of this debate. Therefore, this section aims to contribute to the enduring academic discussion by offering an Indian perspective on how the West is perceived. In particular, it asks an important question: where is the 'West' located, or which countries are considered part of the larger "Western countries" framework in Indians' understanding?

To gain insights into this perception, we asked the respondents to recall from their imagination which nation-states came to their minds when we utter the words – 'Western countries'. This was a straightforward question, and the respondents were allowed to give multiple responses, i.e., they could name all the countries they thought constituted the term Western countries. It is essential to highlight that no names were offered to the respondents; they named the countries themselves. The findings revealed that the United States of America (USA) was the most frequently mentioned country, with nearly four in ten (43%) respondents identifying it as a Western country. Another one-third (31%) named the United Kingdom. One in every five (21%) respondents named Germany, while a slightly smaller proportion mentioned France, Canada, and Australia (18%, 17%, and 15%, respectively). Additionally, one in ten respondents named Swit-

zerland (12%) and Italy (9%). Around five percent identified countries like New Zealand, Brazil, and Spain. Other countries that appeared less frequently in responses included Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Portugal, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Luxembourg (***Figure 2.1***).

**Figure 2.1: Who All Are 'Western Countries'**




*Note: The question had multiple response categories. Other countries cited by respondents included Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Portugal, Austria, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Luxemburg. 16 percent were not aware of Western countries.*

*Question asked: Generally speaking, which country comes first to your mind when I say "Western Countries"? R could choose multiple responses.*

These findings suggest a clear tendency among Indian respondents to name countries historically considered part of the Western framework. Most countries listed belong to Western Europe, North America (specifically the United States and Canada), and Oceania (New Zealand and Australia). The inclination was strongest for European countries, followed by North America and Oceania. Interestingly, Brazil, a Latin American nation, also featured in Indians' perception of the West, with nearly five percent of respondents mentioning it (***Figure 2.1***).

The data was further analysed using socio-demographics to observe patterns. To ensure that only meaningful inferences come out, the analysis focused only on the top three countries (as the proportion of respondents for other nations was too small). The findings revealed intriguing patterns based on the respondents' age, education, class and occupation. However, the level of urbanity did not yield any significant variation in the level of awareness or in identifying Western countries.

Age proved to be a crucial determinant in awareness of Western countries. The younger generation, aged 18 to 25 years, displayed the highest level of awareness compared to their older counterparts. Moreover, this awareness diminished with age. For instance, nearly half (46%) of the youth named the USA as a Western country, in contrast to one-third of the elderly, aged 56 years and above who named the USA. This trend was also consistent with the UK, Germany, and other countries (***Table 2.1***).

**Table 2.1: Knowledge of 'Western Countries' Among Different Age Groups**

| Age groups | Top three known Western countries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | UK | Germany | Not aware of Western countries |
| 18 to 25 years | 46 | 33 | 26 | 8 |
| 26 to 35 years | 44 | 34 | 24 | 11 |
| 36 to 45 years | 44 | 30 | 19 | 17 |
| 46 to 55 years | 43 | 28 | 18 | 22 |
| 56 years and above | 33 | 20 | 11 | 36 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. Only the top three countries were analysed.*

*Question asked: Generally speaking, which country comes first to your mind when I say "Western Countries"? R could choose multiple responses.*

Similarly, education played a crucial role, having a more significant effect than age. Higher levels of education were associated with greater awareness of Western countries. For example, among non-literates, close to one in ten identified the USA as a Western country; in contrast, nearly half of those with college degrees did so. This education gap was also evident for other countries, including the UK and Germany (***Table 2.2***).

**Table 2.2: Knowledge of 'Western Countries' with The Level of Education**

| Level of educational attainment | Top three known Western countries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | UK | Germany | Not aware of Western countries |
| Non-literate | 11 | 3 | 3 | 76 |
| Some schooling | 31 | 17 | 11 | 36 |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 40 | 26 | 15 | 20 |
| College and above | 49 | 37 | 26 | 7 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. Only the top three countries were analysed.*

*Question asked: Generally speaking, which country comes first to your mind when I say "Western Countries"? R could choose multiple responses.*

On the other hand, economic class was also a marker of awareness among the respondents. Affluent respondents were more likely to be aware of Western countries than those economically underprivileged. For instance, half of those from wealthy families identified the USA as a Western country compared to one-third (36%) of respondents from poor economic group (***Table 2.3***).

**Table 2.3: Knowledge of 'Western Countries' Across Different Economic Classes**

| Economic class | Top three known Western countries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | UK | Germany | Not aware of Western countries |
| Poor | 36 | 26 | 16 | 29 |
| Lower | 41 | 27 | 19 | 18 |
| Middle | 45 | 31 | 22 | 11 |
| Upper | 50 | 39 | 27 | 8 |

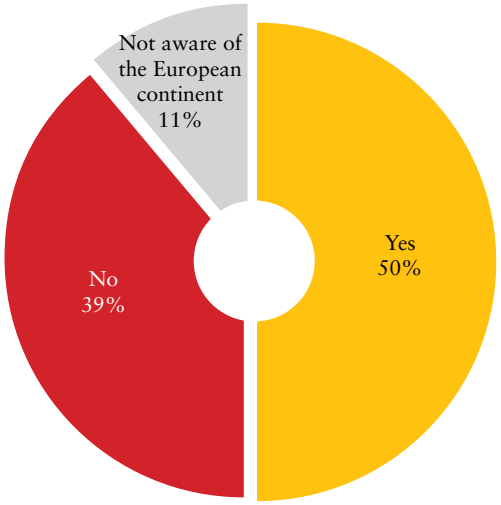
*Note: All figures are in percentages. Only the top three countries were analysed.*

*Question asked: Generally speaking, which country comes first to your mind when I say "Western Countries"? R could choose multiple responses.*

Occupation was another factor. Professionals in high-ranking and low-ranking positions demonstrated a strong awareness of Western countries (in this case – the USA, the UK, and Germany). Students, big business owners, and government employees followed closely behind. Conversely, awareness started to drop among small business owners and unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled workers. The lowest awareness was observed among housewives and those who stay at home (***Table 2.4***).

The findings indicate that many European countries form the core of what Indians perceive as the West. Europe appears and re-appears in the broader Indian imagination. This raises a pertinent question: Can Indians distinguish between what is Europe and what is not? Or, do they use Europe as a synonym for West. To assess this, they were asked to understand whether they knew of any European country. The findings revealed that about half of the respondents were aware of European countries, and conversely, nearly two-fifths were not. Interestingly, about one in ten (11%), a notable segment, stated that they were unaware of the European continent (***Figure 2.2***).

**Figure 2.2: Awareness About European Countries**




*Question asked: Do you know about any European country?*

Among those who claimed to be aware of European countries, the next step was to test their knowledge. These respondents were then asked to name

**Table 2.4: Knowledge of 'Western Countries' by Occupation**

| Occupation | Top three known Western countries | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | UK | Germany | Not aware of Western countries |
| Lower professionals | 49 | 37 | 26 | 5 |
| Higher professionals | 47 | 39 | 32 | 5 |
| Students | 46 | 35 | 28 | 7 |
| Big and medium business | 45 | 27 | 16 | 19 |
| Government employees | 43 | 31 | 19 | 11 |
| Small business | 42 | 29 | 16 | 20 |
| Unskilled workers | 41 | 26 | 18 | 28 |
| Skilled and semi-skilled workers | 38 | 24 | 20 | 19 |
| Housewives/stay-at-home | 38 | 24 | 13 | 30 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. Only the top three countries were analysed.*

*Question asked: Generally speaking, which country comes first to your mind when I say "Western Countries"? R could choose multiple responses.*

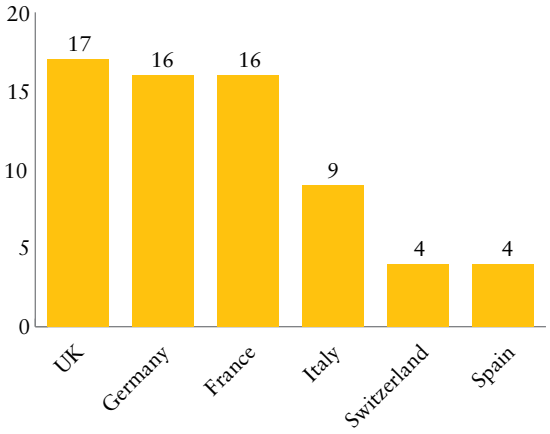
European countries. The data showed that not all responses were accurate. Over three quarters (77%) were able to correctly identify European countries, while the rest could not (***Table 2.5***). Among the countries correctly identified, five stood out as they were frequently mentioned. The United Kingdom, Germany, and France emerged as the top three, each named by nearly one in seven respondents (17%, 16% and 16%, respectively). Italy, Switzerland, and Spain were relatively less popular (***Figure 2.3***).

**Table 2.5: Awareness of European Countries**

| Awareness about which country is European and Non-European | (%) |
|---|---|
| Correctly identified a European country | 77 |
| Named a non-European country as European | 23 |

*Question asked: Can you name any three European countries?*

**Figure 2.3: Names of the European Countries Identified by The Indians**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest named other countries. Multiple analysis was used for getting the names of the countries.*
*Question asked: Can you name any three European countries?*

## 2.3. India Vs Europe: Infrastructure, Quality of Life and Technology

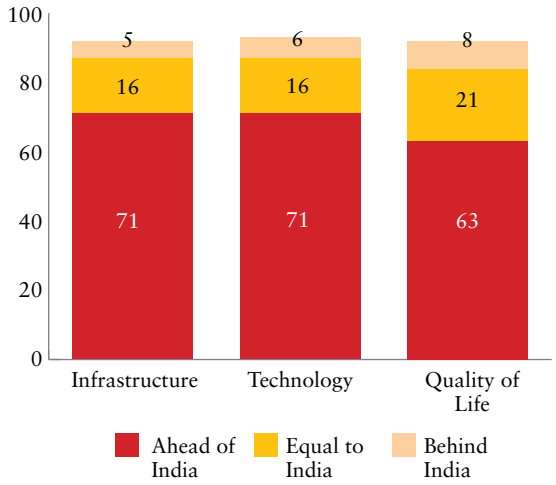
As explored in the earlier section, the West does have a geographical context and a concrete presence in the Indian imagination. This emanates specifically from well-established countries, primarily centred in Europe and North America, and also in select countries from Oceania. However, the idea of the West as a larger conceptual framework also represents technological, infrastructural and standard of living advancements. Modernity has long been associated with the Western world, as defined by advancements in all these parameters. This perception of Western superiority, especially in urban planning, transportation, healthcare, and education, dates back to the Industrial Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution and subsequent technological advancements in Europe and North America positioned the West as a leader in economic and infrastructural transformation. Studies have highlighted how Western nations developed interconnected systems of industry, infrastructure, and governance, which fundamentally altered societal functioning. Modernisation, however, has been a diverse process globally, with different regions interpreting and implementing it in ways shaped by their unique histories and priorities. While European advancements, such as urban centres with efficient transportation networks, comprehensive healthcare systems, and strong educational institutions, are often seen as exemplary (Rydin, 2012), these represent just one version of modernity. In India, admiration for aspects of Western-style development—particularly visible in the celebration of projects like improved roads and urban infrastructure—is evident. However, this does not necessarily translate into an embrace of European modernity as a cultural or philosophical ideal. Instead, the appeal often lies in tangible improvements to quality of life, such as better connectivity and public services, which are sometimes conflated with a broader notion of "modernity." This section explores how Indians perceive their country's progress in areas like infrastructure, technology, and quality of life, especially in relation to Western benchmarks.

The respondents were asked about which region—India or Europe—is ahead in infrastructure, technology, and quality of life. The findings revealed that nearly three-quarters of respondents (71%) believed that European countries had better infrastructure and technology than India. Only one in six respondents (16%) thought both places were equal, while a mere six percent or fewer believed that India was ahead of Europe. A similar trend emerged when respondents were asked about the quality of life. Approximately two-thirds (63%) of respondents opined that Europe offers a better standard of living. In contrast, one-fifth of respondents believed both regions were on par, and only about eight percent thought India surpassed Europe (***Figure 2.4***). The findings support a widespread perception that the West is a model of superior living conditions, especially regarding technological advancements and public infrastructure.

The analysis further highlighted that perceptions of Europe's superiority in infrastructure, technology, and quality of life are shaped by socio-demographic factors such as education, economic status, occupation, and exposure to international experiences. Those with higher levels of education and affluence were more likely to admire Europe's advancements, whereas less-educated and economically disadvan-

**Figure 2.4: Perception of Infrastructure, Technology, and Quality of Life: Europe Vs India**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Please tell me whether the European countries are ahead, equal or behind India in the following fields.*

taged respondents often lacked awareness or engagement with these comparisons. Occupational background further influenced these perceptions, with professionals and students showing a greater inclination to view Europe as advanced. Additionally, exposure to international experiences, such as having relatives who studied or worked abroad, or personal aspirations to study overseas, reinforced the belief in Europe's superiority, underscoring the role of global exposure in shaping these perspectives.

## 2.4. Culture Still Holds Sway Among Indians

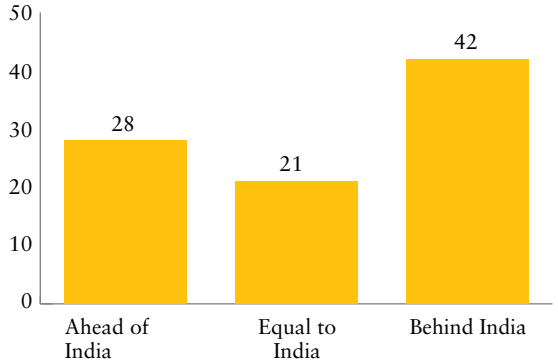
The perception of cultural superiority among Indians often serves as a counterbalance to their admiration for European advancements in infrastructure and technology. While Europe's progress in quality of life is widely acknowledged, many Indians assert the primacy of their own culture, celebrating its depth, longevity, and spiritual richness. This compensatory assertion highlights a dissonance: Indians may be in awe of Western development but often view their cultural heritage as a realm where they hold a unique and unmatched identity. Research highlights this dynamic, with Indian cultural values, such as familial bonds, religious devotion, and communal harmony, seen as distinct from the individualistic and secular orientation of European societies. For example, Jain and Joy (1997) highlight how cultural principles shape long-term decision-making in Indian households, where collective familial priorities take precedence over individualistic pursuits, offering a stark contrast to many Western norms.

This pride in cultural identity is further amplified by India's rising global soft power, seen in the international recognition of Bollywood, yoga, and spirituality as uniquely Indian exports. Ghoshal (2016) observes that even as Indians adopt aspects of Western lifestyles, such as modern consumer habits, their cultural identity often remains a guiding force, evident in the preservation of traditional festivals, cuisine, and art. However, this assertion of cultural superiority exists alongside a growing inclination toward Western norms, particularly among urban youth. The increasing adoption of Western clothing, entertainment, and values reflects a duality in Indian society, shaped by globalisation and exposure to Western media.

This duality underscores a complex negotiation between admiration for Western development and a compensatory assertion of India's cultural pride. While cultural richness and spiritual depth are sources of pride, they are often juxtaposed with the allure of Western lifestyles, revealing an ongoing tension in defining which culture—European or Indian—holds greater primacy among Indian respondents.

To assess this perception of cultural standing, respondents were asked whether they believed Indian culture was ahead of, behind, or equal to European culture. The findings revealed that a significant proportion, about two-fifths of the participants, felt that Indian culture was ahead. In contrast, nearly one-fourth (28%) said European countries were culturally superior, while approximately one-fifth viewed the two cultures as equal (***Figure 2.5***). Interestingly, while Indians often look to Western (European) nations as benchmarks for modernity and technological advancement, most believe that India surpasses Europe in cultural integrity.

**Figure 2.5: Comparing Indian and European Culture**

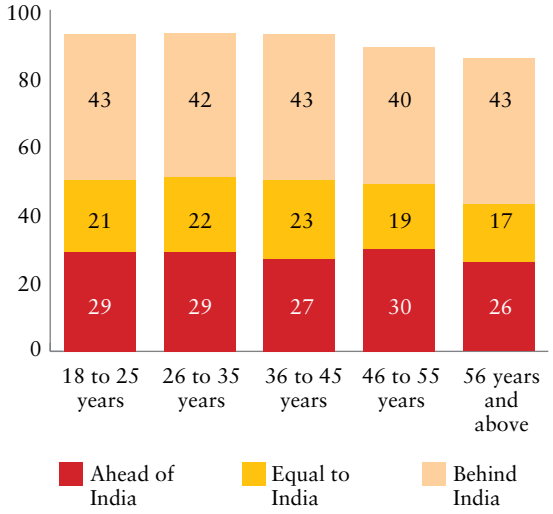



*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Please tell me whether the European countries are ahead, equal or behind India in the following in terms of culture.*

As discussed earlier, Indian youth are often attracted by Western culture and tend to imitate their life-

style. However, when we examined perceptions of culture across different age groups, we found minimal differences in opinion. There was a consensus among all age groups that Indian culture is superior and that India leads Europe in cultural excellence. However, a slightly higher proportion of youth believed that Europe and India hold equal cultural stature (***Figure 2.6***).

**Figure 2.6: Age Wise Comparison Between Indian and European Culture**

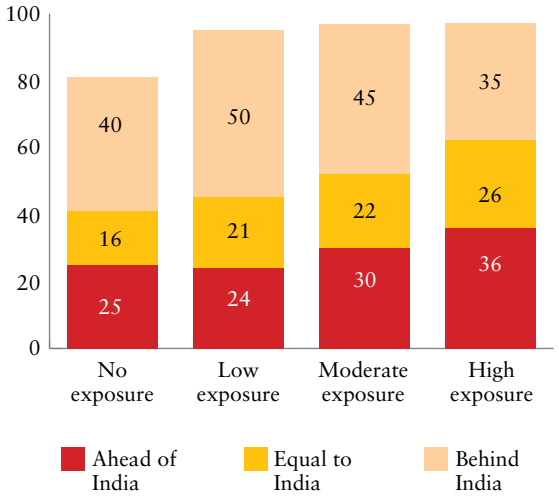



*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Please tell me whether the European countries are ahead, equal or behind India in the following in terms of culture.*

The data also suggest that people are connected to the Western world through various means, such as direct interaction with Westerners via social media platforms or exposure to Western culture through media and entertainment. It was found that individuals with greater exposure to the Western world through different channels are more likely to believe that Europe leads India in culture, or at least that both are equal. Conversely, people with lower exposure think India is ahead in cultures (***Figure 2.7***).

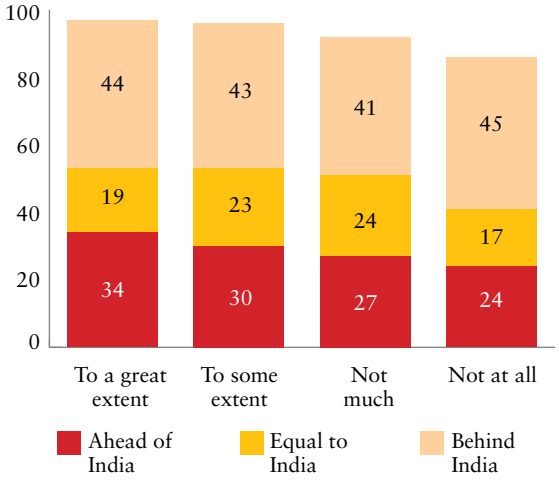
Perceptions of culture are also linked to people's aspirations. For instance, individuals aspiring to study abroad or sending their family members to study abroad are likely to believe that European culture is superior to Indian culture. Conversely, while the majority of respondents believed that India leads Europe in cultural excellence, there was not much variation in responses between those with high aspirations to study abroad and those without such aspirations (***Figure 2.8***).

**Figure 2.7: Exposure to The Western World and Perception of Cultural Superiority**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Please tell me whether the European countries are ahead, equal or behind India in the following in terms of culture*

**Figure 2.8: Aspiration to Study Abroad and Perception of Cultural Superiority**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Please tell me whether the European countries are ahead, equal or behind India in the following in terms of culture.*

## 2.5. Conclusion

The term "West" is broad and layered with multiple connotations, but in the Indian imagination, it carries a distinct geographical dimension. The findings suggest that Indians associate the West with Europe and North America (particularly the United States and Canada) and select countries from Oceania, such as Australia and New Zealand. The United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany emerge as the top three countries identified as part of the West. This perspective is especially prevalent among wealthier,

more educated respondents and those in younger age brackets. Conversely, as respondents move down the socio-economic spectrum regarding education, age, and class, they are less likely to identify these specific countries as Western. They are more inclined to leave these questions unanswered.

Europe occupies a central place in the Indian perception of the West, indicating its importance in what is understood as the West, at least in the Indian imagination. However, a critical question arises: can people distinguish between European and non-European countries? The data reveal that while nearly half of the respondents claim to be familiar with Western countries, a significant one in ten are unaware of the European continent altogether. Even among those who assert familiarity, only three-quarters can accurately name at least three European nations. Within this group, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France top the list of countries identified as European.

Beyond geography, the idea of the West in the Indian context symbolises technological advancements, better infrastructure, and a higher standard of living. These parameters reflect that modernity has long been associated with the Western world. But how do Indians view this modernity compared to developments in their own country? When asked to compare European and Indian infrastructure, quality of life, and technological progress, over two-thirds of respondents indicated that Europe is ahead. Nearly one-fifth believed the two are equal in these aspects, while only a tiny fraction, around one-tenth or less, felt that India surpasses Europe in these domains.

Those who perceive Europe as leading in infrastructure, technology, and quality of life are predominantly from wealthier and more educated backgrounds. These respondents are often professionals, students, or government employees. Interestingly, respondents with lower levels of education and income (economic class) were more likely to avoid responding to these questions, indicating a lack of awareness about the comparison. Additionally, respondents with family members who had travelled abroad for education or employment were likelier to believe that Europe excels in these parameters in comparison to India.

However, a contrasting narrative emerges when it comes to culture. Over two-fifths of respondents believe that India surpasses Europe in cultural richness. At the same time, another quarter feel Europe is ahead, and a corresponding proportion view both as equal in artistic terms. Among those who think Indian culture is superior, a clear pattern was observed: respondents with higher education levels and more wealth were more likely to hold this view. Individuals whose family members had studied or worked abroad were also more inclined to believe that Indian culture is ahead of European culture.

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3

# What Constitutes ‘Western Culture’? – A Perspective from India

CHAPTER 3

# What Constitutes 'Western Culture'? – A Perspective from India

## 3.1. Introduction

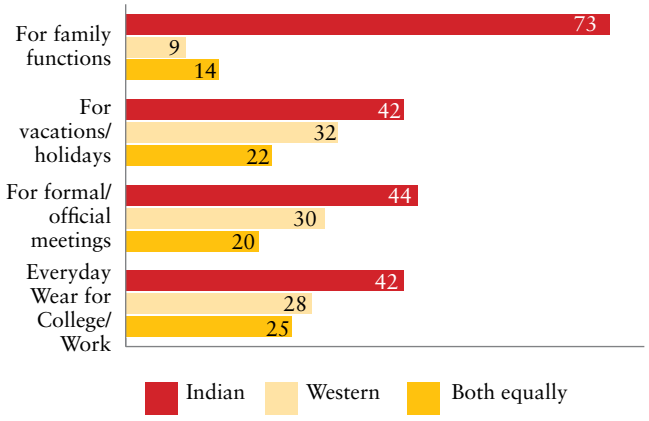
Global cultural exchange has intensified recently, leading to significant interactions between Western and non-Western cultures. In India, the influx of Western cultural elements — from fashion, food, literature, and media to social norms and values — has led to complex shifts in popular perceptions and individual preferences. While Western culture is often associated with modernity, freedom, and economic progress, it can also evoke concerns about the erosion of traditional values. This chapter delves into survey findings to explore the nuances in Indians' perceptions of Western culture, also examining how factors such as age, gender, education, and socio-economic status shape these attitudes.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section explores Indians' preferences for Western and traditional clothing, food, and literature. The following section investigates Indians' exposure to Western media, detailing the types of engagement with Western entertainment and their perceptions of its influence on Indian society. The third section explores how Western norms impact Indians' social values, especially concerning cleanliness, gender roles, and relationships. In the fourth section, the chapter examines family practices and emotional connectedness, contrasting Indian and Western values regarding familial bonds. The last section discusses the broader debate surrounding cultural preservation versus openness to foreign influences among Indians.

## 3.2. Indian or Western? – Preferences of Indians in Clothing, Food, and Literature

The survey responses indicate a strong preference for Indian clothing, especially in settings associated with tradition and family, where almost three-quarters (73%) of the respondents chose Indian outfits for family functions, compared to just nine percent who preferred Western attire (***Figure 3.1***). Fourteen percent also reported being comfortable with both styles equally. The preference for Western clothing increases for casual and less traditional settings like vacations, official meetings, or everyday wear. However, it remains lower than the preference for Indian attire. For vacations, more than two in every five (42%) respondents said they prefer Indian clothing, while nearly one-third (32%) chose Western outfits. This shift likely reflects the influence of global fashion trends, as vacations are seen as an opportunity for personal expression and relaxation. Regarding formal meetings, 44 percent still favoured Indian attire, showing a traditional inclination, but nearly one in three (30%) respondents preferred Western outfits. Everyday wear for work or college displayed similar trends, with 42 percent favouring Indian attire, while more than a quarter (28%) preferred Western clothing. The preference for Indian clothing in family-centred events suggests that traditional attire continues to be associated with culture, which is deeply valued in the Indian social fabric.

**Figure 3.1: Preference for Clothing for Various Occasions – Indian Vs. Western**




*Note: All figures in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?*

Clothing preferences vary significantly by age, with older Indians favouring traditional attire more than younger ones. For family functions, nearly four in five (79%) of those aged 56 and above choose Indian outfits, compared to two in three (66%) of those aged 25 or younger (***Table 3.1***). This preference increases sharply for vacations (61% vs. 29%) and everyday

**Table 3.1: Preference for Clothing for Various Occasions by Age**

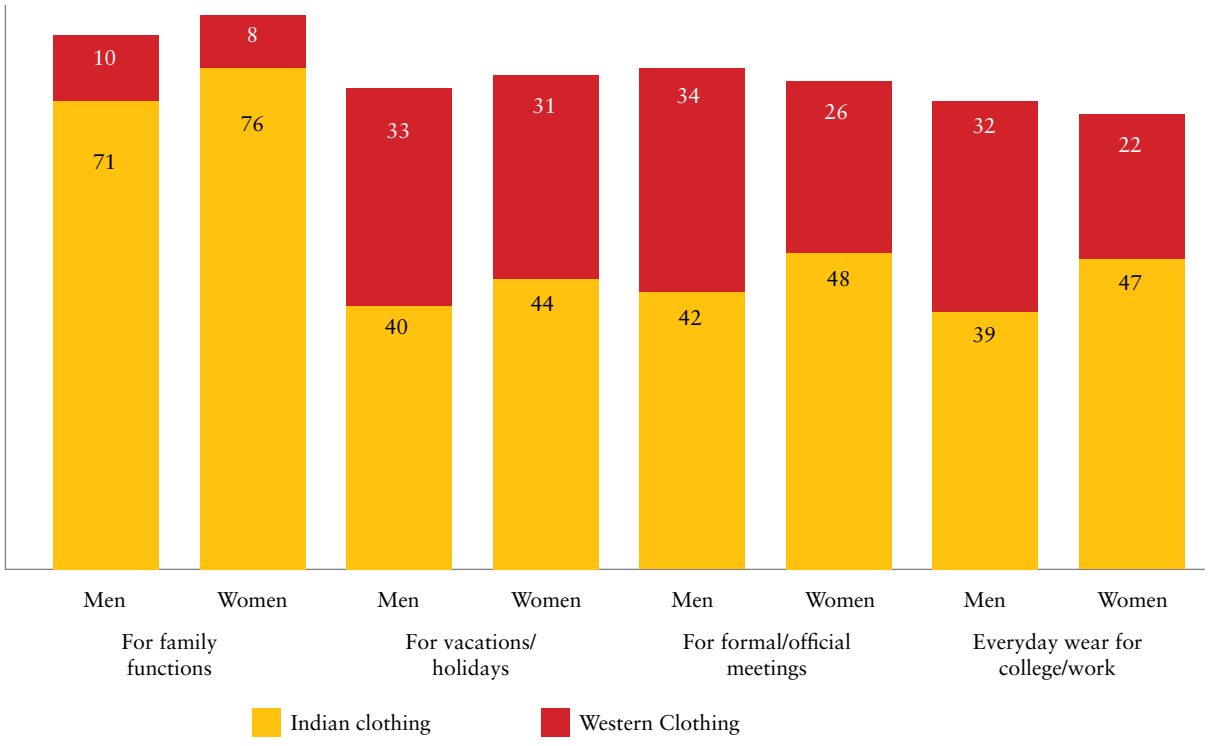
| Age groups | Preference for Indian clothing for various occasions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | For family functions | For vacations/holidays | For formal/official meetings | Everyday wear for college/work |
| 18 to 25 years | 66 | 29 | 32 | 29 |
| 26 to 35 years | 73 | 35 | 40 | 37 |
| 36 to 45 years | 77 | 47 | 50 | 50 |
| 46 to 55 years | 78 | 54 | 54 | 54 |
| 56 years and above | 79 | 61 | 60 | 58 |
| | Preference for Western clothing for various occasions | | | |
| | For family functions | For vacations/holidays | For formal/official meetings | Everyday wear for college/work |
| 18 to 25 years | 13 | 42 | 39 | 36 |
| 26 to 35 years | 9 | 36 | 35 | 33 |
| 36 to 45 years | 8 | 29 | 27 | 23 |
| 46 to 55 years | 6 | 23 | 22 | 20 |
| 56 years and above | 5 | 16 | 17 | 15 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either preferred both outfits equally or did not respond.*
*Question asked: What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?*

work-wear (58% vs. 29%). Younger individuals, however, prefer Western styles for vacations, office meetings, and casual wear, associating them with modernity and freedom, while older generations adhere more to traditional norms. Family functions remain an exception, as Indian clothing remains popular across all ages.

Gender significantly shapes clothing preferences, with women favouring Indian attire more than men. For family functions, over three-quarters (76%) of women prefer Indian outfits compared to 71 percent of men (***Figure 3.2***). Women also display a stronger preference for Indian styles on vacations, in formal meetings, and for everyday wear. In contrast, men

**Figure 3.2: Preference for Clothing for Various Occasions by Gender**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either preferred both outfits equally or did not respond.*
*Question asked: What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?*

**Table 3.2: Preference for Clothing for Various Occasions by Level of Educational Attainment**

| Level of educational attainment | Preference For Indian Clothing for Various Occasions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | For Family Functions | For Vacations/ Holidays | For Formal/Official Meetings | Everyday Wear for College/Work |
| Non-literate | 84 | 77 | 72 | 69 |
| Some schooling | 83 | 66 | 67 | 63 |
| Intermediate to undergraduate | 73 | 48 | 48 | 48 |
| College and above | 70 | 32 | 36 | 34 |
| | Preference For Western Clothing for Various Occasions | | | |
| | For Family Functions | For Vacations/ Holidays | For Formal/Official Meetings | Everyday Wear for College/Work |
| Non-literate | 2 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| Some schooling | 4 | 14 | 12 | 13 |
| Intermediate to undergraduate | 9 | 26 | 24 | 23 |
| College and above | 11 | 40 | 39 | 34 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either preferred both outfits equally or did not respond.*
*Question asked: What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?*

are more inclined toward Western clothing, particularly for everyday wear (32% vs. 22%) and official meetings (34% vs. 26%). These trends reflect societal norms, where men often face professional expectations to adopt Western attire, while women adhere to traditional dress codes. This disparity may stem from the internalisation of Western wear, such as trousers and shirts, as routine attire for men, contrasting with traditional options like *kurta-pyjama*.

Clothing preferences vary by education, with highly educated individuals favouring Western attire, especially for vacations (40% vs. 4%) and formal meetings (39% vs. 4%). While Indian outfits dominate family functions (84% among non-literate vs. 70% among college-educated individuals), education fosters openness to Western styles, reflecting increased global exposure and changing cultural perceptions (***Table 3.2***).

Economic class influences clothing preferences, with wealthier respondents showing a stronger inclination towards Western attire. For vacations, two-fifths (43%) of those from the upper economic class prefer Western wear, compared to just one-fifth (22%) of the poor (***Table 3.3***). Similarly, upper-class respondents favour Western styles more for professional settings (39% vs. 20%) and everyday wear (36% vs. 19%). This highlights how economic affluence fosters greater acceptance of Western fashion.

**Table 3.3: Preference for Clothing for Various Occasions by Economic Class**

| Economic class | Preference for Indian clothing for various occasions | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | For family functions | For vacations/holidays | For formal/official meetings | Everyday wear for college/work |
| Poor | 73 | 50 | 52 | 48 |
| Lower | 73 | 45 | 46 | 46 |
| Middle | 74 | 40 | 43 | 41 |
| Upper | 73 | 33 | 37 | 35 |
| | Preference for Western clothing for various occasions | | | |
| | For family functions | For vacations/holidays | For formal/official meetings | Everyday wear for college/work |
| Poor | 6 | 22 | 20 | 19 |
| Lower | 8 | 28 | 28 | 25 |
| Middle | 10 | 35 | 33 | 30 |
| Upper | 11 | 43 | 39 | 36 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either preferred both outfits equally or did not respond.*
*Question asked: What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?*

### Table 3.4: Preference for Clothing for Various Occasions by Occupation

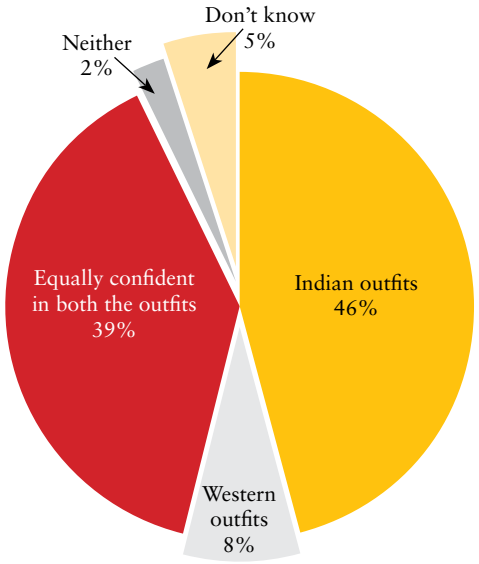
| Occupation | Preference for Indian clothing | Preference for Western clothing |
|---|---|---|
| | For family functions | |
| Housewives/stay-at-home | 81 | 5 |
| Government employees | 77 | 10 |
| Higher professionals | 72 | 11 |
| Lower professionals | 76 | 11 |
| Students | 64 | 13 |
| | For vacations/holidays | |
| Housewives/stay-at-home | 59 | 19 |
| Government employees | 46 | 32 |
| Higher professionals | 29 | 44 |
| Lower professionals | 34 | 43 |
| Students | 25 | 44 |
| | For formal/official meetings | |
| Government employees | 50 | 31 |
| Higher professionals | 33 | 44 |
| Lower professionals | 39 | 41 |
| Students | 30 | 41 |
| | Everyday wear for college/work | |
| Government employees | 48 | 28 |
| Big and medium business | 40 | 31 |
| Small business | 45 | 24 |
| Higher professionals | 33 | 38 |
| Lower professionals | 36 | 38 |
| Students | 26 | 37 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either preferred both outfits equally or did not respond.*
*Question asked: What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?*

Occupation significantly shapes clothing preferences, with housewives, and those who stay at homes and government employees favouring Indian attire (***Table 3.4***). Professionals and students tend to prefer Western clothing for vacations, formal meetings, and everyday wear. Exposure to diverse social and professional environments influences clothing choices.

When asked about clothing confidence, nearly half (46%) of the respondents reported feeling more confident in Indian attire, compared to only eight percent who expressed confidence in Western styles. Two in five (39%) people feel equally confident in both (***Figure 3.3***). Among younger respondents, over half (52%) were comfortable with both styles, while two-thirds of older respondents (aged 56 or above) favoured Indian clothing. Confidence in Western attire is higher among younger people (13%) than older individuals (3%). From a gender perspective, women (51%) feel more confident in Indian attire than men (42%). Education and economic status also influence confidence, with non-literate respondents (83%) favouring Indian clothes over college-educated individuals (35%), while economically affluent respondents prefer Western clothing more than the poor (***Table 3.5***).

### Figure 3.3: Perceived Confidence in Different Attires




*Question asked: Do you feel more confident wearing Western or Indian outfits?*

### Table 3.5: Confidence in Indian Vs. Western Clothing Across Various Demographics

| | Feeling more confident wearing…. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Indian | Western | Equally confident in both the outfits |
| **Age groups** | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 31 | 13 | 52 |
| 26 to 35 years | 39 | 11 | 46 |
| 36 to 45 years | 53 | 6 | 34 |
| 46 to 55 years | 61 | 4 | 28 |
| 56 years and above | 66 | 3 | 21 |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Men | 42 | 10 | 42 |
| Women | 51 | 7 | 36 |

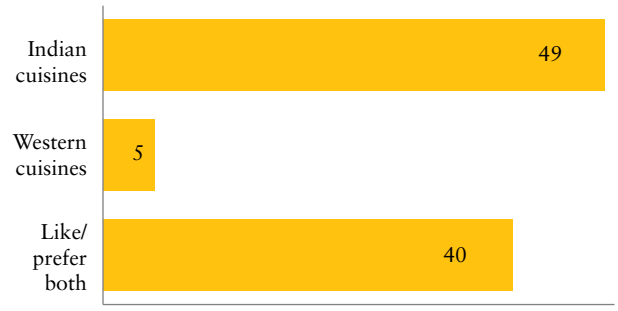
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | |
| Non-literate | 83 | 1 | 7 |
| Some schooling | 73 | 2 | 16 |
| Intermediate to undergraduate | 53 | 6 | 32 |
| College and above | 35 | 11 | 49 |
| **Economic class** | | | |
| Poor | 56 | 5 | 28 |
| Lower | 48 | 8 | 36 |
| Middle | 43 | 9 | 44 |
| Upper | 38 | 12 | 48 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond or said "neither."*

*Question asked: Do you feel more confident wearing Western or Indian outfits?*

Regarding dining preferences, Indian cuisine remains dominant, with nearly half (49%) of the respondents preferring Indian food when dining out, while only five percent exclusively favoured Western cuisines (***Figure 3.4***). However, two in five also expressed an equal enjoyment of both cuisines, reflecting a gradual shift towards accepting Western food options alongside traditional Indian food.

**Figure 3.4: Preference for Food: Indian or Western?**

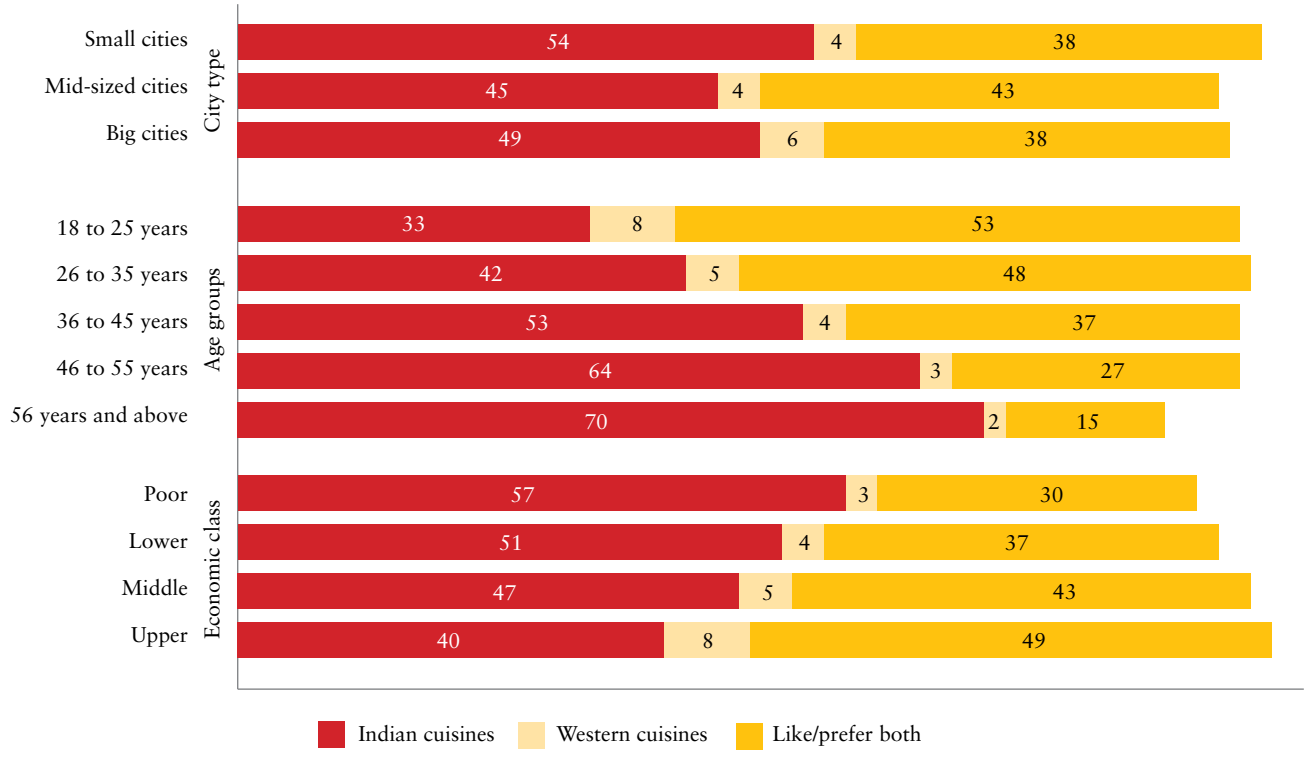



*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either did not respond or said "neither" (1%), preferred "other" cuisines (1%), or said that they don't go out for dining (2%).*

*Question asked: When dining out, do you prefer to eat Indian cuisines (like dal, sabzi, roti, south Indian) or Western cuisines (pizza, pasta, croissants, pancakes)?*

Food preferences show a clear distinction between those who prefer exclusively Indian cuisine and those who enjoy both Indian and Western options, with demographic characteristics shaping these tendencies. Among those who prefer Indian cuisine exclusively, the trend is more prominent in older age groups. For instance, seven in ten respondents aged 56 and above and, nearly two in three (64%) in the age bracket of

**Figure 3.5: Dining Preference Across Various Demographics**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either did not respond or said "neither" or preferred "other" cuisines or told that they don't go out for dining.*

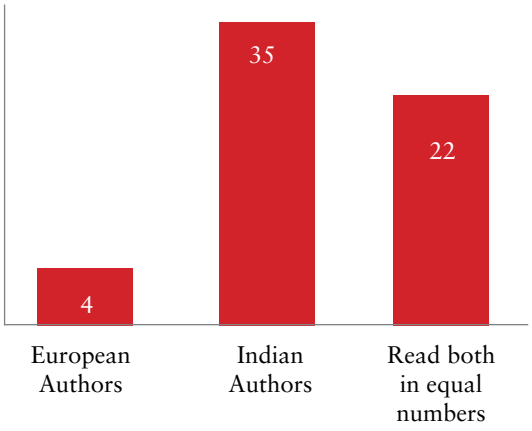
*Question asked: When dining out, do you prefer to eat Indian cuisines (like dal, sabzi, roti, south Indian) or Western cuisines (pizza, pasta, croissants, pancakes)?*

46-55 years prefer Indian food. This group exhibits a closer attachment to traditional dietary habits, with a strong inclination towards Indian cuisine. In contrast, younger respondents (aged 18-25 years) exhibit a greater shift toward both Indian and Western food; among younger respondents, over half (53%) stated that they enjoy both Indian and Western food, reflecting a more eclectic taste.

The preference for both Indian and Western cuisine is more common in larger cities, where dining options are diverse. In both big cities and small cities, nearly two-fifths (38%) enjoy both cuisines. Economic class plays a key role in shaping these preferences. Among economically affluent groups, there is a higher tendency to enjoy both cuisines. For instance, a little less than half (49%) of upper-class respondents enjoy both, compared to only three in ten of those from poorer backgrounds. However, poor respondents show a stronger preference for Indian cuisine (57%) (***Figure 3.5***).

Literary preferences reveal a strong inclination toward Indian authors, with more than a third (35%) of the respondents reading more works by Indian writers. In comparison, only four percent reported reading more works by European authors (***Figure 3.6***). This pattern suggests that Indian literature remains more accessible and relatable for most readers. A notable 22 percent had read works by Indian and European authors equally, indicating some openness to Western literature, which might gradually increase.

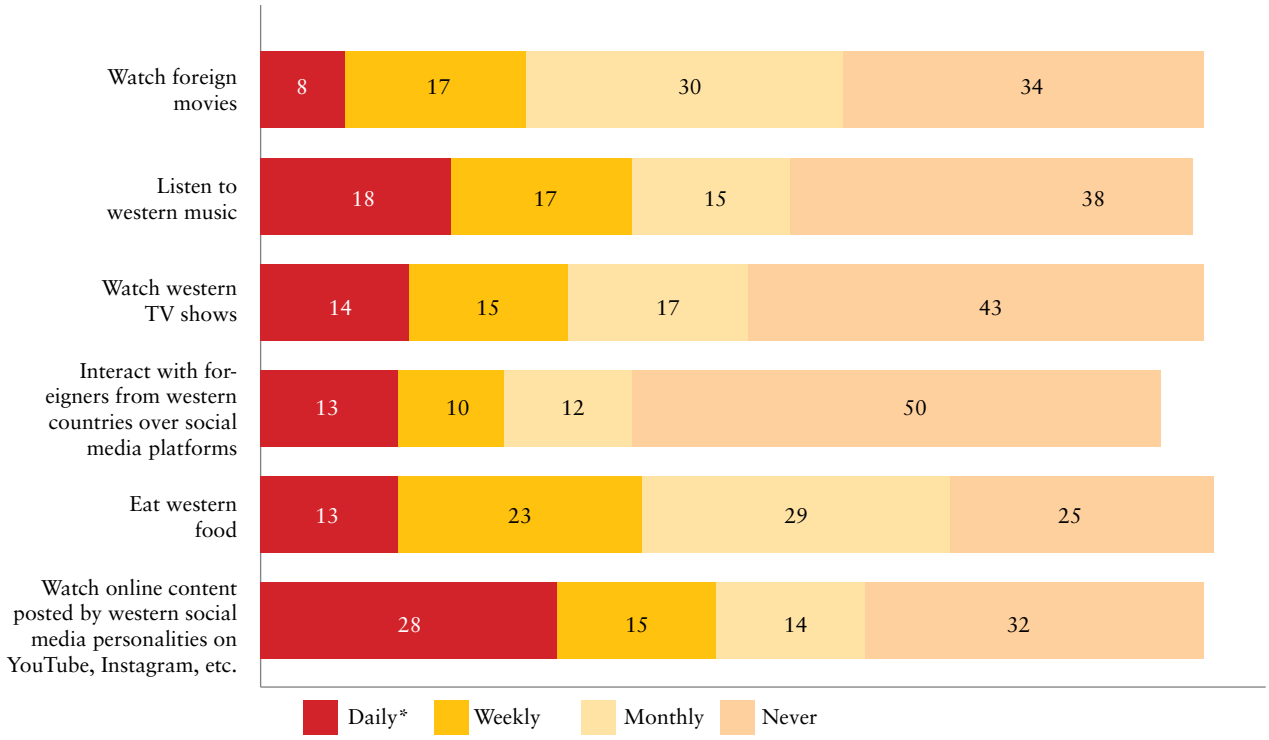
**Figure 3.6: Preference for Literary Works**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest of the respondents either did not respond or said "neither" (14%), or said that they were not interested in reading (16%).*

*Question asked: Have you read more works of fiction, like novels, short stories, etc., written by authors belonging to European countries or Indian authors?*

**Figure 3.7: Engagement with Western Media Among Indians Across Various Platforms**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond. *Includes those who said they do these activities multiple times a day.*

*Question asked: How often do you do these things – Monthly, weekly, daily, multiple times a day? – a) Watch foreign movies, b) Listen to Western music, c) Watch Western TV shows, d) Interact with foreigners from Western countries over social media platforms, e) Eat Western food, f) Watch online content posted by Western social media personalities on YouTube, Instagram, etc.*

## 3.3. Popularity of Western Media – Exposure and Beliefs Among Indians

Engagement with Western media varies across platforms, with 30 percent of the respondents watching foreign movies at least once a month, while 17 percent do so weekly (***Figure 3.7***). Listening to Western music is less frequent, with only 15 percent doing so at least monthly. Watching Western TV shows and online content from Western social media personalities is more popular, with 17 and 14 percent of the respondents engaging with these media types at least monthly. However, interacting with foreigners from Western countries over social media platforms is the least popular way of engaging with Western media among Indians, with only 12 percent doing so at least once a month and half a proportion not doing so. This data suggests that visual media, especially movies and social media, is a primary channel for exposure to Western culture in India, likely due to its widespread accessibility through streaming platforms and social networks.

**Table 3.6: Exposure to Western Media and Social Media Across Various Demographics**

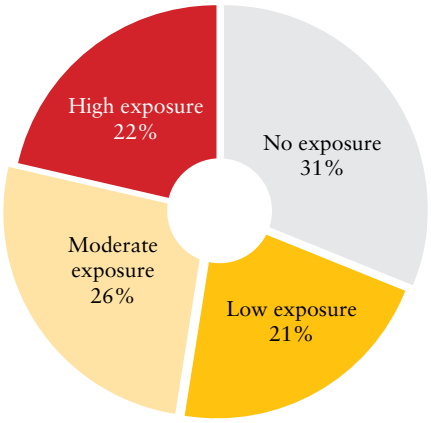
| | Exposure to the Western world through different platforms | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No exposure | Low exposure | Moderate exposure | High exposure |
| **City type** | | | | |
| Small cities | 27 | 24 | 28 | 21 |
| Mid-sized cities | 33 | 21 | 23 | 23 |
| Big cities | 31 | 21 | 27 | 21 |
| **Age groups** | | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 15 | 18 | 36 | 31 |
| 26 to 35 years | 23 | 24 | 30 | 23 |
| 36 to 45 years | 35 | 25 | 23 | 17 |
| 46 to 55 years | 45 | 23 | 18 | 14 |
| 56 years and above | 62 | 17 | 11 | 10 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | | |
| Non-literate | 91 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Some schooling | 62 | 18 | 10 | 10 |
| Intermediate to undergraduate | 41 | 22 | 19 | 18 |
| College and above | 18 | 23 | 33 | 26 |
| **Economic class** | | | | |
| Poor | 50 | 18 | 18 | 14 |
| Lower | 32 | 21 | 25 | 22 |
| Middle | 25 | 22 | 29 | 24 |
| Upper | 20 | 24 | 31 | 25 |
| **Occupation** | | | | |
| Students | 11 | 19 | 37 | 33 |
| Government employees | 31 | 26 | 19 | 24 |
| Higher professionals | 12 | 24 | 42 | 22 |
| Lower professionals | 18 | 23 | 35 | 24 |
| Big and medium business | 37 | 26 | 22 | 15 |
| Small business | 42 | 22 | 19 | 17 |
| Skilled and semi-skilled workers | 42 | 22 | 19 | 17 |
| Unskilled workers | 49 | 16 | 19 | 16 |
| Housewives/stay-at-home | 51 | 22 | 13 | 14 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*

*Question asked: How often do you do these things – Monthly, weekly, daily, multiple times a day? – a) Watch foreign movies, b) Listen to Western music, c) Watch Western TV shows, d) Interact with foreigners from Western countries over social media platforms, f) Watch online content posted by Western social media personalities on YouTube, Instagram, etc.*

Upon creating an index of how Indians engage with Western media, the survey found that at least one in every five (22%) Indians reported high exposure to Western media. In comparison, a more significant proportion (31%) reported no exposure (***Figure 3.8***). Moderate exposure was observed among more than a quarter (26%) of respondents, while 21 percent reported low exposure. This range reflects the diverse accessibility and acceptance of Western media across different demographic groups.

**Figure 3.8: Exposure to Western Media and Social Media**

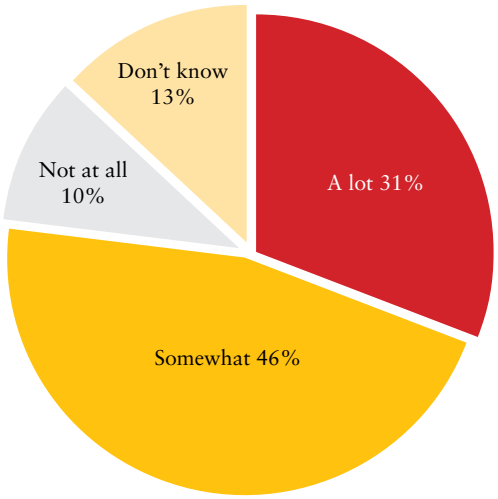



*Question asked: How often do you do these things – Monthly, weekly, daily, multiple times a day? – a) Watch foreign movies, b) Listen to Western music, c) Watch Western TV shows, d) Interact with foreigners from Western countries over social media platforms, f) Watch online content posted by Western social media personalities on YouTube, Instagram, etc.*

Contrary to the assumption that larger cities have higher exposure to Western media, the survey reveals that mid-sized cities (23%) exhibit slightly greater engagement with Western media than big cities (21%) (***Table 3.6***). Younger respondents, especially those aged 25 and below (31%), show the highest exposure to Western media, while older respondents (aged 56 and above) exhibit minimal exposure. This generational divide is driven by increased access to digital streaming services and social media among younger people. Education also plays a role, with college-educated individuals (26%) having greater exposure, compared to just three percent of non-literate individuals. Economic affluence further influences media consumption, with a quarter of upper-class respondents reporting high exposure, versus only 14 percent of the poor. Occupational background impacts exposure, with students and professionals showing the highest engagement, while housewives, those who stay at home, and unskilled workers report the least exposure (***Table 3.6***).

When asked about the influence of Western media on Indian culture, close to one in every three of the respondents (31%) believe it has great influence, while nearly half (46%) feel it has moderate impact (***Figure 3.9***). Only 10 percent believe Western media has no influence at all. This consensus suggests that Western media is widely perceived as influential in shaping India's social values, lifestyles, and fashion. Data also suggest that with more exposure to Western media, people are more likely to perceive that Western media has a significant influence on Indian culture. Among those with no exposure, only one in five (19%) think it influences a lot, and the figure doubled among those who have high exposure (***Table 3.7***).

**Figure 3.9: Perception of Influence of Western Media on Indian Culture**




*Question asked: To what extent do you believe that Western media influences Indian culture – a lot, somewhat, or not at all?*

Perception of Western media's influence varies by age and economic status. Among younger respondents (aged 18-25 years old), over one-third (35%) believe Western media impacts Indian culture significantly, compared to only one in four of those aged 56 and above. Comparatively, respondents from upper economic class perceive a stronger influence than those from poorer backgrounds (35% vs. 23% respectively) (***Table 3.7***).

**Table 3.7: Perception of Western Media Influence on Indian Culture among Various Segments**

| | Western media influences Indian culture | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | A lot | Somewhat | Not at all |
| **Age groups** | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 35 | 47 | 8 |
| 26 to 35 years | 31 | 50 | 9 |
| 36 to 45 years | 29 | 47 | 11 |
| 46 to 55 years | 30 | 42 | 11 |
| 56 years and above | 25 | 36 | 12 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Economic class** | | | |
| Poor | 23 | 41 | 10 |
| Lower | 29 | 46 | 12 |
| Middle | 34 | 45 | 9 |
| Upper | 35 | 50 | 7 |
| **Exposure to the Western world through different platforms** | | | |
| No | 19 | 37 | 13 |
| Low | 29 | 52 | 10 |
| Moderate | 38 | 50 | 7 |
| High | 40 | 46 | 9 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: To what extent do you believe that Western media influences Indian culture – a lot, somewhat, or not at all?*

## 3.4. Indians' Opinions About Western Culture

The survey reveals varying degrees of influence from Western culture on respondents' social values. Over half (53%) report that Western culture has significantly shaped their views on cleanliness, indicating a notable Western impact on lifestyle habits (***Figure 3.10***). Attitudes towards gender roles also show substantial Western influence, with 44 percent stating that Western norms have significantly impacted their beliefs about the roles of men and women in society. A smaller yet notable percentage (36%) of the respondents report Western influence on their views regarding the behaviour of unmarried couples. This suggests that Western culture is perceived as a force for change in societal behaviour, particularly in relation to cleanliness and gender roles, where modern values may differ markedly from traditional norms.

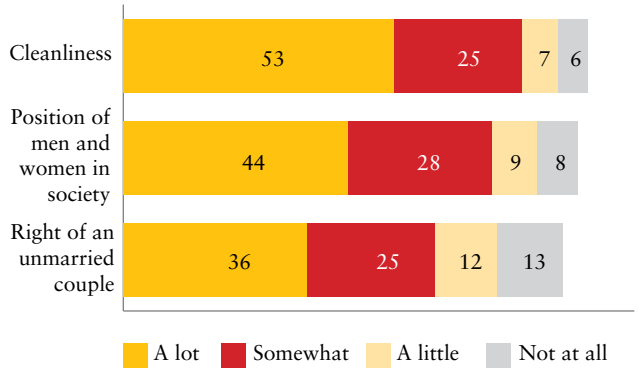
Western influence on social values varies by city size. More than half of the respondents in all types of cities feel their views on cleanliness have been heavily influenced by Western culture (***Table 3.8***). For gender roles, 42 percent of respondents from big cities report Western influence, while smaller towns show a slightly higher influence at 47 percent. Attitude towards unmarried couples is almost similar across all types of cities with nearly one-third (36%) reporting significant Western impact. This trend suggests that urbanisation and exposure to diverse social environments

**Table 3.8: Opinion on How Western Culture Influences Indians in Different Spheres Across Demographics**

| | Influenced by Western culture concerning… | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Cleanliness | Men's and women's position in society | Rights of unmarried couples |
| **City type** | | | |
| Small cities | 52 | 47 | 36 |
| Mid-sized cities | 54 | 46 | 36 |
| Big cities | 54 | 42 | 36 |
| **Age groups** | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 59 | 51 | 42 |
| 26 to 35 years | 58 | 48 | 39 |
| 36 to 45 years | 50 | 42 | 34 |
| 46 to 55 years | 48 | 39 | 30 |
| 56 years and above | 44 | 31 | 25 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | |
| Non-literate | 24 | 17 | 17 |
| Some schooling | 43 | 33 | 28 |
| Intermediate to undergraduate | 47 | 35 | 29 |
| College and above | 59 | 51 | 41 |
| **Economic class** | | | |
| Poor | 44 | 33 | 27 |
| Lower | 50 | 43 | 34 |
| Middle | 59 | 49 | 39 |
| Upper | 58 | 51 | 41 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The figures in the above table show responses to the "a lot" answer category.*
*Question asked: How far has Western culture influenced you? a) What are your views about cleanliness? b) What position do men and women have in society? c) What can an unmarried couple do or cannot do?*

**Figure 3.10: Opinion on How Western Culture Influences Indians in Different Spheres**



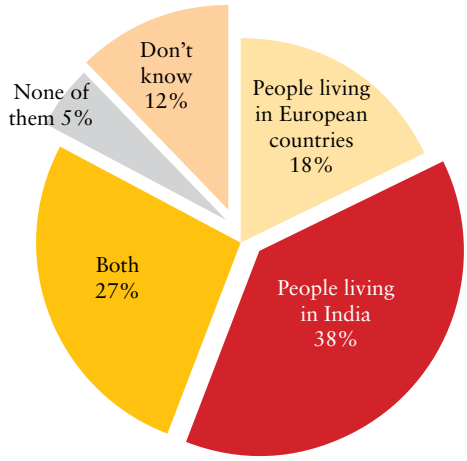

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: How far has Western culture influenced you concerning – a) your views about cleanliness, b) the position that men and women should have in society, and c) what an unmarried couple can or cannot do?*

may encourage greater adoption of Western values, especially concerning lifestyle and personal freedom.

The age group also plays a significant role in shaping Indians' perceptions of social values, with younger respondents more likely to report Western influence across all categories. Among those aged 18-25 years, three in five (59%) feel Western culture heavily influences their views on cleanliness, compared to only 44 percent among those aged 56 years and above (***Table 3.8***). Similarly, younger respondents report a higher influence regarding gender roles (51% among those aged 25 years and below vs. 31% among those aged 56 years and above) and views on unmarried couples (42% among those aged 25 years and below vs. 25% among those aged 56 years and above). These age-based differences indicate that younger Indians, exposed to globalised values through media and social platforms, are more receptive to Western perspectives on societal norms, whereas older generations retain more traditional views.

The level of educational attainment reveals a strong correlation with Western influence. Among college-educated respondents, three in five (59%) report significant Western influence on their views of cleanliness, while this figure drops to 24 percent among non-literate individuals (***Table 3.8***). Education also impacts opinions on gender roles, with 51 percent of college graduates acknowledging Western influence compared to only 17 percent among non-literates. Regarding unmarried couples, 41 percent of college graduates report Western influence, contrasting sharply with 17 percent of non-literate respondents. These findings suggest that higher educational attainment, which often includes exposure to diverse ideologies, encourages openness to Western cultural elements.

**Figure 3.11: Who Would Be More Helpful in A Foreign Land: An Indian or A European?**




*Question asked: If someone encounters a problem like losing their phone or struggling with language barriers in a new city, who do you think would be more helpful – people living in European countries or India?*

For economic class, wealthier and middle class respondents show more significant influence from Western culture. Among the upper and middle classes, nearly three in five (58% and 59% respectively) respondents report a significant impact on cleanliness standards, compared to 44 percent of respondents from poorer backgrounds (***Table 3.8***). This trend is similar for gender roles and attitudes towards unmarried couples. This pattern implies that economic affluence and greater exposure to Western lifestyles through travel and media foster openness to Western cultural norms.

Respondents were asked to compare the helpfulness of people in European countries to those in India. Close to two in five (38%) respondents feel that Indians are more helpful, while only 18 percent believe that Europeans are more helpful, and a little more than a quarter (27%) see both as equally helpful (***Figure 3.11***). This perception of greater helpfulness in Indian society could stem from cultural norms emphasising hospitality and interpersonal support. However, those who perceive equal helpfulness may have had experiences with diverse social interactions or been exposed to global media portraying similar values in Western culture.

## 3.5. Views of Indians Regarding Family Practices and Emotional Connectedness

The survey shows a strong preference for the traditional Indian family structure, with an overwhelming proportion of the respondents (67%) favouring the practice of children and parents living together (***Figure 3.12***). Only 11 percent support the Western norm

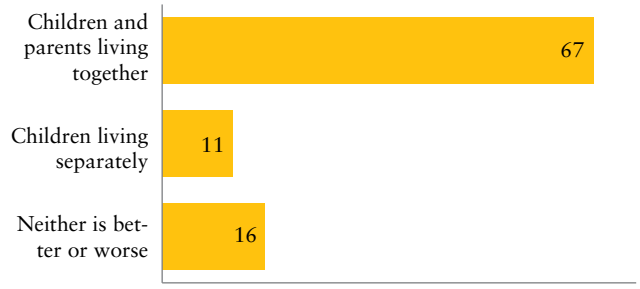
**Table 3.9: Opinion on Family Structure Across Demographics**

| | According To You, Which Is a Better Practice? | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Children and Parents Living Together | Children Living Separately | Neither Is Better or Worse |
| **Age groups** | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 62 | 14 | 19 |
| 26 to 35 years | 68 | 11 | 17 |
| 36 to 45 years | 69 | 10 | 15 |
| 46 to 55 years | 68 | 12 | 13 |
| 56 years and above | 69 | 8 | 10 |
| **Occupation** | | | |
| Housewives/stay at home | 72 | 8 | 11 |
| Big and medium business | 67 | 7 | 12 |
| Small business | 71 | 7 | 15 |
| Skilled and semi-skilled workers | 65 | 17 | 13 |
| Unskilled workers | 69 | 9 | 11 |
| Government employees | 67 | 12 | 19 |
| Higher professionals | 60 | 16 | 23 |
| Lower professionals | 69 | 13 | 16 |
| Students | 63 | 14 | 20 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: In most Western societies, children start living separately from their parents after adulthood, while in India, many children and parents often continue to live together even after adulthood. In your opinion, which is a better practice?*

of children living separately post-adulthood, and 16 percent believe neither practice is inherently better. This preference reflects the deep-rooted cultural values placed on family unity in Indian society, where multigenerational households are seen as sources of support and connection. However, a small but noteworthy proportion (11%) favouring separate living arrangements may indicate an emerging acceptance of individualism among specific demographics.

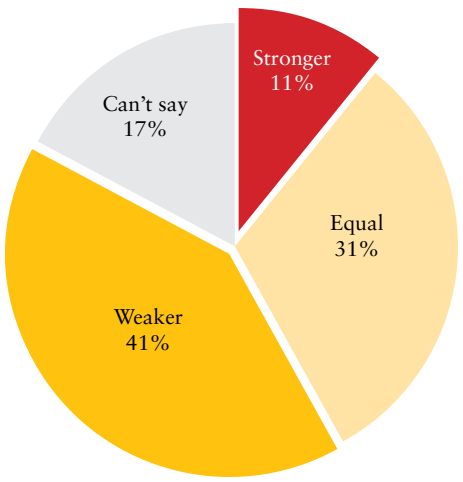
**Figure 3.12: Opinion on Family Structure**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: In most Western societies, children start living separately from their parents after adulthood; in India, many children and parents often continue living together even after adulthood. In your opinion, which is a better practice?*

While support for children and parents living together is strong across all age categories, it slightly

**Figure 3.13: How Emotionally Connected are Europeans to Their Families?**




*Question asked: Do you think people in European countries have a more substantial, equal, or weaker emotional attachment to their family members than people in India?*

increases with age. Among respondents aged 25 years and below, 62 percent favour cohabitation, while 14 percent support separate living arrangements (***Table 3.9***). In contrast, 69 percent of those aged 56 years and above favour living together, with only eight percent supporting independent living. This generational

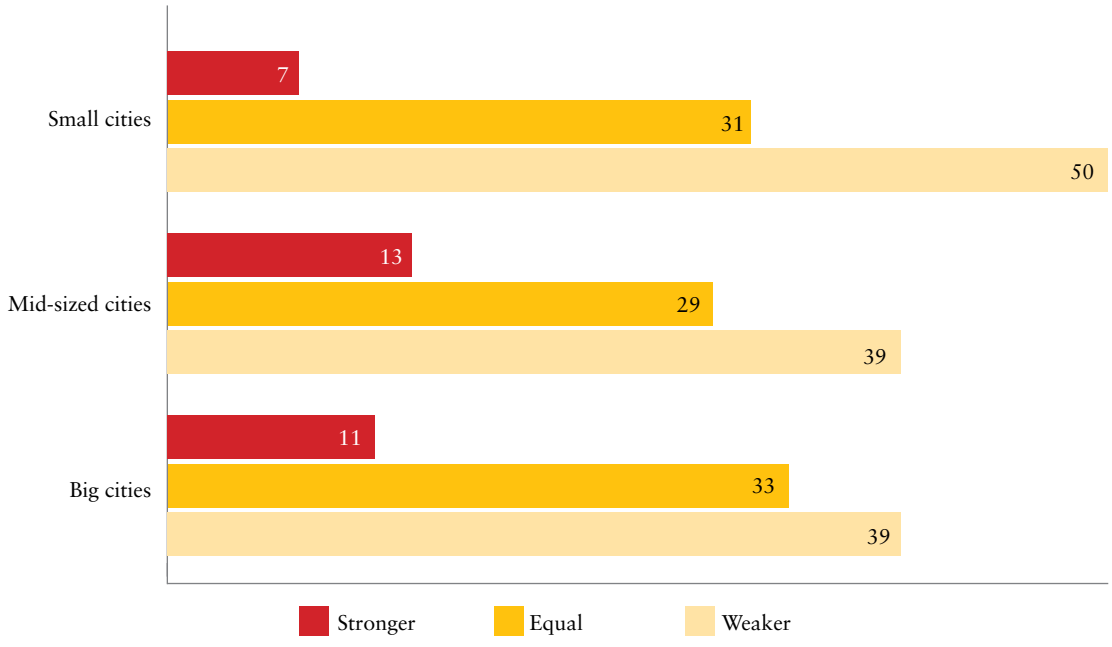
difference suggests that younger individuals may be more open to Western norms of independence. However, traditional values remain influential, especially among older respondents who prioritise familial support and interdependence. Additionally, it is noteworthy that the survey did not find any notable differences in the responses of male and female respondents regarding the preferred living arrangement.

Occupation also influences family structure preferences, with specific roles displaying a stronger inclination towards cohabitation. Housewives (72%) prefer children and parents living together, likely reflecting traditional values prevalent in home-centred roles (***Table 3.9***). Conversely, higher professionals (60%) and students (63%) report slightly lower support for cohabitation, with 16 and 20 percent of higher professionals and students respectively favouring independent living arrangements. This trend suggests that exposure to diverse, often global perspectives in academic and professional settings fosters a degree of openness to Western-style independence. However, the preference for family cohabitation still predominates. These findings indicate that traditional family values retain significant influence across occupations. However, exposure to urban or cosmopolitan environments among students and professionals promotes a slight shift towards independent living arrangements.

When asked to compare emotional connectedness, 41 percent of respondents believe that Indian families have stronger emotional ties, while only 11 percent feel that European families do (***Figure 3.13***). Thirty-one percent view both as equal in terms of emotional bonds. This perception of stronger Indian family ties may stem from the community-based and interdependent nature of Indian society, where family is often prioritised. However, 31 percent of those who see both as equally connected may reflect an increased familiarity with Western family dynamics, possibly through media portrayals highlighting close-knit Western families.

City type affects perceptions of emotional connectedness in Indian and European families. In smaller cities, half of the respondents feel that Indian families have stronger bonds. In comparison, this figure drops to 39 percent in big cities, where 11 percent also believe that European families have stronger ties as opposed to seven percent of the small city respondents who think so (***Figure 3.14***). These differences suggest that more small city residents may have closer ties to traditional community structures and perceive stronger emotional bonds in Indian families. In contrast, big city respondents exposed to diverse social norms may also recognise similar values of family closeness in Western cultures.

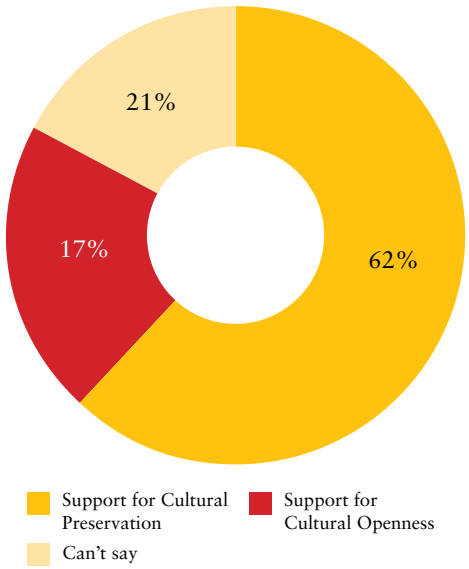
**Figure 3.14: Perception on Emotional Connectedness of Europeans with Families Across Different Levels of Urbanity**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*

*Question asked: Do you think people in European countries have a more substantial, equal, or weaker emotional attachment to their family members than people in India?*

**Figure 3.15: Opinion on Defending Indian Culture from Foreign Influences or Cultural Openness**




*Note: The rest did not respond (16%) or refused to answer (5%).*
*Question asked: Please tell me which of the following two statements you agree with the most. Statement 1: India should do more to defend its culture from the cultures coming from other countries. Statement 2: India should do more to learn more from other countries, even if we might lose our own culture or way of life.*

## 3.6. The Big Debate – Cultural Preservation Vs. Openness to Foreign Influence

When asked about cultural preservation versus openness to foreign influence on Indian culture, more than three-fifths (62%) of respondents believe India should focus on defending its culture from foreign influences, while only 17 percent support a more open approach to learning from other cultures (***Figure 3.15***). This strong preference for cultural preservation reflects a prevailing concern about cultural erosion, especially as globalisation and Westernisation introduce new norms. However, the 17 percent advocating for openness may represent younger or more urbanised demographics, who often view cultural exchange as a path to innovation and modernisation.

City type shows a marked difference in attitudes, with residents of smaller cities showing the highest preference (67%) for defending Indian culture from foreign influence, while only 17 percent support increased openness to foreign cultures (***Table 3.10***). In big cities, a slightly lower proportion (64%) favour cultural preservation, and support for openness is also higher at 16 percent. This pattern indicates that more small city residents, who may be less exposed to foreign cultural elements, prioritise traditional values. At the same time, urban respondents are slightly more open to cultural exchange, associating it with modernisation and progress.

Levels of educational attainment reveal an interesting finding. Contrary to the general expectation, those with college degrees or higher form the highest proportion (65%) of support for cultural preservation in comparison to the non-literate respondents (44%) (***Table 3.10***). However, college-educated Indians also show more support for openness to foreign influence (20%) compared to only eight percent of non-literates favouring openness. These findings suggest that the force in favour of preserving traditional Indian cultural values remains strong, even among college-educated Indians, even though higher education might foster some acceptance of cultural exchange, as educated individuals may view openness as an opportunity for growth and learning.

The economic class also shapes perspectives on cultural preservation. Among more affluent respondents, close to seven in ten support defending Indian culture, compared to 54 percent of the respondents from poorer backgrounds (***Table 3.10***).

**Table 3.10: Demographic-wise Analysis of Cultural Preservation Vs. Openness to Foreign Influence Among Indians**

| | Support for... | |
|---|---|---|
| | Cultural Preservation | Cultural Openness |
| **City type** | | |
| Small cities | 67 | 17 |
| Mid-sized cities | 58 | 18 |
| Big cities | 64 | 16 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | |
| Non-literate | 44 | 8 |
| Some schooling | 56 | 10 |
| Intermediate to undergraduate | 62 | 14 |
| College and above | 65 | 20 |
| **Economic class** | | |
| Poor | 54 | 14 |
| Lower | 58 | 18 |
| Middle | 65 | 18 |
| Upper | 70 | 17 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond or refused to answer.*
*Question asked: Please tell me which of the following two statements you agree with the most.*

However, Indians from the upper economic stratum also show more support for openness to foreign cultural influence than those in the poor stratum (17% vs. 14% respectively). This suggests that wealthier individuals, who are more likely to encounter foreign influences through travel and media, are nonetheless inclined to uphold the Indian cultural roots.

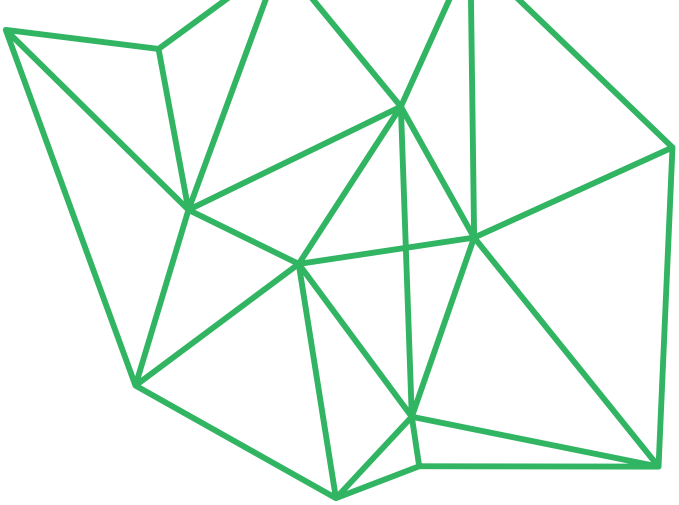
## 3.7. Conclusion

The data reveals a complex interaction between Western and Indian cultural preferences across various domains such as clothing, food, literature, media exposure, social values, and family structures. While Indian clothing and cuisine retain significant popularity, particularly among the older, small-city, and less affluent demographics, younger and urban respondents show increasing openness to Western styles. Preferences for traditional family structures and high levels of emotional connectedness remain strong. However, slight shifts towards individualism are evident among younger and more educated groups, who demonstrate greater acceptance of Western independence and personal choice norms.

Exposure to Western media and ideas influences respondents' social values, especially those in urban areas with higher education and professional occupations. However, a strong preference for preserving Indian culture exists across demographics, though the inclination to embrace foreign influences varies by factors like economic class, education, and occupation. This nuanced interplay between tradition and modernity highlights India's adaptability, with many Indians selectively embracing global influences while simultaneously maintaining a deep-rooted connection to traditional values. The findings suggest that India's cultural landscape is evolving, blending the appeal of modernisation with a continued reverence for heritage and identity.

4

# Perceptions of Western Economy and Quality of Life



CHAPTER 4

# Perceptions of Western Economy and Quality of Life

## 4.1. Introduction

The perception of the "Western economy" and its impact on the quality of life has long been a subject of global discourse. Originating from the economic models of Europe and North America, the Western economy is often associated with capitalism, market-driven principles, consumerism, and welfarism, particularly in Europe. Over the decades, this economic framework has shaped not only the financial structures of many countries but also the cultural and social fabric of societies worldwide.

In the post-World War II era, the Western economic model became the dominant global force, particularly with the establishment of institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Western economic model became synonymous with progress, development, and prosperity, with these institutions promoting free-market economies, privatisation, and deregulation. Countries that adopted this model saw rapid industrialisation, urbanisation, and significant improvements in living standards.

Perceptions of the Western economy, however, have been complex and multifaceted. On the one hand, many view it as a driver of wealth, technological advancement, and individual freedoms, with the United States and Western European nations setting benchmarks in innovation, infrastructure, and overall living standards. The high quality of life—characterised by access to education, healthcare, personal liberties, and abundant consumer goods—became a point of aspiration for many in the developing world.

Moreover, as globalisation has increased, perceptions of the Western economy have evolved, especially regarding the quality of life it promises. While Western countries still rank highly in various quality-of-life indices, including healthcare, education, and personal freedom, social issues such as inequality, mental health, and work-life balance have emerged. In non-Western countries, perceptions of Western economies are often shaped by the media, migration trends, and economic policies. For many, Western countries represent a land of opportunity, where the promise of a higher standard of living, professional success, and personal freedom beckon.

However, India has never been a closed society; interactions with the West, including travel for education, work, and exposure to new ideas, predate the liberal reforms of the 1990s. These earlier interactions influenced the minds of policymakers and intellectuals who envisioned and implemented the reforms. While the reforms marked a significant turning point, their broader societal impact became evident only after a decade. The middle class, which had roots even during the colonial period, experienced a reinvigoration in this era, characterised by increasing urbanisation and socio-economic mobility. The influence of Western culture became more visible, and a new cohort emerged, navigating the intersection of traditional and modern identities while aspiring to an urban, contemporary, and scientific lifestyle. This segment of society embraced Western-style living as a symbol of pride and a pathway to transcend hierarchical social structures. Aspirations to move abroad for better opportunities and quality of life also grew across social strata. Today, as per the Ministry of External Affairs (2024), approximately 35 million people of Indian origin reside in other countries.

India, traditionally a land where people saved their wealth for unforeseen events, has experienced a rapid transition post-liberalisation. Survival and subsistence were the primary motivations for accumulating resources. However, today, India is part of a globally connected, consumerist-capitalist world where the possession of material wealth assumes significant value. Every aspect of life now revolves around the ability to earn—and earn quickly. This necessitates the presence of a sound and vibrant economy where people can fulfil their aspirations. An economy is a system where production, consumption, and exchange occur, determining the allocation of resources within society. In the modern global institutional setup, economies are often categorised as developed,

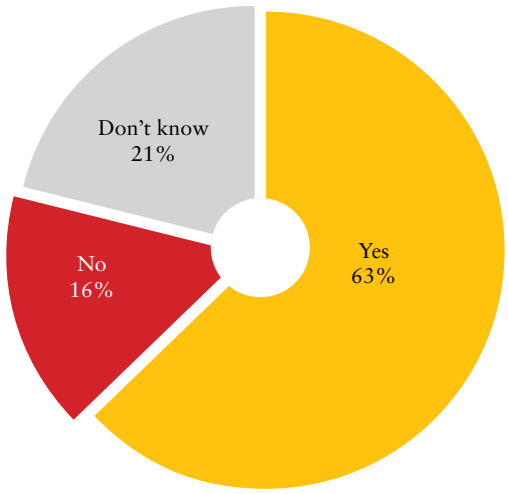
developing, or underdeveloped. These categories are broadly based on infrastructure, income levels, and quality of life. European countries are generally classified as developed, while others fall under the developing or underdeveloped categories. This creates a binary of 'the West' and 'the rest.'

This chapter focuses on popular perceptions among Indians regarding the Western economy and quality of life. Perception, simply put, is the ability to interpret something. It is the accumulation of layers of knowledge that form an understanding. Perceptions are not rigid; they are subject to change and take time to develop.

## 4.2. Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe

Employment in India has long been a concern among its citizens. According to the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE), the unemployment rate in India stood at 7.8% in November 2024, compared to 5.9% in the European Union (Eurostat, September 2024). These figures highlight a notable difference in employment rates between India and Europe, a factor that likely contributes to the perception among Indians that Europe offers better employment opportunities. When asked about the availability of employment opportunities in Europe compared to India, nearly two out of three (63%) Indians believe that Europe provided better employment prospects (***Figure 4.1***). However, one in six disagree with this proposition, stating that Europe does not have better employment opportunities than India.

**Figure 4.1: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe Compared to India**




*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

The data indicate that most Indians perceive Europe as offering better employment opportunities. This belief is not uniform across all demographics. A closer look at various age groups reveals that younger Indians are more likely to believe that Europe offers better job prospects. Nearly seven out of ten (71%) respondents aged 18 to 25 agreed that Europe offers better employment opportunities. This belief gradually decreases with age, with almost half (48%) of respondents aged 56 and above sharing the same opinion (***Table 4.1***). This trend can be understood in the context of employment instability, where younger individuals, who are more likely to face challenges in finding stable employment in India, view Europe as a promising alternative. In contrast, older individuals have more stable career paths, making them less likely to seek employment abroad. The level of educational attainment also plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of employment opportunities in Europe. Highly educated Indians are more likely to perceive Europe as a destination for better job prospects. For instance, seven in ten respondents with a college education agreed that Europe offers better employment opportunities, compared to only three in ten non-literate individuals. Nearly three-fifths of non-literate individuals did not know about this, suggesting that higher levels of education lead to greater awareness of the opportunities available in European countries, influencing the perception that Europe offers better employment prospects (***Table 4.1***).

**Table 4.1: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe by Age and Education**

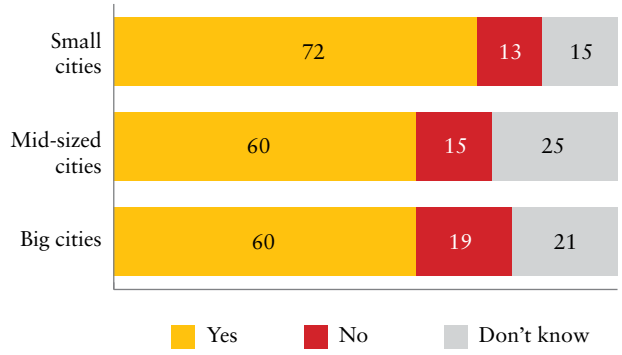
| | Europe has better employment opportunities | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Don't know |
| **Age groups** | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 71 | 14 | 15 |
| 26 to 35 years | 67 | 16 | 17 |
| 36 to 45 years | 60 | 18 | 22 |
| 46 to 55 years | 56 | 18 | 26 |
| 56 years and above | 48 | 19 | 33 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | |
| Non-literate | 30 | 14 | 56 |
| Some schooling | 48 | 20 | 32 |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 56 | 16 | 28 |
| College and above | 70 | 15 | 15 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

The data show an interesting pattern in how people living in small cities are more likely to perceive Europe as offering better employment opportunities.

People in small towns exhibit the highest belief (72%) that Europe provides better job prospects. This figure is twelve percentage points higher than that of those living in mid-sized and big cities. This could be attributed to smaller towns' relatively limited employment prospects, where specialised or high-skill jobs may be scarce. As a result, individuals from smaller cities are more likely to view Europe as a place with more diverse and accessible employment options. For individuals in mid-sized and large cities, this perception may stem from the desire for career growth in specialised industries for which Europe well known for, such as finance, engineering, and academia (***Figure 4.2***).

**Figure 4.2: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe Based on City Size**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

Professionals, both higher & lower, working in specialised fields like engineering, medicine, and technology, are more likely to believe that Europe offers better job prospects. Seventy-one percent of higher professional view Europe as providing better employment opportunities. This is because these professionals tend to have the qualifications and skills in demand in European job markets, making them more aware of the potential for career advancement abroad. On the other hand, government employees (63%) show less enthusiasm for Europe as a destination for better employment opportunities. Government jobs in India typically offer job security, a clear career path, and benefits that make the uncertain and competitive nature of the European job market less appealing. These employees may also value the stability of their current positions and not feel the need to pursue opportunities abroad. However, students (74%) hold the strongest perception of better employment opportunities in Europe. This could be because students often aspire to study overseas, and they associate Europe with high-quality higher education and the potential for post-graduation job opportunities. Moreover, the prospect of gaining international work experience while studying abroad further reinforces their perception of Europe as a land of career possibilities. These individuals see Europe as an educational destination as well as a platform for future employment (***Table 4.2***).

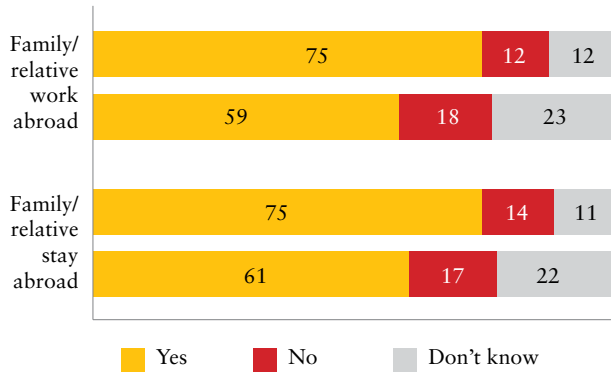
**Table 4.2: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe by Occupation**

| Occupation | Europe has better employment opportunities | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Don't know |
| Students | 74 | 13 | 13 |
| Higher professionals | 71 | 17 | 12 |
| Lower professionals | 72 | 16 | 12 |
| Government employees | 63 | 16 | 21 |
| Small business | 58 | 21 | 21 |
| Skilled and semi-skilled workers | 57 | 19 | 24 |
| Big and medium business | 56 | 16 | 28 |
| Unskilled workers | 54 | 19 | 27 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

Family connections and exposure to individuals who have studied or worked abroad also significantly shape perceptions. Three-fourths of respondents with a family member or relative working abroad believe that Europe offers better employment opportunities, compared to just three-fifths (59%) among those who do not have such connections (***Figure 4.3***). Similarly, the perception that Europe offers better employment opportunities is stronger among those with family members studying abroad, with three in four agreeing, compared to over three in five (61%) among those without such family connections.

**Figure 4.3: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe by Family Connections in Abroad**

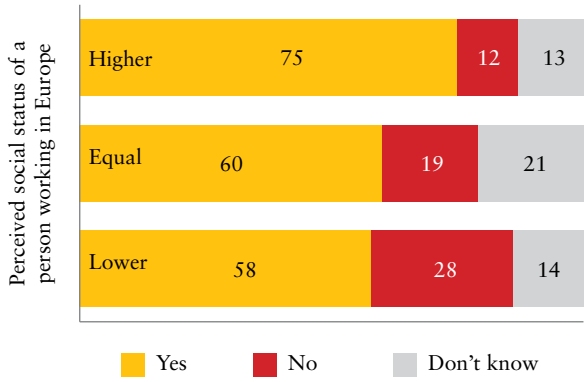



*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

The findings suggest that the influence of personal or familial exposure to life in Europe likely fosters a more positive view of its employment prospects.

There is a widely held perception that individuals who work abroad have a higher social status. This perceived elevation in social status is also linked to the belief that employment opportunities are more abundant in European countries. The data suggests that those who associate a higher social status with working abroad are more likely to believe that Europe offers better job prospects, with three-fourths sharing this view. In contrast, only three in five (58%) individuals who perceive the social status of those working abroad as lower hold the same belief (***Figure 4.4***).

**Figure 4.4: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe by Perceived Social Status of People Working in Europe**



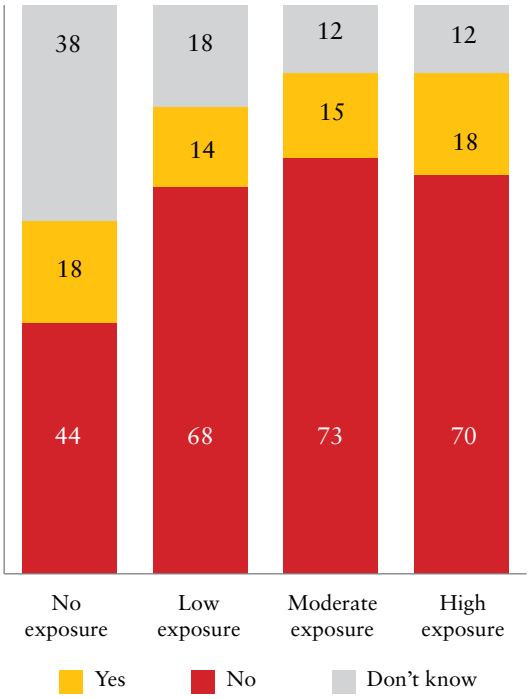

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

It is believed that exposure to the West through various means of communication, such as films, music, media, and social media, also shapes one's perception. This suggests that media exposure has a considerable impact on the perception of Europe as offering better employment opportunities. Respondents with high exposure to Western media are more likely (70%) to perceive Europe as offering superior employment prospects, compared to a little over two in five (44%) of those with no exposure to Western media (***Figure 4.5***).

## 4.3. Perception of Pay Disparity: Europe Pays More Than India

This section explores Indians' perceptions of pay disparities between India and Europe. There is a general belief that Europe pays more for the same work than India. The data reveal a clear trend among Indians who perceive wages for the same job as higher in European countries than in India. Nearly three in

**Figure 4.5: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe by Level of Exposure to Western Media**



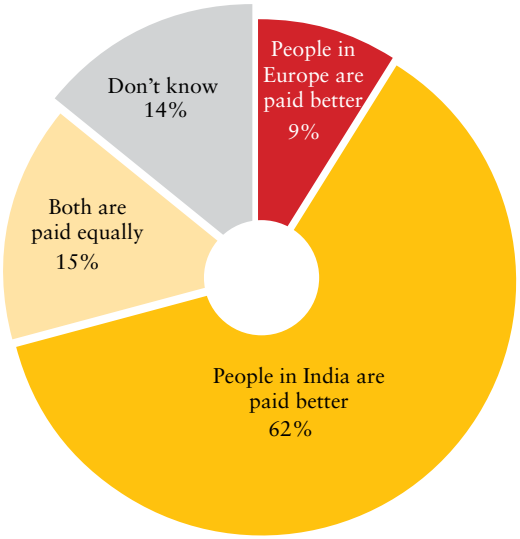

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities than India?*

five (62%) Indians believe that people in Europe are paid more for the same work than in India. In contrast, only about one in ten respondents think that people in India are paid more than those in European countries. One in six (15%) respondents believe both are paid equally (***Figure 4.6***). This perception aligns with the deeply held belief that the economic value of work is higher in Europe compared to India, and this belief influences many Indians' aspirations to go abroad for better pay and job opportunities in European countries.

The perception that people in European countries earn higher wages than India for comparable work is also influenced by age. Younger individuals, mainly those aged 18-25, exhibit a stronger tendency (69%) to perceive a significant pay disparity in favour of Europe. Furthermore, educational attainment plays a crucial role in shaping this perception. Individuals with higher levels of education (69%) are more inclined to believe that people in European countries earn higher wages than those with lower educational qualifications (***Figure 4.8***).

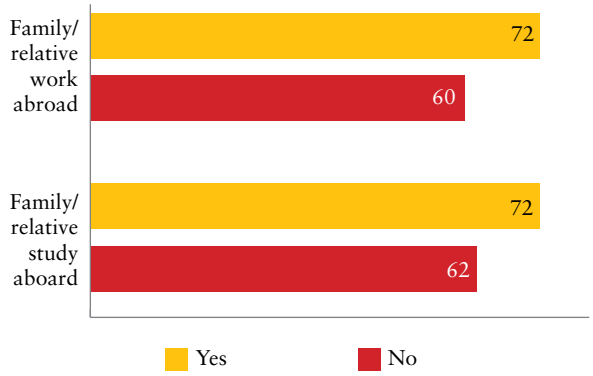
If individuals have firsthand experience, such as having a family member or relative working or studying abroad, their perception of employment oppor-

**Figure 4.6: Perception of Pay Disparity Between Europe and India**




*Question asked: Some people believe that people living in Europe are paid more for the same work as people in India. Others believe that Indians are paid more for the same work that people do in Europe. What is your opinion?*

**Figure 4.7: Perception of Pay Disparity by Family Connections Abroad**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*

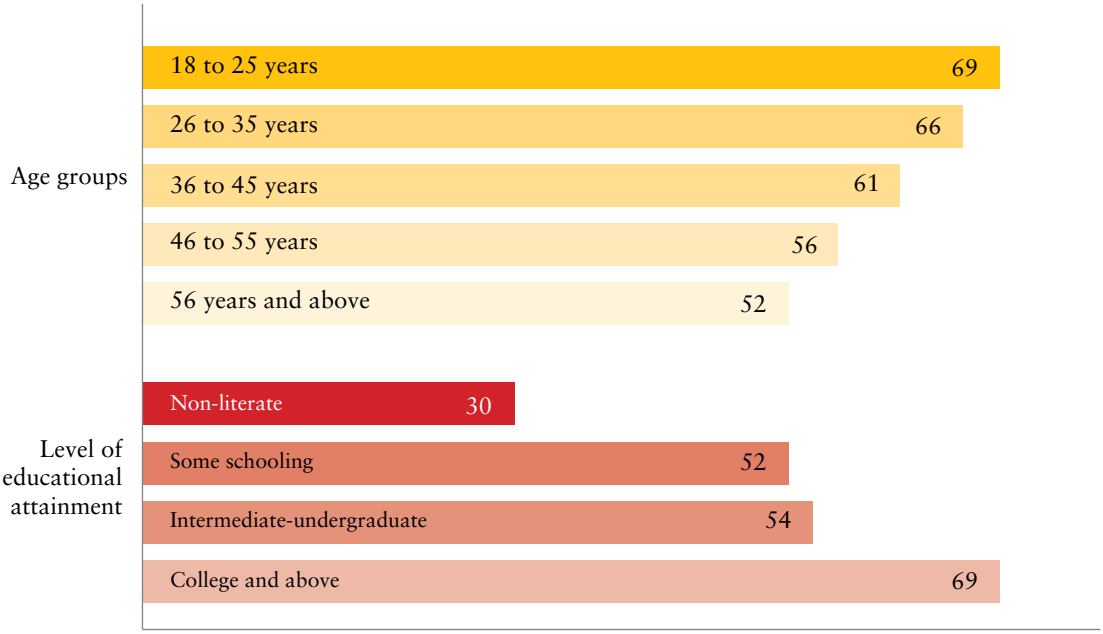
*Question asked: Some people believe that people living in Europe are paid more for the same work as people in India. Others believe that Indians are paid more for the same work that people do in Europe. What is your opinion?*

tunities and wage disparities tends to differ significantly. They are more likely to believe that people in European countries are paid more for the same work. Whether through employment or education, these familial ties to Europe provide individuals with insights into the economic conditions of European countries, shaping their expectations and aspirations regarding potential job opportunities and higher pay abroad (***Figure 4.7***).

## 4.3. Why Do Indians Apply for Work Visa?

Rising unemployment rates in India, limited opportunities for career growth, and a lack of value for skilled labour have pushed many Indians to seek employment abroad. In particular, Europe has emerged as a destination of interest for individuals looking for better opportunities. According to the study, 15 percent of respondents plan to apply for a work visa to Europe, while three percent have already done so (***Figure 4.9***). The main reasons for moving to Europe are better wages and career growth opportunities.

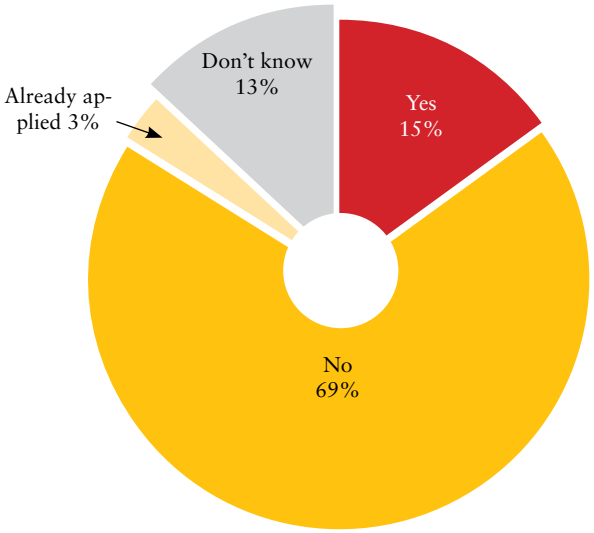
**Figure 4.8: Perception of Pay Disparity by Age and Education**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*

*Question asked: Some people believe that people living in Europe are paid more for the same work as people in India. Others believe that Indians are paid more for the same work that people do in Europe. What is your opinion?*

**Figure 4.9: Aspiration to Work Aboard**




*Question asked: Are you planning to apply for a work visa to Europe?*

More than one-third (38%) of respondents indicated that higher wages were the primary motivation for applying for a work visa. One-fifth (21%) expressed interest in Europe due to better career advancement opportunities. However, seven percent also mentioned the attraction of developed infrastructure in Europe (***Table 4.3***).

**Table 4.3 Indians Apply for Work Visa in Search of Better Pay and Career Growth**

| Reasons for applying for a work visa | (%) |
|---|---|
| Work wages/better pay/guarantee of minimum wages | 38 |
| More opportunities for career growth | 21 |
| Developed infrastructure | 7 |

*Note: The rest of the respondents chose other options like 'working hours,' 'more prestige,' and 'no response.'*
*Question asked: What is the main reason for having applied/applying for the work Visa?*

A key element driving the desire for work visas to Europe is the perception that Europe offers better employment opportunities than India. Data suggest that nearly one in five (21%) individuals who believe Europe provides better employment opportunities plan to apply for a work visa. In contrast, only seven percent of those who do not believe in the higher opportunities in Europe plan to apply for a work visa (***Table 4.4***).

**Table 4.4: Perception of Employment Opportunities in Europe**

| Does Europe have better employment opportunities than India? | Planning to apply for a European work visa (%) |
|---|---|
| Yes | 21 |
| No | 7 |

*Note: The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Are you planning to apply for a work visa to Europe?*

The role of social networks and family experiences abroad is another crucial factor. Respondents whose families or relatives have moved abroad for employment were more likely to consider applying for a work visa in Europe. Among those with family members who have relocated for work, over one-fifth (22%) are planning to apply for a work visa, compared to 12 percent among those whose families have not moved abroad (***Table 4.5***).

**Table 4.5: Influence of Family or Relatives Abroad on the Decision to Apply for a Work Visa**

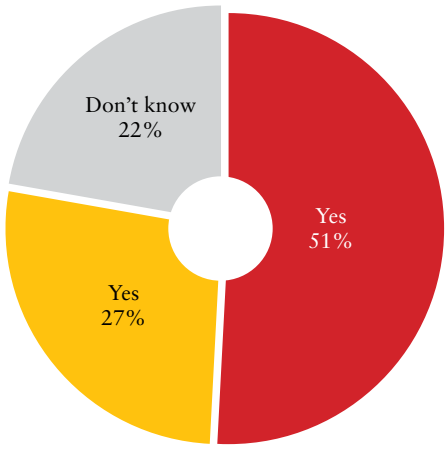
| Family/relative work abroad | Planning to apply for a European work visa (%) |
|---|---|
| Yes | 22 |
| No | 12 |

*Question asked: Are you planning to apply for a work visa to Europe?*

## 4.4. Indians' Desire for European Standard of Life and Comfort

Everyone wants a comfortable and dignified life, which depends on having better resources and good-quality essentials for well-being. However, in India, economic disparity and rising poverty are significant challenges. According to a 2024 World Bank report, approximately 129 million Indians live in extreme poverty, with the gap between the rich and the poor widening. Amid these concerns, many Indians expect a better quality of life in European countries than their own. This perception of a more comfortable lifestyle in Europe is reflected in the study's findings, where over half of the respondents indicated that they believe people living in Europe enjoy a more relaxed life than those living in India. At the same time, more than one in four (27%) disagreed with this perception. Nonetheless, over one-fifth (22%) were uncertain about the comparison and did not share their opinion (***Figure 4.10***).

**Figure 4.10: People Think That Life in Europe Is More Comfortable Than India**




*Question asked: Do you think that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India?*

When we analysed the data by age groups, we found that a younger cohort, in the age bracket of 18-25 years, was more likely to believe that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India. In comparison, older respondents are less likely to hold this belief. Among those aged up to 25 years, three in five perceive Europe as more comfortable, but this percentage gradually decreases with age; for individuals aged 56 years and above, two in five believe Europe provides a relaxed lifestyle. Education also plays a critical role in shaping individuals' views about different lifestyles. The data reveal that individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to believe that life in Europe is more comfortable.

**Table 4.6: Perception of Life in Europe by Age Cohorts and Education Level**

| | Europe has more comfortable life than India | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Don't know |
| **Age groups** | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 60 | 24 | 16 |
| 26 to 35 years | 53 | 28 | 19 |
| 36 to 45 years | 49 | 29 | 22 |
| 46 to 55 years | 49 | 27 | 24 |
| 56 years and above | 39 | 28 | 33 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | |
| Non-literate | 25 | 26 | 49 |
| Some schooling | 42 | 27 | 31 |
| Intermediate - undergraduate | 46 | 27 | 27 |
| College and above | 57 | 27 | 16 |

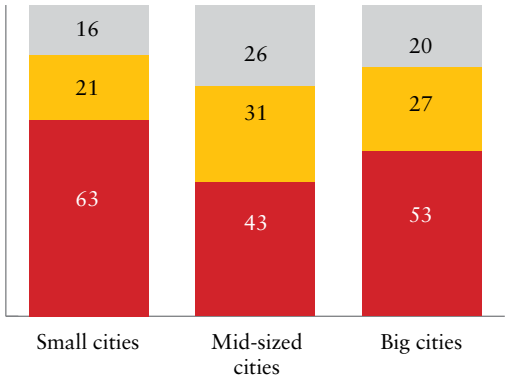
*Note: All figures are in percentages.*

*Question asked: Do you think that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India?*

Among respondents with college and above education, 57 percent believe Europe offers a more comfortable life (***Table 4.6***). In contrast, merely a quarter of non-literate respondents hold this view, with a substantial half of them unaware of it and did not respond.

When analysing the perception by city size, those from small cities have the highest percentage (63%) of respondents believing that life in Europe is more comfortable. This contrasts with respondents from mid-sized cities (43%) and big cities (53%). This discrepancy may reflect the aspirations of people from smaller towns who perceive Europe as a model of better living conditions. In contrast, those from larger urban centers may already have access to a higher standard of living in India (***Figure 4.11***).

**Figure 4.11: Perception of Life in Europe by City Size**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*

*Question asked: Do you think that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India?*

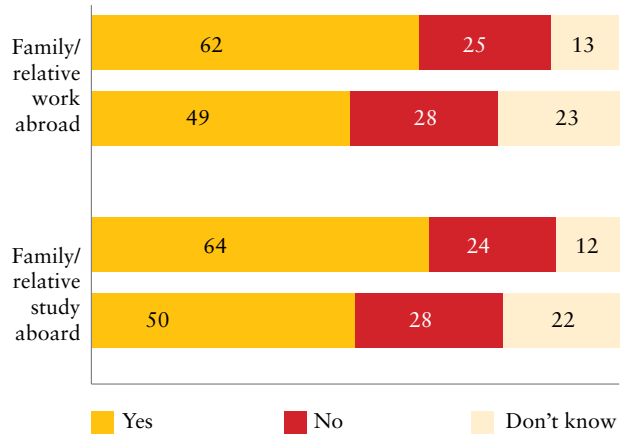
The level of exposure to Western culture and media is also related to the perception of European comfort. Those with high or moderate level exposure to Western media (62%) each are most likely to believe that life in Europe is more comfortable. In contrast, nearly two in five (37%) with no exposure believe this, with almost the same proportion (35%) being unsure. This indicates that the more individuals are exposed to European lifestyles through media, the stronger their belief in the superiority of European living standards (***Table 4.7***). Having family or relatives who have lived or studied abroad significantly impacts the perception of life in Europe. Among those with family members working abroad or studying there (62% and 64%, respectively), over three in five believe life in Europe is more comfortable, compared to nearly half of those without such relatives (***Figure 4.12***).

### Table 4.7: Perception of Life in Europe by Level of Exposure

| Exposure to the Western world through different platforms | Europe has more comfortable life than India | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Don't know |
| No exposure | 37 | 29 | 34 |
| Low exposure | 49 | 30 | 21 |
| Moderate exposure | 62 | 24 | 14 |
| High exposure | 62 | 26 | 12 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India?*

### Figure 4.12: Perception of Life in Europe by Family/ Relatives Abroad



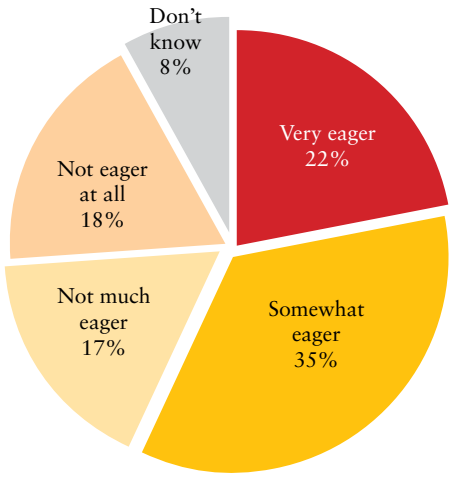

*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Do you think that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India?*

## 4.5. Aspiration for Settling in Europe

The desire to live and settle in European countries is an emerging aspiration among many Indians, driven by better employment opportunities, a higher quality of life, and a more comfortable standard of living. Survey data reveal that Indians are eager to move to Europe and settle there if given the chance. The findings suggest that 22 percent of respondents are keen to live in a European country, while 35 percent are somewhat eager, indicating a strong interest in living in European countries. However, some respondents expressed less or no interest in settling there (***Figure 4.13***).

Those who believe in the high job prospects in Europe tend to show more eagerness to live there. Among those who think Europe has better employment opportunities, nearly three in ten (29%) are very eager, and two in five (38%) are somewhat eager to settle in Europe. This is significantly higher than the response from those who do not perceive Europe as offering better employment opportunities, where only 14 percent said they are very eager, and 35 percent are somewhat eager (***Table 4.8***).

### Figure 4.13: Aspiration for Living in Europe




*Question asked: If given the chance, how eager would you be to live in a European country? Would you be very keen, somewhat enthusiastic, not eager, or not?*

### Table 4.8: Eagerness to Settle in Europe Based on Employment Opportunities

| Europe has better employment opportunities as compared to India | Eagerness to settle a European country | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very eager | Somewhat eager | Not much eager | Not eager at all |
| Yes | 29 | 38 | 16 | 14 |
| No | 14 | 35 | 19 | 23 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: If given the chance, how eager would you be to live in a European country—very enthusiastic, somewhat eager, not eager, or not at all eager?*

The eagerness to settle abroad is also associated with the perceived comfort of life in European countries. When respondents were asked whether life in Europe is more comfortable than in India, those who agreed that Europe offers a more comfortable lifestyle were more likely to express eagerness to settle there.

### Table 4.9: Eagerness to Settle in Europe Based on Perception of Comfort

| Living in Europe have a more comfortable life than India | Eagerness for settling in a European country | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very eager | Somewhat eager | Not much eager | Not eager at all |
| Yes | 33 | 37 | 15 | 12 |
| No | 13 | 37 | 20 | 24 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: If given the chance, how eager would you be to live in a European country—very enthusiastic, somewhat eager, not eager, or not at all eager?*

One in three among them were eager to settle in a European country, while 37 percent were somewhat eager. In contrast, those who did not perceive life in Europe as more comfortable exhibited significantly lower eagerness, with only 13 percent expressing intense eagerness to settle there (***Table 4.9***).

Perceptions of the quality of life in Europe also play a crucial role in the eagerness to relocate there. The data indicate that over one in four (28%) individuals who believe Europe surpasses India's quality of life are eager to settle there. In contrast, those who perceive the quality of life in Europe as equal to or inferior to that in India exhibit significantly lower eagerness to settle in Europe, with only 14 percent in each group expressing intense eagerness (***Table 4.10***).

**Table 4.10: Eagerness to Settle in Europe Based on Quality-Of-Life Perception**

| In terms of quality of life, European countries are…. | Eagerness for settling in a European country | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very eager | Somewhat eager | Not much eager | Not eager at all |
| Ahead of India | 28 | 38 | 16 | 15 |
| Equal | 14 | 37 | 21 | 19 |
| Behind India | 14 | 33 | 17 | 28 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: If given the chance, how eager would you be to live in a European country—very enthusiastic, somewhat eager, not eager, or not at all eager?*

## 4.6. Conclusion

The findings suggest that many Indians perceive Europe as offering better employment opportunities, a perception particularly pronounced among younger individuals, those with higher educational qualifications, and those with familial ties to Europe. Furthermore, exposure to Western media reinforces this belief, positioning European countries as attractive destinations for enhanced job prospects, professional growth, and an improved quality of life. Given these perceptions, it is unsurprising that many Indians are motivated to migrate to Europe for better employment opportunities. The perception of higher wages, career growth prospects, and favourable work conditions in Europe significantly influences Indians' decisions to seek employment opportunities there. The data reveal that many respondents view European countries as offering better prospects for skilled workers than India. Also, exposure to family and social networks with overseas experience further amplifies this perception, fostering migration aspirations. As these perceptions persist and evolve, they will likely continue to drive the trend of Indians seeking work visas for Europe.

Moreover, the widespread perception that Europe offers a more comfortable life than India is prevalent among younger individuals, those with higher educational attainment, and those with greater exposure to Western media and lifestyles. The desire for improved living standards, reinforced by social networks with connections abroad, plays a significant role in shaping this belief. As these perceptions continue to influence aspirations, they contribute to the growing interest in migration to Europe for better living conditions. The perception of the Western economy and lifestyle reflects a highly aspirational attitude towards growth and development. In recent years, this perception has driven demand for migration, particularly among young, highly educated Indians. This has contributed to a 'brain drain,' with a significant portion of India's skilled workforce seeking opportunities abroad. As a result, the country faces the challenge of addressing the factors contributing to the perception that the West offers better opportunities and lifestyles.

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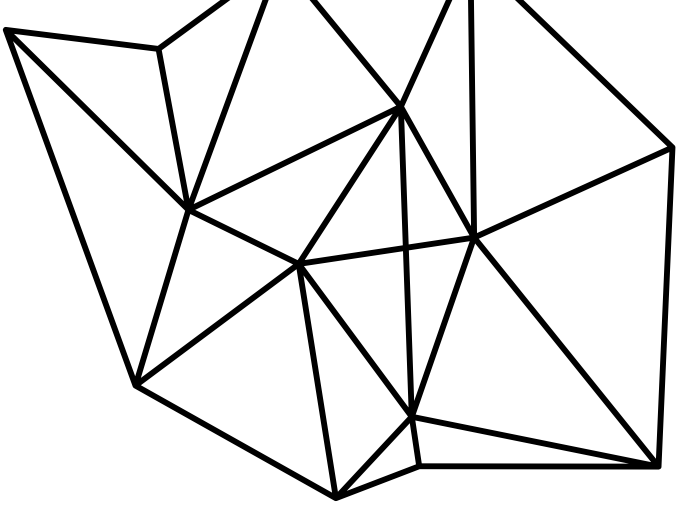
5

# Why do Indians Wish to Travel Abroad?



CHAPTER 5

# Why do Indians Wish to Travel Abroad?

## 5.1. Introduction

In recent decades, there has been a significant shift in the aspirations of Indians, with an increasing desire to travel abroad for various reasons such as tourism, employment, education, and even settling down. This change in mindset can be attributed to several factors, including India's economic liberalisation in the 1990s, the growing exposure to the Western world through media and technology, and the rise of the middle class. The liberalisation policies began in the early 1990s and opened the Indian economy to global markets, resulting in increased foreign investments, job opportunities, and higher incomes. This economic transformation allowed for the growth of the middle class, which now plays a pivotal role in driving the desire to travel abroad. With higher disposable incomes and increased access to global products and services, Indians started to seek experiences beyond national borders, not only for leisure but also for better career opportunities, educational pursuits, and an improved standard of living.

The exposure to the Western world through various forms of communication, mainly through television, movies, the internet, and social media, further fueled this aspiration. Western lifestyle, which is widely accessible through media, has become an influential factor in shaping the desires of Indians. Hollywood films, television series, and lifestyle trends have often depicted an idealised version of life in foreign countries, which many Indians find appealing and desirable. The influence of multinational companies, the spread of global business hubs, and the presence of international technology leaders have made it clear that career advancement and prosperity often come with international exposure. This increasing interaction with the West has broadened the horizons of many Indians, reinforcing the notion that travel abroad offers valuable experiences, both professionally and personally.

The motivations for traveling abroad are varied, but tourism, employment, education, and immigration are the key driving factors. Tourism has seen remarkable growth, with millions of Indians traveling abroad yearly. According to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, approximately 26 million Indians traveled overseas in 2019, compared to just 1.9 million in 1991. However, in 2021, this figure dropped to 8.55 million due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns announced in India in 2020. The most preferred destinations for Indian travelers include the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and Southeast Asia (Ministry of Tourism, 2022). The desire to explore new cultures, witness different lifestyles, and experience the world beyond India has become a significant part of the middle class's aspirations. In addition to tourism, employment has been another key motivation. Pursuing better job opportunities, higher salaries, and professional growth has led many Indians to migrate temporarily or permanently. Countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the United Kingdom (UK) have long been destinations for skilled professionals and workers seeking better prospects. Education, too, has become a crucial factor in the desire to travel abroad. With the growing demand for higher education and a desire to study in world-renowned institutions, more and more Indian students are pursuing degrees abroad. For some, the aspiration to settle overseas has become a primary motivator. The appeal of a better quality of life, enhanced career, and personal growth opportunities have led to an increasing number of Indians to choose emigration.

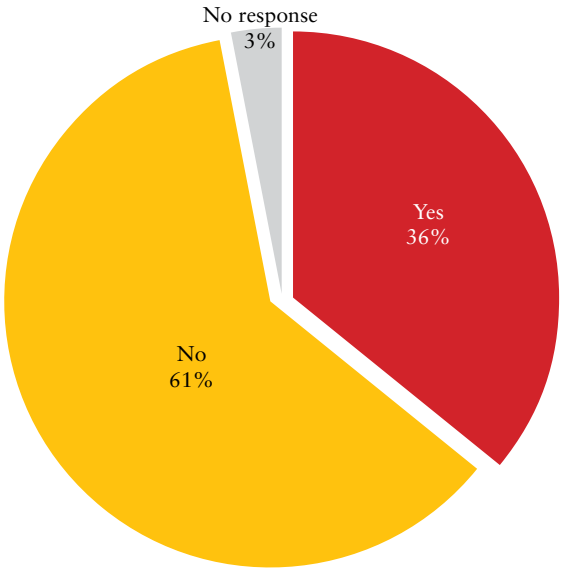
Overall, the desire to travel abroad is not merely a passing trend but a significant reflection of the socio-economic changes in the country. The combination of economic growth, greater global exposure, and the rise of a more affluent upper middle class has made international travel a viable and desirable aspiration. Whether for tourism, employment, education, or emigration, the growing inclination of Indians to explore the world reflects a broader shift in their worldview, driven by the pursuit of better opportunities and experiences. This rising aspiration to connect with the global community will likely continue shaping India's future trajectory as it becomes an increasingly globalised nation.

Building on this background, this chapter explores Indians' aspirations for traveling abroad, their desire to explore opportunities overseas, perceptions of social status, the perceived openness of European countries in welcoming Indians for education, work, and tourism, and the challenges associated with navigating visa processes.

## 5.2. Aspirations Among Indians to Travel Abroad

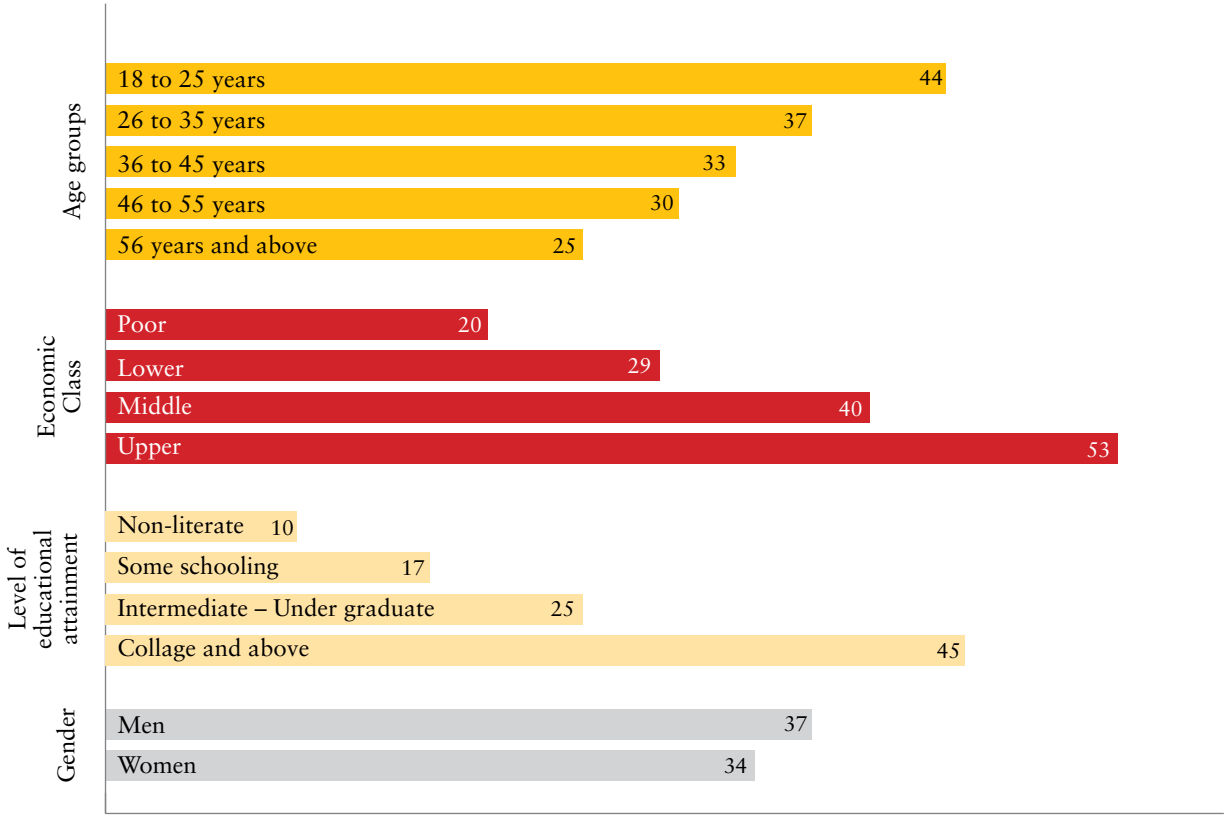
The aspiration to travel abroad reflects Indians' evolving socio-economic ambitions, shaped by diverse factors such as age, education, and class. Our survey asked respondents whether they had ever travelled or considered travelling abroad. The results show that for most respondents, travelling abroad was neither an experience nor a dream. Approximately one-third (36%) of the respondents affirmed this aspiration, while a significant majority (61%) reported not having travelled or considered doing so (***Figure 5.1***).

**Figure 5.1: Opinion of Indians Regarding Travelling Abroad**




*Question asked: Have you ever considered travelling abroad or out of India?*

**Figure 5.2: Aspiration/Experience of Travelling Abroad Across Different Demographics**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond.*
*Question asked: Have you ever travelled/thought of traveling abroad or out of India?*

Age emerges as a critical factor influencing aspirations for international travel. The survey found that younger individuals are significantly more likely to have either travelled abroad or thought about doing so. Among respondents aged 18 to 25, over two-fifths (44%) reported such aspirations/experience, making them the most globally inclined age group. Interest in/experience of international travel declines as age increases, with only one in four of those aged 56 years and above expressing similar aspirations/experience (***Figure 5.2***). This highlights a generational shift, where younger Indians exhibit higher global exposure and ambition than older cohorts.

The economic class also plays a pivotal role in shaping aspirations for international travel. Nearly half (53%) of the respondents from affluent households expressed a desire to travel abroad, and/or having experienced the same, significantly more than their counterparts from the middle class (40%), lower class (29%), and the poor (20%). Financial capacity facilitates the ability to aspire to and achieve international travel, emphasising the stark socio-economic divide among Indians.

Educational attainment further influences this trend. Respondents with a college-level education or higher demonstrated the strongest inclination towards international travel, with 45 percent affirming such aspirations/experience. In contrast, one in four of those with intermediate or undergraduate education, and only one in ten non-literate respondents expressed similar desires. Education broadens perspectives and enhances opportunities for international exposure and mobility. However, the data also found that men who either aspire to go abroad or have already been there, are comparatively higher in proportion to women ***(Figure 5.2)***.

Occupational disparities too significantly shape travel aspirations/experience. Higher professionals were the most likely to have considered or experienced such opportunities, with 61 percent expressing interest in international travel. Similarly, students and lower professionals demonstrated substantial aspirations, with 47 percent in each category affirming this desire. In contrast, respondents engaged in small businesses exhibited the lowest levels of interest, with one in four reporting aspirations to travel abroad (***Table 5.1***). These occupational differences reflect variations in income, exposure, and professional networks that enable or limit global mobility.

**Table 5.1: Aspiration/Experience of Travelling Abroad Among Different Occupation Categories**

| Occupation | Respondents travelled/thought of travelling abroad or out of India |
|---|---|
| Higher professionals | 61 |
| Lower professionals | 47 |
| Students | 47 |
| Big and medium business | 34 |
| Government employees | 33 |
| Small business | 25 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond.*

*Question asked: Have you ever travelled or thought of traveling abroad or out of India?*

Urbanisation further impacts aspirations for/experience of international travel. Residents of big cities showed the highest interest, with 39 percent having either travelled abroad or thought about doing so. This figure is higher than that for residents of mid-sized cities (32%) and in small towns (35%). Urban residents benefit from better income levels, global exposure, and resource access, particularly in larger cities, making international travel more feasible (***Table 5.2***).

**Table 5.2: Aspiration/Experience of Travelling Abroad with Level of Urbanity**

| City type | Respondents travelled/thought of travelling abroad or out of India |
|---|---|
| Small cities | 35 |
| Mid-sized cities | 32 |
| Big cities | 39 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond.*

*Question asked: Have you ever travelled/thought of traveling abroad or out of India?*

The study also suggests that exposure to Western culture and familial connections abroad are significantly related to aspirations for international travel. Respondents with greater exposure to the West through various communication channels displayed higher aspirations. Nearly half of those with moderate exposure (48%) and high exposure (45%) expressed interest in or had already travelled abroad, compared to only one-fifth (18%) of those with no exposure (***Table 5.3***). Familial ties also emerged as a strongly associated factor. Over half (55%) of the respondents with family or relatives working abroad reported aspirations for international travel, as did

three in five (59%) of those with relatives studying abroad. In contrast, respondents without such connections (relatives working or studying abroad) were far less inclined to express similar aspirations, with nearly three in ten (28% and 30%, respectively) doing so (***Figure 5.3***). These patterns suggest that direct personal exposure to international environments through communication or familial networks may significantly foster aspirations to travel abroad.

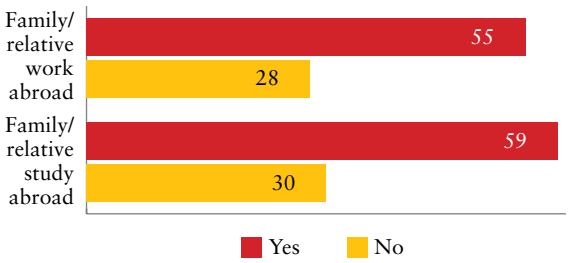
**Table 5.3: Influence of Exposure to the Western World on International Travel Aspirations**

| Exposure to the Western world through different platforms | Respondents travelled/thought of traveling abroad or out of India |
|---|---|
| No exposure | 18 |
| Low exposure | 37 |
| Moderate exposure | 48 |
| High exposure | 45 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond.*

*Question asked: Have you ever travelled or thought of traveling abroad or out of India?*

**Figure 5.3: Role of Familial Connections Abroad in Shaping International Travel Aspirations**

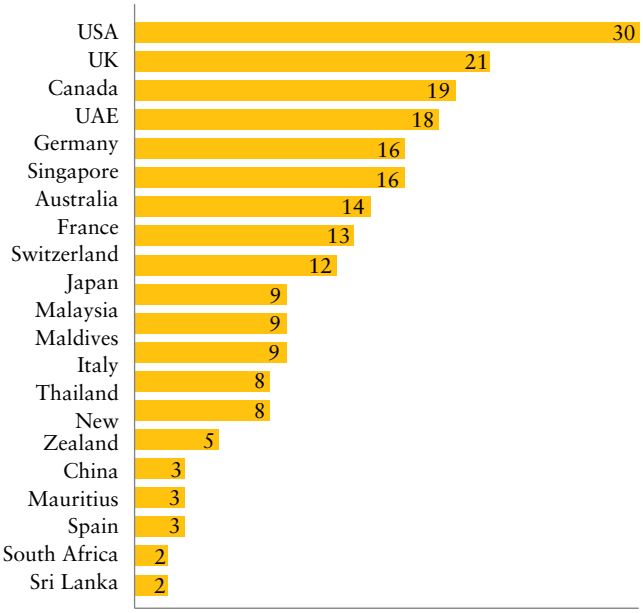



*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond.*

*Question asked: Have you ever travelled or thought of traveling abroad or out of India?*

Respondents expressed various preferences spanning multiple continents when asked about their preferred destinations. In North America, the United States (30%) emerged as the most favoured destination, followed by Canada (19%). Similarly, Europe witnessed significant interest, with the United Kingdom (21%) leading the way, followed by Germany (16%), France (13%), and Switzerland (12%). In the Asia-Pacific region, Australia (14%) garnered considerable interest, while Southeast Asian nations like Singapore (16%), Malaysia (9%), Maldives (9%), and Thailand (8%) were prominent choices. The Middle East also attracted substantial attention, particularly the UAE (18%). Other notable preferences included Japan (9%) and Italy (8%). ***(Figure 5.4)***.

**Figure 5.4: Countries Preferred by Indians for International Travel**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond.*

*Question asked: To which country did/do Indians travel/think of traveling to? See Appendix 2 Set of question asked in Q2a.*

Younger respondents aged 18–25 demonstrated higher aspirations for traveling to North America and Europe, with one-third (35%) choosing the USA and one-fifth (22%) Canada. Similarly, one in four in this age group preferred the UK, followed by Germany (20%) and France (17%). Middle Eastern destinations like the UAE appealed to 13 percent of younger respondents. Conversely, older age groups (56 and above) exhibited a somewhat distinct pattern, with three in ten preferring the USA and 24% favouring the UAE. These differences highlight a generational divide, where younger individuals prioritise Western destinations, and older respondents show a stronger inclination toward the Middle East ***(Table 5.8)***. Economic class plays a pivotal role in shaping travel aspirations. Respondents from affluent backgrounds preferred the USA (33%) and the UK (26%), followed closely by Germany and France. Educational attainment also influences preferences. College graduates favoured North America, with one-third (32%) choosing the USA and one-fifth (19%) Canada. The UK (23%) and Germany (18%) were preferred destinations in Europe. In contrast, respondents with intermediate or undergraduate education leaned toward the UAE (22%) alongside North American and European options ***(Table 5.4)***.

Occupational background further differentiated preferences. Western destinations remained dominant among students and professionals. Students over-

**Table 5.4: Preference for Countries by Demographics**

| | North American countries | | European countries | | | Middle-Eastern Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Canada | USA | France | Germany | UK | UAE |
| **Age groups** | | | | | | |
| Young (18 to 25 years | 22 | 35 | 17 | 20 | 25 | 13 |
| Elderly (56 years and above) | 15 | 30 | 7 | 12 | 21 | 24 |
| **Economic class** | | | | | | |
| Middle | 17 | 27 | 12 | 17 | 18 | 17 |
| Upper | 24 | 33 | 18 | 21 | 26 | 15 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | | | | |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 21 | 22 | 15 | 9 | 13 | 22 |
| College and above | 19 | 32 | 7 | 18 | 23 | 16 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond while responding to the given names of the countries. Question asked: To which country did Indians travel/think of traveling? See Appendix 2 Set of question asked in Q2a.*

**Table 5.5: Preference for Countries by Occupational Categories**

| Occupation | North American Countries | | European Countries | | | Middle-Eastern Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Canada | USA | France | Germany | UK | UAE |
| Higher professionals | 24 | 32 | 16 | 21 | 25 | 14 |
| Lower professionals | 12 | 23 | 12 | 15 | 15 | 19 |
| Government employees | 14 | 30 | 11 | 17 | 17 | 12 |
| Big and medium business | 18 | 27 | 16 | 11 | 19 | 27 |
| Small business | 17 | 26 | 7 | 8 | 15 | 28 |
| Students | 21 | 37 | 19 | 21 | 26 | 11 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond while responding to the given names of the countries. Question asked: To which country did Indians travel/think of traveling? See Appendix 2 Set of question asked in Q2a.*

**Table 5.6: Preference for Countries by Urbanity**

| City type | North American Countries | | European Countries | | | Middle-Eastern Countries |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Canada | USA | France | Germany | UK | UAE |
| Small cities | 16 | 28 | 10 | 11 | 20 | 23 |
| Mid-sized cities | 15 | 29 | 13 | 14 | 17 | 20 |
| Big cities | 21 | 31 | 15 | 19 | 24 | 14 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond while responding to the given names of the countries. Question asked: To which country did Indians travel/think of traveling? See Appendix 2 Set of question asked in Q2a.*

whelmingly preferred the USA (37%), followed by higher professionals (32%) and government employees (30%). Meanwhile, the UAE emerged as the top choice for individuals in big and medium businesses, as well as small businesses, underscoring regional hubs' appeal for business opportunities ***(Table 5.5)***.

Data also suggested that residents of different types of localities have different preferences when choosing countries to travel to. Respondents from big cities preferred the USA (31%) and the UK (24%), more than those from mid-sized or small towns. However, the Middle East, particularly the UAE, was notably favoured by respondents from small cities (23%), suggesting a balance between economic opportunities and accessibility ***(Table 5.6)***.

## 5.3. Purpose of Travel Abroad

In recent years, India has witnessed a significant surge in outbound travel, with an increasing number of its citizens traveling abroad for diverse purposes.

Additionally, a growing segment of the population has opted to emigrate, with some even leaving their Indian citizenship to settle in foreign countries. Multiple factors drive these trends, including pursuing better economic opportunities, educational prospects, and improved quality of life. In this context, it is pertinent to explore the primary motivations behind Indians' travel to Europe, which include tourism, education, employment, business, and the intention to settle permanently. The data from the survey provides valuable insights into these trends and reveals the emerging preferences among Indian travellers.

Tourism remains the most prominent reason for international travel among Indians, with substantial interest in European destinations. The survey reveals that Switzerland (56%), the United Kingdom (56%), and France (55%) are the top choices for Indian tourists, followed closely by Germany (49%). These countries are considered ideal vacation spots, likely due to their rich cultural heritage, scenic landscapes, and global reputation as tourist destinations. Italy also emerges as a significant contender, with 45 percent of respondents expressing an interest in visiting the country. Other European nations such as Ireland (34%), Norway (33%), Sweden (33%), and the Netherlands (32%) are also favoured by a sizable proportion of potential travellers, while Spain is slightly less favoured at 28%. A smaller percentage, around eight percent, is inclined to explore other European countries.

Regarding education, Europe continues to be a sought-after destination for Indian students. The survey highlights that the United Kingdom (38%) remains the most preferred country for higher education, followed closely by Germany (34%) and France (31%). These countries are favoured for their high-quality educational institutions. Switzerland (23%) is a popular choice for those seeking education abroad, though its preference for education is lower than its appeal as a tourist destination. Other European countries such as Italy (21%), Spain (18%), and Ireland (16%) also attract a considerable proportion of prospective students. Sweden (16%), Netherlands (15%), and Norway (14%) also feature in the preferences of Indian students.

Employment-related migration is another significant factor driving Indian interest in European destinations. The survey data suggests that the United Kingdom (42%) is the most favoured destination for Indians seeking employment abroad, owing to its well-established job market and diverse economy. Germany (37%) and France (36%) are also highly regarded by respondents, particularly for their strong industrial sectors and opportunities in specialised fields. Switzerland (30%), with its thriving financial industry, and Italy (26%) are also seen as attractive destinations for job seekers. Countries such as Spain (22%), Ireland (20%), and Sweden (20%) are also considered viable employment destinations, while the Netherlands (19%) and Norway (18%) are seen as emerging options for skilled labour.

Regarding business aspirations, the United Kingdom (32%) is the leading choice for Indians looking to establish or expand their business ventures in Eu-

**Table 5.7: Preferred Countries for Travelling Abroad for Various Reasons**

| | If given a chance, which country would you like to go for | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Tourism | Education | Employment | Business | Settling down |
| Switzerland | 56 | 23 | 30 | 24 | 26 |
| UK | 56 | 38 | 42 | 32 | 33 |
| France | 55 | 31 | 36 | 30 | 28 |
| Germany | 49 | 34 | 37 | 28 | 26 |
| Italy | 45 | 21 | 26 | 21 | 20 |
| Ireland | 34 | 16 | 20 | 17 | 15 |
| Norway | 33 | 14 | 18 | 15 | 14 |
| Sweden | 33 | 16 | 20 | 16 | 14 |
| Netherlands | 32 | 15 | 19 | 16 | 13 |
| Spain | 28 | 18 | 22 | 18 | 15 |
| Any other country | 8 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 |

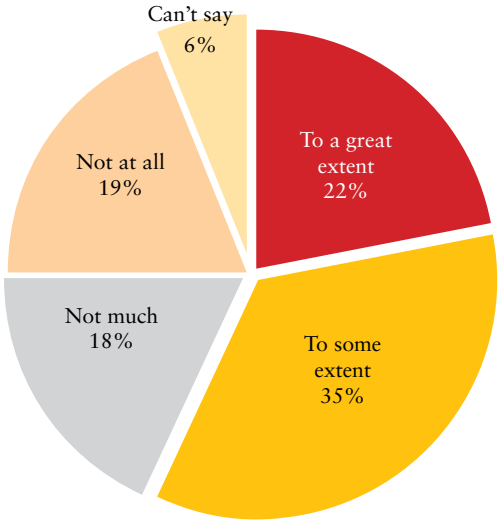
*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond while responding to the given names of the countries. Question asked: Nowadays, we see a trend amongst Indians going to Europe for different reasons. If given a chance, which country would you like to go for ….? (The activities/reasons are listed in the columns 2-5.)*

rope. France (30%) and Germany (28%) also rank highly, reflecting their stable economic environments, access to broader European markets, and supportive regulatory frameworks for entrepreneurs. While other European nations are considered for business purposes, their share of interest is relatively lower, with respondents showing some interest in countries such as Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands. Finally, when considering the possibility of settling abroad, the United Kingdom (33%) remains the most popular destination for Indians, reflecting its historical ties with India, widespread diaspora communities, and perceived quality of life. France (28%) and Germany (26%) are also prominent choices, owing to their strong economies, social welfare systems, and cultural appeal. Switzerland (26%) continues to attract interest in settlement, mainly due to its high standard of living and economic stability. Countries such as Italy (20%) and Ireland (15%) also feature prominently among those considering permanent relocation to Europe. The data from the survey highlights distinct trends in the aspirations of Indian citizens regarding travel to Europe, with clear preferences based on purpose. Tourism remains the dominant driver of outbound travel, with several Western and Northern European countries being favoured for leisure visits. Europe continues to hold significant appeal for educational, employment, and business purposes, particularly in the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. Furthermore, when it comes to long-term relocation, the United Kingdom is the preferred destination for settling down, closely followed by other Western European countries. These trends reflect broader socio-economic dynamics, including the pursuit of educational excellence, career opportunities, and a better quality of life, which continue to shape the mobility patterns of Indian citizens to Europe.

The survey gave significant insights regarding the inclination of people towards studying abroad or sending a family member to study overseas. As per the data available, more than 30 lakh Indians went abroad for higher education during 2017-2022 (*Economic Times*, 2023). Nearly one in five (22%) respondents are likely to aspire greatly, whereas 35 percent moderately aspire to study abroad ***(Figure 5.5)***.

When we analyse the data across age groups, it is revealed that among the younger respondents (18 to 25 years), a little over one in four (26%) are likely to aspire significantly to study abroad, whereas over one-third (36%) are moderately looking to study overseas ***(Table 5.8)***.

**Figure 5.5: Inclination for Studying Abroad or Sending a Family Member**




*Question asked: To what extent do you aspire to study abroad or send a family member to study overseas – to a great extent, to some extent, not much, or not at all?*

Educational background and economic class are critical factors shaping aspirations to study abroad. Among those who have completed college or higher education, over one in four (26%) express a strong desire to study overseas, while two in five (39%) show moderate interest. In contrast, respondents with lower educational attainment exhibited a lower level of aspiration to study abroad. For instance, only 11 percent of respondents with some schooling express a strong desire to study overseas, while over one-fourth (24%) show moderate interest. In terms of economic class also, the data reveal a significant pattern. Among those from the upper economic class, three in ten strongly desire to study abroad, and nearly two in five (38%) have moderate aspirations, suggesting that financial means may influence the likelihood of aspiring to pursue education in foreign countries. Conversely, those from the poor class have the lowest aspiration levels, with only 13 percent aspiring intensely and 30 percent aspiring moderately.

Further, when respondents were asked whether they wanted to study in European countries or any other foreign countries, nearly two in five (37%) preferred European countries. In contrast, one in ten expressed interest in studying in non-European countries. Almost one-third (34%) of the respondents are not even considering studying abroad ***(Figure 5.6)***. Not only for education, but Indian respondents also favoured European countries for work. The survey indicates that two-fifths (38%) of the respondents were likely to travel to European countries for employment, while 11 percent preferred traveling to non-European countries. However, 29 percent of the

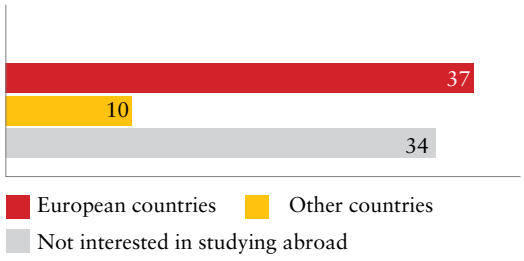
**Table 5.8: Desire to Study Abroad or to Send a Family Member to Study Abroad Across Demographics**

| | Aspire to study abroad or send a family member to study overseas | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | To a great extent | To some extent | Not much | Not at all |
| **Age groups** | | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 26 | 36 | 15 | 18 |
| 26 to 35 years | 21 | 38 | 20 | 16 |
| 36 to 45 years | 19 | 38 | 18 | 20 |
| **Level of education** | | | | |
| Non-literate | 6 | 17 | 17 | 47 |
| Some Schooling | 11 | 27 | 20 | 32 |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 17 | 34 | 21 | 20 |
| College and above | 26 | 39 | 17 | 14 |
| **Economic class** | | | | |
| Poor | 13 | 30 | 19 | 28 |
| Lower | 17 | 33 | 21 | 22 |
| Middle | 25 | 39 | 16 | 14 |
| Upper | 30 | 38 | 15 | 14 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: To what extent do you aspire to study abroad or send a family member to study overseas – to a great extent, to some extent, not much, or not at all?*

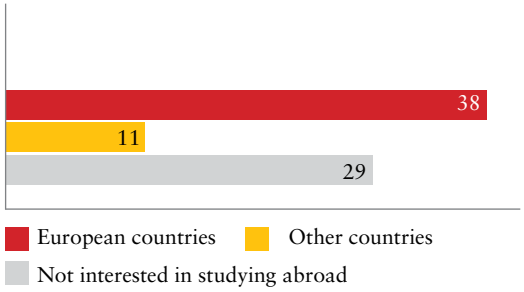
respondents expressed no interest in traveling abroad for employment (***Figure 5.7***).

**Figure 5.6: European Countries Vs. Other Countries for Education**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: If you get an opportunity to study abroad, would you like to go to a European country or any other country?*

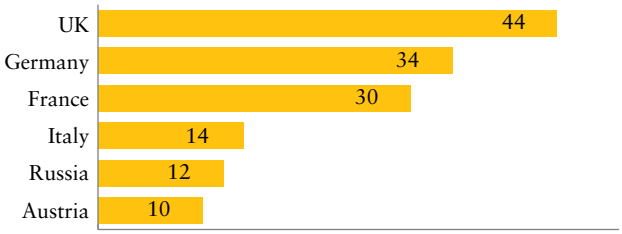
**Figure 5.7: European Countries Vs. Other Countries for Working Abroad**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: If you get a chance to work abroad, would you like to go to a European or some other country?*

Regarding specific preferences for countries to work abroad, two in five preferred the UK, followed by Germany with one-third (34%), and France with three in ten (***Figure 5.8***). Respondents also showed interest in Italy (14%), Russia (12%), and Austria (10%).

**Figure 5.8: Preferred European Countries for Working Abroad**

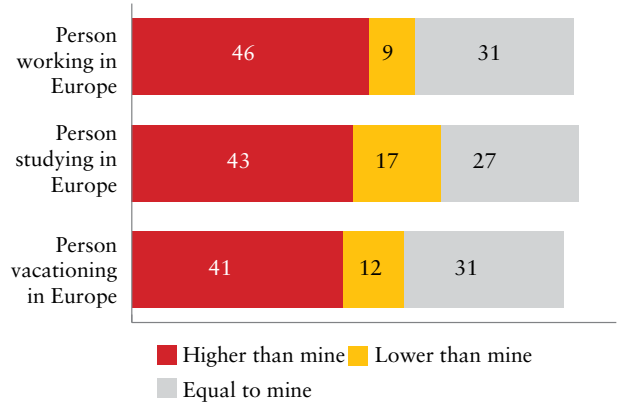



*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Which European country would you like to go to work abroad?*

The willingness to travel abroad for various reasons is also associated with the perception of higher social status. The study explored people's perspectives on the social status of individuals working, studying, or vacationing in Europe. Regarding perceptions of people working abroad, nearly half (46%) believe that European individuals have a higher social status than those working in India. More than two out of five (43%) held the same view about people studying in Europe, while 17 percent believed the opposite. Similarly, two-fifths (41%) perceive those vacationing in

Europe as having a higher social status than those not engaged in these activities (***Figure 5.9***).

**Figure 5.9: Perceived Social Status of Individuals Exposed to Europe through Study, Work, or Vacation**



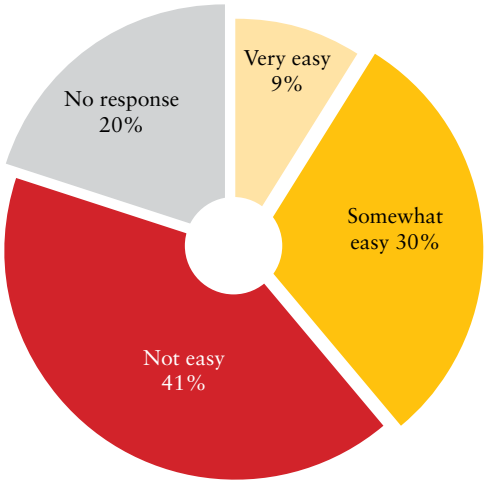

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: (9a) In your opinion, who typically has higher social status: a person studying in a European country or one studying in India?; (9b) Do you perceive your social status as higher, lower, or equal to those who vacation in European countries? (9c) If a person works in a European country, would their social status be higher, lower, or equal to yours?*

Another reason people prefer different European countries is the perception that these countries are more welcoming to Indians. As the data above shows, people favoured the UK, Germany, and France mainly for travel purposes, and they also believe these countries are more welcoming to Indians for various reasons. The survey addressed Europeans' willingness to welcome Indians for different purposes. The findings suggest that people are likely to perceive the UK as one of the most welcoming countries for Indians, particularly for education (29%), employment (28%), tourism (27%), settling down (23%), and business and trade (20%). People also view Germany as welcoming to Indians for education (22%), employment (20%), tourism (21%), and other reasons. Among other countries, France is perceived as more welcoming for tourism (23%) but not as welcoming for education, employment, or settling down (***Table 5.9***).

## 5.4. Perceptions of Visa Accessibility for Indians Travelling to Europe

The survey also examined respondents' perceptions of the challenges of obtaining a visa for international travel. Visa accessibility is a critical factor influencing international mobility, and the findings highlight varying levels of ease in the process. Approximately only one in ten (9%) respondents perceived it as very easy to obtain a visa, while three in ten considered it somewhat easy. In contrast, a significant portion of respondents, almost two in five (41%), reported that obtaining a visa is difficult (***Figure 5.10***).

**Figure 5.10: Perception of Indians Regarding Ease in Obtaining Visas for European Countries**




*Question asked: Do you think it is easy for an Indian to obtain a visa for a European country?*

Respondents were also asked about their perceptions of which European countries have the most flexible visa processes. The data reveal that the UK is viewed as having the most flexible visa system, with nearly three in ten (29%) respondents holding

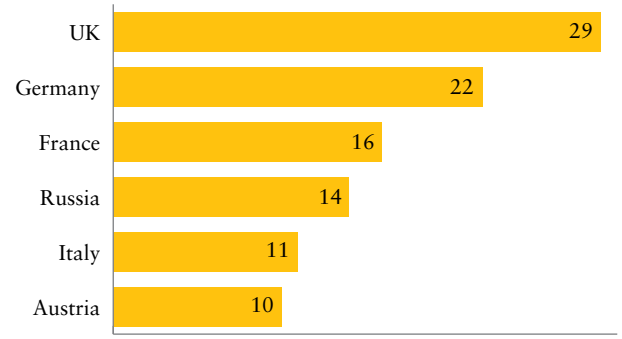
**Table 5.9: Countries Perceived as Welcoming to Indians for Various Purposes**

| European country willing to welcome Indian citizens | Education | Employment | Tourism | Business & trading | Settling down |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UK | 29 | 28 | 27 | 20 | 23 |
| Germany | 22 | 20 | 21 | 14 | 14 |
| France | 14 | 14 | 23 | 11 | 11 |
| Russia | 10 | 9 | 11 | 9 | 6 |
| Austria | 8 | 8 | 10 | 6 | 6 |
| Italy | 7 | 8 | 16 | 6 | 7 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest either said "no" or did not respond while responding to the given names of the countries.*
*Question: Which European country is more willing to welcome Indian citizens…? List of countries are given in Column 1.*

this belief, closely followed by Germany (22%) and France (16%). Other countries, such as Russia, Italy, and Austria, are perceived to have comparatively less flexible visa systems ***(Figure 5.11)***.

**Figure 5.11: Indians' Perceptions of Visa Flexibility in European Countries**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: Which country has the most flexible visa system? List of countries are given in Column 1.*

## 5.5. Conclusion

Travelling allows individuals to explore new cultures and lifestyles, driven by curiosity and the desire for better opportunities. While many Indians aspire to travel abroad for education, employment, or leisure, financial constraints and restrictive visa systems remain significant barriers. These challenges reinforce global hierarchies and perpetuate social divisions, as traveling abroad is often seen as a symbol of higher social status. Young Indians, mainly, are eager to explore opportunities abroad yet face financial limitations. The affluent class tends to travel or relocate quickly, while the middle class struggles with budgetary constraints. Recent data highlights a rising trend of Indians renouncing Indian citizenship to pursue better opportunities abroad, driven by inadequate domestic infrastructure and higher living standards overseas.

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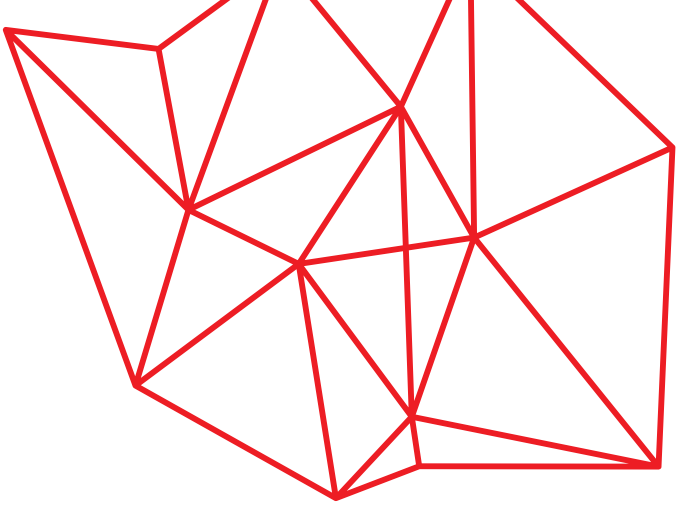
6

# How Indians View Their Foreign Policy



CHAPTER 6

# How Indians View Their Foreign Policy

## 6.1. Introduction

While a nation's foreign policy influences how its citizens will relate to other countries, it is not uncommon for citizens to have an independent view of which nations are more friendly and which are less so. In recent years, India has experienced significant shifts in its foreign policy, aligning more closely with Western countries and asserting itself as a key player on the global stage. With initiatives like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) and increasing diplomatic engagement with Western powers, India's foreign policy reflects a strategic recalibration. Such moves, too, can influence citizens' worldviews and assessments of countries from different regions of the globe.

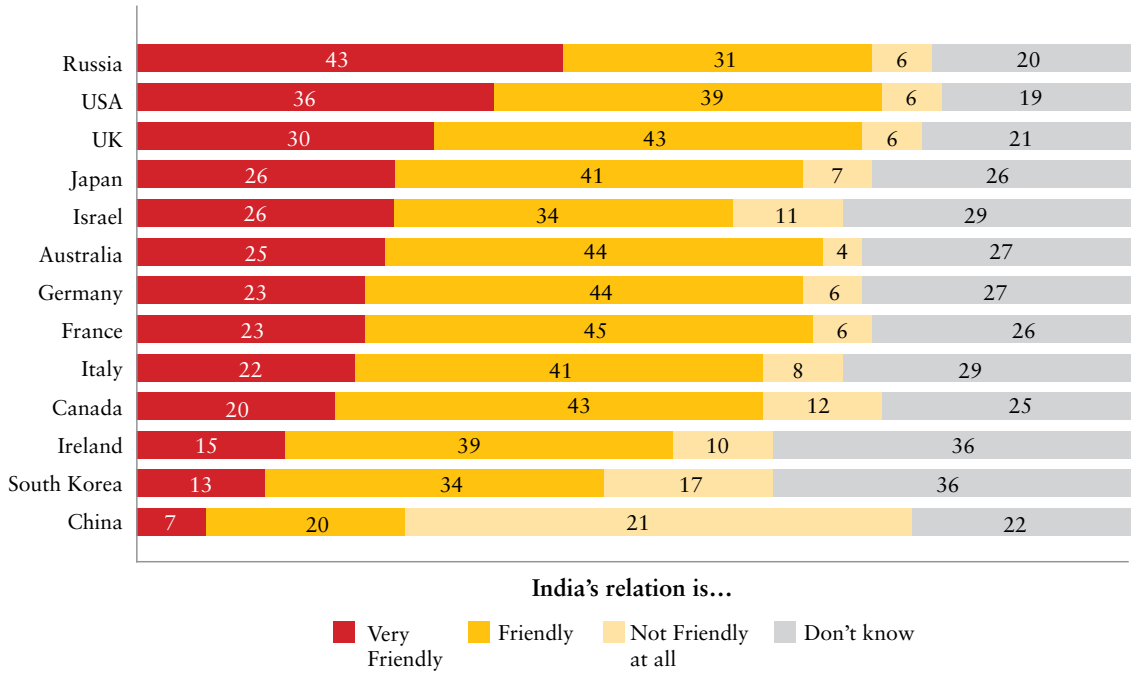
This chapter delves into the citizens' perceptions of India's relations with other countries, examining key questions related to which nations are viewed as friendly or hostile, which are seen as India's most trusted partners, and how important it is for India to maintain a positive image abroad.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section explores India's relations with various countries, focusing on public perceptions of friendliness, influence, and defence partnerships. The second section addresses Indian views on international events such as the Russia-Ukraine war, India's role in global diplomacy, and hosting international summits like the G20 in 2023. This section also tries to tap people's perception on trade and economy, particularly their views on whether to limit imports or exports or to strengthen local producers.

## 6.2. India's Relations with Other Countries

India's relationships with major global powers deeply influence its foreign policy. Public opinion, shaped by historical ties, contemporary partnerships, and geopolitical developments, provides a lens

**Figure 6.1: Perceived Relationship with Other Countries**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*

*Question asked: How would you describe India's relations with these countries? Are they very friendly, friendly, or not friendly?*

through which to assess these relationships. This section examines how Indians perceive their country's relations with other nations, highlighting which countries are seen as friendly, influential, and trustworthy, particularly in the defence sector.

### 6.2.1. Perceived Relationship with Countries

A question asked respondents to describe India's relations with various countries, ranging from very friendly to not friendly. Overall, nearly one-fourth of respondents did not share their opinion. However, the data suggest that different nations are perceived differently in the Indian public's imagination. These responses indicate that Russia is perceived as India's closest ally, with over two-fifths (43%) describing the relationship as very friendly, followed by the United States of America (USA), with over one in three (36%) considering the relationship as very friendly. Meanwhile, China is perceived overwhelmingly as not a friendly nation, with more than half (51%) of respondents expressing a negative view of the relationship (***Figure 6.1***). India's relationship with other Western nations, such as the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, France, and Australia, is predominantly friendly, reflecting strong diplomatic and economic ties. However, many respondents expressed uncertainty or lack of knowledge, particularly regarding countries like South Korea and Ireland.

The public's perception of India's relationships with the USA, Russia, and European countries varies significantly across city sizes, offering insights into how people view these nations as friendly partners. In smaller cities, a narrow gap is observed, with 41 percent of people considering Russia as having a very friendly relationship with India, compared to 37 percent for the USA. In mid-sized cities, Russia is viewed more favourably, leading by 10 percentage points over the USA. In contrast, gap remains same (10) in mid-sized and big cities, with 45 percent perceiving Russia as very friendly, compared to 38 percent for the USA, highlighting nuanced preferences shaped by urban contexts ***(Table 6.1)***.

When it comes to European nations, smaller cities display a modest perception of friendliness, with the United Kingdom (UK) leading at 30 percent, followed by France (21%), Germany (20%), and Italy (18%). Mid-sized cities reflect similar trends, with 26 percent considering the UK very friendly, while perceptions of France (23%), Germany (22%), and Italy (17%) remain lower. Big cities, however, show a stronger sense of shared relationships, with the UK perceived very positively by 33 percent, followed by Germany (27%), Italy (27%), and France (23%). The UK consistently emerged as the most positively viewed European partner.

**Table 6.1: Perception of Relations by Urbanity**

| City type | Very friendly relations with | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | Russia | UK | Germany | France | Italy |
| Small cities | 37 | 41 | 30 | 20 | 21 | 18 |
| Mid-sized cities | 33 | 43 | 26 | 22 | 23 | 17 |
| Big cities | 38 | 45 | 33 | 27 | 23 | 27 |

*Note: All figures are in percentage. Only the first category of 'very friendly' has been analysed.*
*Question asked: How would you describe India's relations with these countries? Are they very friendly, friendly, or not friendly?*

Similarly, education plays a significant role in shaping perceptions of India's relations with major global powers, including the USA, Russia, and European countries. Across all education levels, Russia is consistently viewed more favourably than the USA, with the gap widening as educational attainment increases. Among non-literate respondents, 17 percent perceive Russia as "very friendly," compared to just 10 percent for the USA—a 7 percentage point difference. However, as education levels rise, the preference for Russia grows more pronounced. Among college-educated respondents, half view Russia as very friendly, compared to two in five (41%) for the USA, demonstrating Russia's sustained advantage across all education categories. A similar trend is observed for perceptions of European countries. Among non-literate respondents, perceptions of "very friendly" relations with the UK, Germany, France, and Italy remain low, ranging between 10 percent and 11 percent. These perceptions improve with higher education. For instance, among college-educated respondents, nearly one in three (34%) view the UK as very friendly, followed by Germany (27%), France (26%), and Italy (25%) ***(Table 6.2)***. The UK emerges as the most positively viewed European country across all education levels, except the non-literates. This trend underlines how education influences geopolitical awareness and perceptions, with educated individuals expressing a nuanced understanding of India's relationships with global powers.

Historically, Russia has been regarded as a steadfast ally of India, especially during the Cold War, when older generations witnessed close diplomatic, defence, and economic ties. Within this historical context, it was believed that older individuals would per-

**Table 6.2: Perception of Relations by Level of Educational Attainment**

| Level of educational attainment | Very friendly relations with | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | Russia | UK | Germany | France | Italy |
| Non-literate | 10 | 17 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 11 |
| Some schooling | 23 | 27 | 20 | 14 | 13 | 13 |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 31 | 39 | 27 | 20 | 18 | 18 |
| College and above | 41 | 50 | 34 | 27 | 26 | 25 |

*Note: All figures are in percentage. Only the first category of 'very friendly' has been analysed.*
*Question asked: How would you describe India's relations with these countries? Are they very friendly, friendly, or not friendly?*

**Table 6.3: Perception of Relations by Different Age Groups**

| Age groups | Very friendly relations with | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | Russia | UK | Germany | France | Italy |
| 18 to 25 years | 40 | 48 | 33 | 27 | 25 | 25 |
| 26 to 35 years | 37 | 45 | 30 | 24 | 24 | 22 |
| 36 to 45 years | 34 | 43 | 28 | 24 | 22 | 23 |
| 46 to 55 years | 33 | 38 | 28 | 21 | 22 | 19 |
| 56 years and above | 29 | 34 | 26 | 17 | 16 | 15 |

*Note: All figures are in percentage. Only the first category of 'very friendly' has been analysed.*
*Question asked: How would you describe India's relations with these countries? Are they very friendly, friendly, or not friendly?*

**Table 6.4: Perception of Relations by Level of Exposure to Western World Through Various Means of Communication**

| Exposure to Western world through various platforms | Very friendly relations with | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | Russia | UK | Germany | France | Italy |
| No exposure | 25 | 31 | 21 | 14 | 14 | 15 |
| Low exposure | 37 | 51 | 30 | 23 | 24 | 21 |
| Moderate exposure | 43 | 51 | 37 | 29 | 28 | 27 |
| High exposure | 41 | 44 | 34 | 31 | 27 | 25 |

*Note: All figures are in percentage. Only the first category of 'very friendly' has been analysed.*
*Question asked: How would you describe India's relations with these countries? Are they very friendly, friendly, or not friendly?*

ceive closer ties with Russia compared to other Western countries. However, contrary to this presumed generational gap in perceptions of India's international relations, the data shows that younger people, particularly those aged 18–25, view friendly relations with Russia as well as other Western countries more positively than older age groups. For instance, 48 percent of this youngest cohort consider Russia as "very friendly," surpassing the overall figure of 43 percent. Similarly, their perceptions of Western countries, including the USA (40%), the UK (33%), and Germany (27%), exceed those of older age groups, particularly those aged 56 and above, where such ratings drop significantly ***(Table 6.3)***.

This trend suggests that younger generations are not only maintaining a favourable view of Russia—likely due to its enduring historical significance in India's diplomatic relations—while simultaneously embracing the idea of stronger ties with Western nations. In contrast, older individuals, who experienced the peak of Indo-Russian alliances during the Cold War, tend to prioritise Russia over Western countries, though with lower overall enthusiasm compared to younger respondents.

There is a significant influence of exposure to the Western world on public perceptions of India's relations with global powers, particularly the USA, Russia, and European countries. The data show that individuals with no exposure to Western media tend to view Russia more favourably than the USA, with 31 percent perceiving Russia as "very friendly" compared to 25 percent for the USA. As exposure increases, perceptions of both the USA and Russia improve, but Russia (51%) maintains a stronger perception,

particularly among those with low and moderate exposure. Notably, the gap narrows among those with high exposure, suggesting that greater awareness reduces the perceived distinction between the two powers. Similarly, perceptions of European countries improve with higher exposure, with the UK leading in positive ratings across all categories. Among those with no exposure, comparatively lower proportions of respondents view European nations as "very friendly," but this rises significantly with increased exposure, especially for the UK (up to 34%) and Germany (31%) ***(Table 6.4)***. These trends reflect how increased access to global communication platforms enhances the recognition of stronger ties with Western nations, especially the UK, while Russia continues to be viewed as a longstanding ally, particularly among less-exposed individuals.

Among all the countries, Indians perceive their relationship with China as the most hostile. Several clashes between the Indian and Chinese armies have occurred in the north-eastern regions of India, where the repercussions of these conflicts are more directly felt. As a result, individuals living in these areas are more likely to assert that India does not maintain a friendly relationship with China ***(Figure 6.2)***.

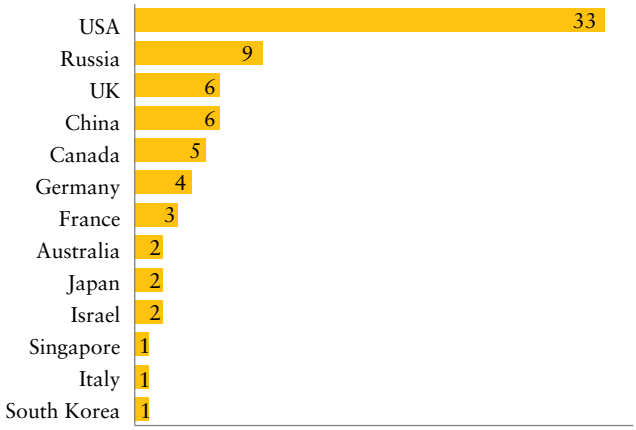
**Figure 6.2: Region-wise Perception of Hostile Relations with China**


*Note: All figures are in percentage.*
*Question asked: How would you describe India's relations with China? Is it very friendly, friendly, or not friendly?*

### 6.2.2. Influence of Foreign Powers on India

In addition to perceived friendliness, Respondents were asked which country they believe has the most significant influence on India. According to the survey, the USA is seen as the most influential country, with one in three surveyed Indians (33%) naming it the foreign power with the most significant impact on India ***(Figure 6.3)***. This reflects the growing Indo-USA partnership, especially in defence, trade, and technology. Russia, traditionally seen as a close ally, is perceived to have much less influence, with only nine per cent of respondents naming it as having the most significant impact on India. The mention of European countries like the UK, Germany, and France by respondents, though not as influential as the USA, also indicates the role of these nations in shaping India's foreign policy.

**Figure 6.3: Perception of Countries with the Greatest Influence on India**




*Note: All figures are in percentage.*
*Question asked: In your opinion, which country has the most influence on India?*

Nearly two in five (39%) respondents in small cities viewed the USA as the most influential, a higher proportion than in mid-sized and big cities, where one-third respondents (33% and 31% respectively) identified the USA. Russia, by contrast, maintained a relatively steady level of influence across these city types ranging between eight to 11 percent. Educational attainment also influenced perceptions, with the respondents' views of the USA's influence growing with higher education levels. Among non-literate respondents, only 13 percent identified the USA as the most influential, whereas this figure rose to nearly two in five (38%) percent among college-educated respondents. Similarly, the perception of Russia's influence increased from four percent among non-literate respondents to 11 percent among college-educated respondents. This pattern suggests that highly educated individuals are more likely to recognise the influence of both superpowers, though the USA remains significantly ahead.

Regionally, the USA is seen as the most influential across the board, with a little over one in three (34%) respondents in both the North and South naming the USA, followed by 33 percent in the West and 28 percent in the East. Russia's influence is perceived slightly more in the South and East, with 12 percent and 11 percent of respondents respectively identifying it, compared to eight percent in the North and seven percent in the West. This suggests that regional factors may influence how people perceive foreign influence.

**Table 6.5: Perceived Influence of Different Countries on India Across Demographics**

| | Which country has the most influence on India? | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | USA | Russia | UK | China |
| **City type** | | | | |
| Small cities | 39 | 9 | 5 | 5 |
| Mid-sized cities | 33 | 11 | 6 | 5 |
| Big cities | 31 | 8 | 7 | 7 |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | | |
| Non-literate | 13 | 4 | 1 | 6 |
| Some schooling | 23 | 7 | 5 | 4 |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 31 | 8 | 4 | 6 |
| College and above | 38 | 11 | 7 | 6 |
| **Regions** | | | | |
| North | 34 | 8 | 6 | 5 |
| South | 34 | 12 | 6 | 6 |
| East | 28 | 11 | 5 | 7 |
| West | 33 | 7 | 7 | 4 |
| **Age groups** | | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 35 | 10 | 7 | 6 |
| 26 to 35 years | 36 | 10 | 7 | 6 |
| 36 to 45 years | 32 | 9 | 5 | 6 |
| 46 to 55 years | 30 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| 56 years and above | 28 | 8 | 5 | 5 |
| **Economic class** | | | | |
| Poor | 22 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| Lower | 31 | 9 | 5 | 4 |
| Middle | 38 | 9 | 6 | 8 |
| Upper | 40 | 11 | 9 | 6 |

*Note: All figures are in percentage. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: In your opinion, which country has the most influence on India?*

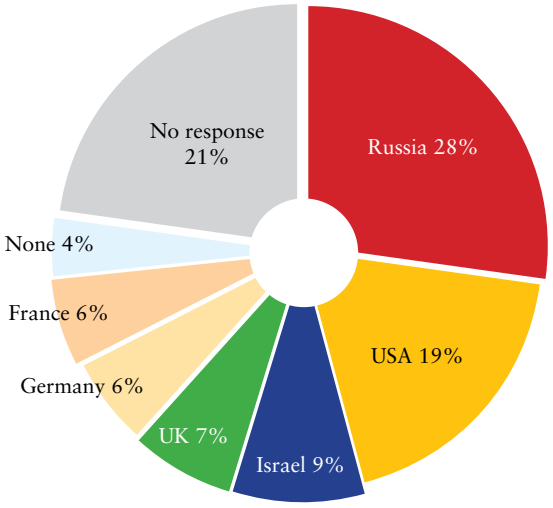
Age and economic class also create some differences in perception. Younger respondents, especially those 18 to 25 years old, are more likely to identify the USA as the most influential (35%), compared to 28 percent among those aged 56 and above. Similarly, wealthier respondents are likely to see the USA as having the most significant influence, with two in five affluent people identifying the USA, compared to just one in five (22%) among the poor (***Table 6.5***). This could indicate that economic exposure to global trade and international business might shape perceptions of foreign influence, with wealthier individuals and younger people having more engagement with or awareness of the USA's global presence. The USA is overwhelmingly seen as India's most influential foreign power, especially among younger, wealthier, and more educated respondents. While Russia remains a key player, it is perceived as having much less influence than the USA. Other Western countries and regional powers, such as the UK, China, and Canada, also play notable roles, though to a lesser extent. These findings reflect the shifting dynamics of India's global partnerships, with the USA emerging as a dominant influence in the eyes of many Indians.

### 6.2.3. Trusted Partners in Defence

Regarding defence, India has historically relied on Russia for military equipment, a trend reflected in the survey results. Respondents were asked which country they trust most as an ally for defence weapons procurement. Russia remains the most trusted defence partner, with over one in four (28%) respondents expressing confidence in it. However, the USA is catching up, with 19 percent of respondents viewing

it as a reliable partner. Despite its smaller size, Israel also ranks highly, reflecting the deepening defence cooperation between India and Israel, particularly in areas like counterterrorism and technology transfer *(**Figure 6.4**)*.

**Figure 6.4: Trusted Countries for Defence Weapons Procurement**



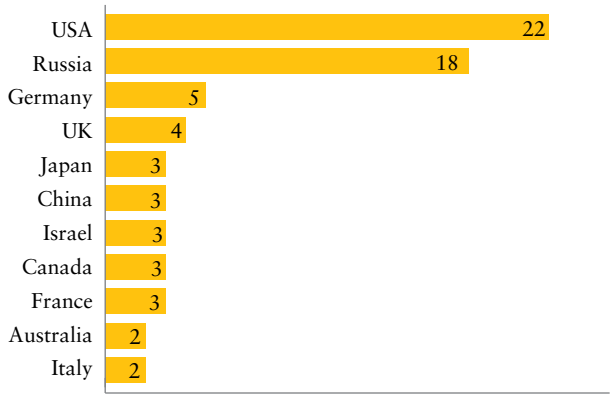

*Question asked: Among Russia, the USA, the UK, Germany, France, and Israel, which country is the most trustable ally to buy defence weapons from?*

### 6.2.4. India's Quest for World Leadership

India's ambition to become a global leader, often described as aspiring to be a *Vishwa Guru* (world leader or teacher), is essential to contemporary domestic discourse. Respondents were asked which country they believe can help India achieve this goal. Once again, the USA emerged as the top choice, with over one-fifth (22%) viewing it as the country most likely to help India become a world leader. While still significant, Russia ranks second with 18 percent, signalling India's growing alignment with the West even in its quest for global leadership *(**Figure 6.5**)*.

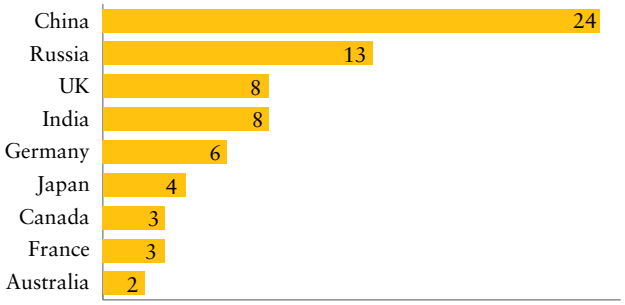
Survey respondents were also asked which country, aside from India, they believe could emerge as a global leader if the USA's economy were to collapse. China is viewed as the most likely country to emerge as a worldwide leader in the event of a USA economic collapse, with 24 percent of respondents expressing this view *(**Figure 6.6**)*. This reflects China's growing economic and geopolitical influence, even as it remains a country with which India has a contentious relationship. Russia, the UK, and India also rank highly, indicating a diverse range of views on the future of global leadership.

**Figure 6.5: Country that Can Help India Achieve World Leadership**




*Note: All figures are in percentage. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: India is trying to achieve the feat of "Vishwa Guru". Which country can help India the most in becoming a world leader?*

**Figure 6.6: Country That Could Emerge as Global Leaders**




*Note: All figures are in percentage. The rest named other countries like Italy, Brazil, South Korea, Mexico.*
*Question asked: Suppose America's economy collapses tomorrow; which country apart from India can emerge as the world leader?*

## 6.3. How Indians View International Events

India's engagement with global diplomacy, including its role in hosting international summits like the G20, has sparked debate about the value of such events. Moreover, international conflicts like the Russia-Ukraine war have also drawn varying opinions from the Indian public.

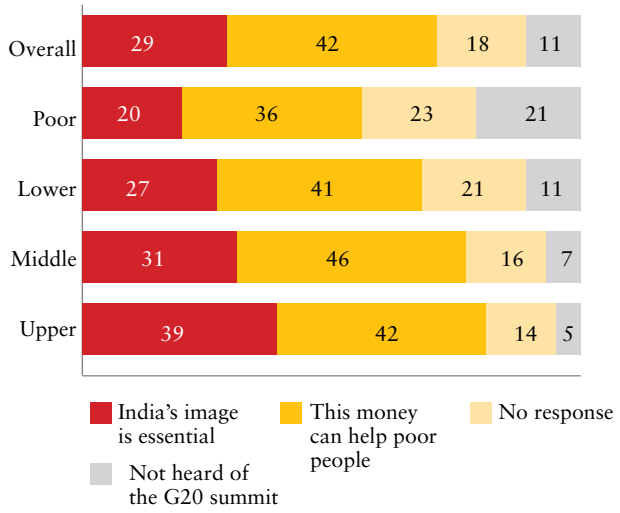
### 6.3.1. India's Global Image vs. Domestic Priorities

One key question is whether Indians believe beautifying cities before international summits like the G20 is essential for enhancing India's global image or if the funds should be spent on addressing domestic poverty. A significant portion of respondents (42%) believe that money allocated to enhancing India's im-

age for events like the G20 should be redirected to help people experiencing poverty instead. This perspective prioritises domestic socio-economic needs over foreign policy driven image enhancement. However, three in ten respondents (29%) prioritise India's global image, suggesting that they see these events as an opportunity to bolster India's international standing. This dichotomy highlights a recurring debate within Indian society about balancing resources between foreign policy aspirations and urgent domestic challenges.

People from different economic classes express varying opinions. Among respondents from lower-income classes, nearly one in three (36%) advocate redirecting funds to poverty alleviation, while only one in five support prioritising India's image for international summits. In contrast, respondents from higher-income classes are somewhat more inclined to value India's global image, with two in five (39%) supporting city beautification for events like the G20 and 42 percent believing that the funds should aid people experiencing poverty ***(Figure 6.7)***.

**Figure 6.7: Opinions on India's Global Image vs. Domestic Poverty**



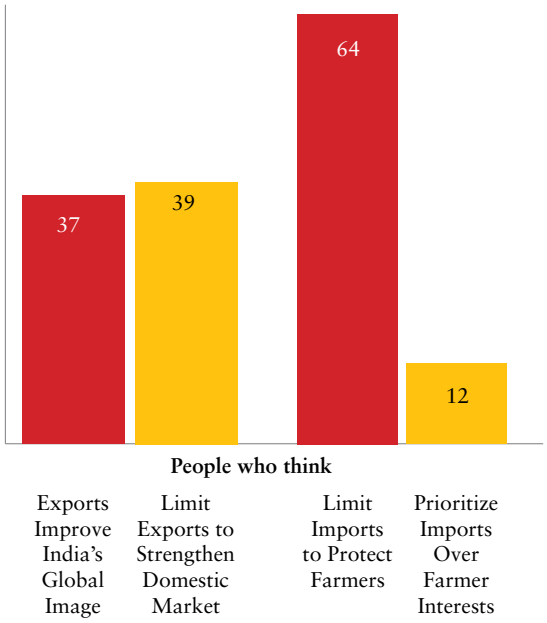

*Note: All figures are in percentage.*

*Question asked: Some people believe beautifying cities before international summits like G20 is essential to enhance India's global image. Others argue that this money could be better spent helping poor people who struggle with poverty. What is your opinion?*

### 6.3.2. Perceptions On Transforming India's Global Economic Outlook

There are several views of people on what could be the possible ways to improve the perception of Indian economy in the global world. Growth in GDP, rise in income levels and reduction in rich-poor gap can help change the image. India requires a vibrant and diversified domestic economy, but the factor that matters most is a positive balance of payments in global financial market. Respondents were asked which is a better option, – to export more or to limit it to strengthen domestic market. The data reveal that there is no clear opinion among people. People who are likely to believe that exporting goods can improve India's international image (37%) and people who believe in limiting exports to strengthen domestic market (39%) are almost equal ***(Figure 6.8)***.

**Figure 6.8: Public Opinion on Trade and Economic Self-Reliance**




*Note: All figures are in percentage. The rest did not respond.*

*Question asked: Please tell me which of the following two statements you agree with the most.*

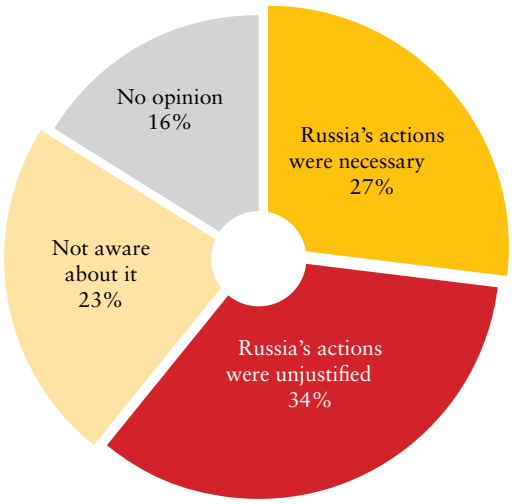
However, on the question of farmers, more than three out of five respondents are likely to believe that India should limit the import of food grains to protect our farmers ***(Figure 6.8)***. This reflects the insecurity among the respondents for high influx of foreign food grains and the inflated prices due to the same. Fair competitive market facilitated through import substitution could help the farmers to sell their produce at better prices and invest in improving the quality of their produce.

### 6.3.3. The Russia-Ukraine War

Finally, when people were asked to share their opinions on Russia's actions in Ukraine, opinions were fractured, with a slight edge toward criticism of Russia's actions. While just over one in four (27%) believed Russia's actions were necessary, one-third (34%) view them as unjustified. A significant portion of respondents (23%) are unaware of the issue, reflecting the complexity of global conflicts and their

lack of resonance with the general public. An interesting dimension of the data is the variation in opinion among those who view Russia as beneficial to India's emergence as a global leader. Within this group, a higher percentage (27%) consider Russia's actions necessary, suggesting that those who favour Russia as a strategic partner for India generally consider Russia's actions necessary. (***Figure 6.9***)

**Figure 6.9: Opinions On Russia's Actions in Ukraine**




## Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter highlights the complexity of Indian public perceptions regarding the country's foreign policy and global relationships. The data reveals a dynamic shift in India's global positioning, where traditional alliances, such as that with Russia, coexist with growing ties to the USA and Western powers. This is particularly evident among younger, more educated demographics who view the USA as a key partner. However, while India's international relations are evolving, there remains a significant concern about balancing global ambitions with domestic challenges, such as poverty and inequality. The public's divided views on whether resources should be directed toward enhancing India's global image or addressing internal issues highlight this tension.

India's stance on international conflicts, like the Russia-Ukraine war, reflects the nation's struggle to navigate its foreign policy between historical alliances and global norms. The chapter underscores that India's foreign policy is not just shaped by governmental decisions but also by the perceptions of its citizens, who influence the nation's global agenda. As India grows as a global power, public opinion will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the country's international relations and its global identity, highlighting the interplay between domestic concerns and foreign policy aspirations.

7

# Indians' Perception of Germany

CHAPTER 7

# Indians' Perception of Germany

## 7.1. Introduction

Germany has long been recognised for its robust education system, thriving economy, and role as a trusted strategic partner of India during times of crisis. It is perceived as an economic powerhouse with a strong industrial base, renowned for its technological advancements and high-quality products. This positive perception extends to its ability to maintain financial stability and provide opportunities for collaboration in key sectors such as manufacturing, renewable energy, and information technology. For Indian policymakers and the general public, Germany's partnership is pivotal in addressing global challenges such as climate change, economic disruptions, and geopolitical tensions.

The German education system is highly regarded for its strong emphasis on academic quality and practical training. The presence of top-ranking universities and specialised technical institutions reflects the system's commitment to innovation and excellence. Many Indian students perceive the German education system as effective, particularly in fields such as engineering, technology, and the sciences, where Germany is considered a global leader besides niche centres for the study of South Asia, its culture and philosophy. The dual-skilling model—which integrates class room learning with hands-on industrial training—is an area of increasing awareness among Indian youth. This dual education system, where students combine classroom learning with real-world training, is especially appreciated by Indian observers as a model that could bridge skill gaps in India's workforce and help align educational outcomes with job market needs (Uderani et al., 2023). This model resonates with the aspirations of students who value employability, skill development, and academic qualifications.

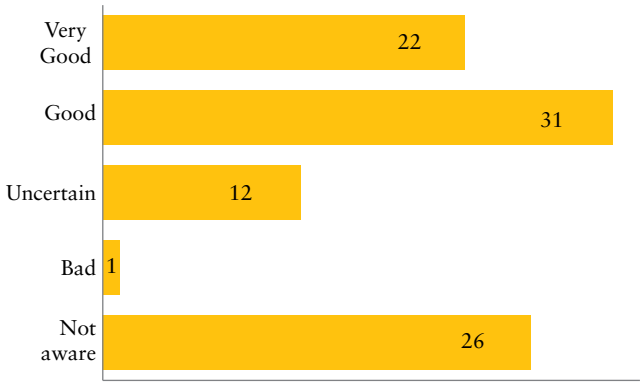
The affordability of education in Germany is a significant factor driving Indian interest. Unlike many other countries, German public universities often charge minimal or no tuition fees, even for international students. This financial accessibility is complemented by scholarship programmes, such as those offered by the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst), which support Indian students' academic pursuits. The growing perception that a German education enhances career prospects—both within India and globally—further motivates Indian students to prefer Germany for their education. Additionally, Germany's inclusive policies towards international students, such as visa regulations that support work opportunities, play a crucial role in shaping these perceptions. Indians view Germany positively, appreciating its emphasis on stability, economic strength, and robust educational systems (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ], 2012).

Keeping this background in mind, this chapter seeks to explore the perceptions of Indians towards Germany. The first section focuses on perceptions of the country's education system, its effectiveness, and affordability. The second section examines Indian familiarity with Germany's economy, companies, and perceptions of German product quality. Lastly, the third section addresses diplomatic relations and public trust in Germany from an Indian perspective.

## 7.2. Perceptions of the German Education System

The German education system has garnered significant attention among Indian students in recent years, with a reported 107% increase in the number of Indian students studying in Germany within four years (studying-in-germany.org)

**Figure 7.1: Perception of the German Education System**



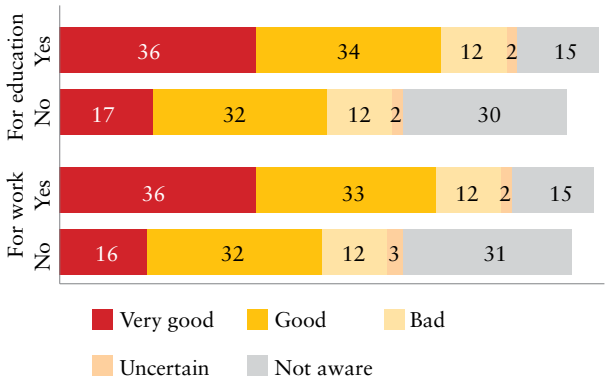

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Now I will ask you some questions related to Germany. Please tell me how good you think their education system is.*

This trend highlights German education's growing interest and perceived value in India. The data indicates that a little over half of the respondents (53%) hold a favourable perception of the German education system, with nearly one in four (22%) perceiving it as very good, and close to one in three (31%) considering it as good (***Figure 7.1***). Despite this positive outlook, a significant proportion remains uncertain (12%) or unfamiliar with the system (26%).

Age, education, and economic status emerge as critical factors influencing perceptions of the German education system. Younger respondents, particularly those aged 25 years or below, were more positive towards the German education system; over one in four (27%) rated it as 'very good.' This enthusiasm diminishes with age as older cohorts display lower levels of awareness and favourability. Education level further amplifies this divide; those with higher qualifications perceive the German education system more positively than individuals with lower education levels, particularly non-literate respondents. Quite understandably, nearly three in five (58%) non-literate respondents were unaware of the German education system. Similarly, economic status plays a significant role, with respondents from middle and upper economic classes exhibiting greater awareness and positivity towards the German system than those in poorer segments ***(Figure 7.2)***.

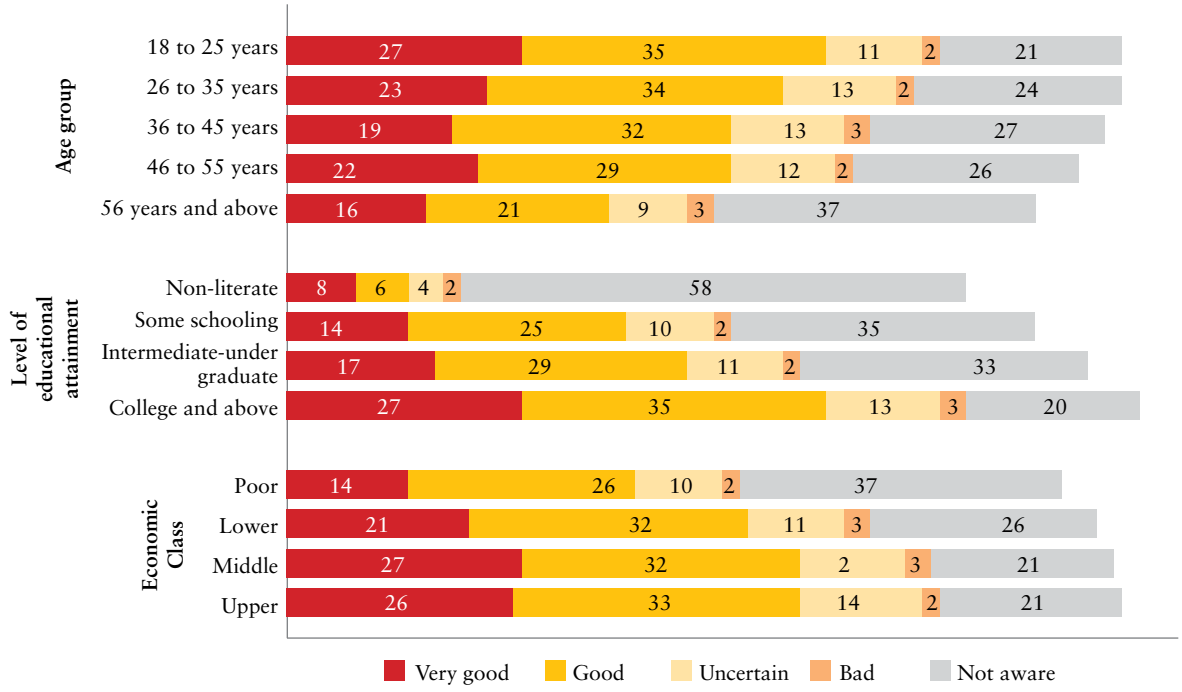
The aspiration to study or work in Germany aligns strongly with perceptions of its education system. Among those aspiring to pursue education or work in Germany, more than one in three (36%) rate the system as 'very good,' significantly contrasting to nearly one in six among those without such aspirations ***(Figure 7.3)***. These findings indicate a strong association between positive perceptions and the desire to engage academically or professionally with the German system.

**Figure 7.3: Aspiration to Study and Work in Germany and Perception of the German Education System**




*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Now I will ask you some questions related to Germany. Please tell me how good you think their education system is.*

**Figure 7.2: Perception of the German Education System by Social Demographics**




*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Now I will ask you some questions related to Germany. Please tell me how good you think their education system is.*

**Table 7.1: Perception of the German Education System across various types of cities**

| City type | The education system in Germany | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very good | Good | Uncertain | Bad | Not aware of the German education system |
| Small cities | 31 | 31 | 10 | 2 | 22 |
| Mid–sized cities | 22 | 31 | 12 | 2 | 28 |
| Big cities | 19 | 32 | 12 | 3 | 26 |

*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Now I will ask you some questions related to Germany. Please tell me how good you think their education system is.*

**Table 7.2: Opinion on German and Indian Education System by Level of Exposure to Western World**

| Exposure to the Western world through different platforms | People's perception of German and Indian education system | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | German education system is better | Indian education system is better | Both are of equal standing | Not aware about German education system |
| No exposure | 21 | 15 | 12 | 40 |
| Low exposure | 40 | 12 | 18 | 27 |
| Moderate exposure | 50 | 13 | 21 | 13 |
| High exposure | 48 | 15 | 22 | 11 |

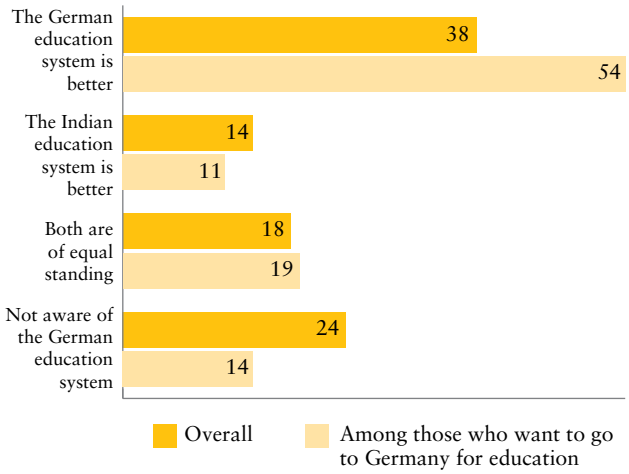
*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond. Question asked: Some people think that the German education system is better than the Indian education system, while others are likely to believe that the Indian education system is better. What do you think?*

Geographical locations also shape perceptions, with respondents from smaller cities being the most positive about the German education system. Nearly three in ten (31%) respondents from small cities rate it as 'very good,' compared to two in ten (19%) in larger cities. This could reflect the aspirational value of international education in less urbanised areas, where global exposure is often perceived as a marker of upward mobility ***(Table 7.1)***.

The comparative evaluation of the German and Indian education systems further highlights Germany's growing appeal among Indians. Nearly four in ten respondents (38%) favour the German system, considering it better than the Indian education system. Notably, those aspiring to go to Germany for education were more likely to believe that the German education system is better than the Indian system. In contrast, only 14 percent believe the Indian education system surpasses the German system. Additionally, nearly one in four (24%) respondents expressed a lack of awareness regarding the German system ***(Figure 7.4)***.

Among those exposed to Western entertainment, the perception of German education as a better system increases significantly. Respondents with high and moderate levels of exposure viewed German education more favourably than Indian education, with 48 percent and 50 percent respectively, compared to only 21 percent among those without exposure ***(Table 7.2)***.

**Figure 7.4: Comparison between German and Indian Education Systems**




*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Some people think that the German education system is better than the Indian education system, while others are likely to believe that the Indian education system is better. What do you think?*

The perception that the German education system is better than the Indian system is further influenced by whether individuals or someone they know have studied abroad. Half of those who, or whose acquaintances, have studied abroad lean towards Germany as having a better education system, compared

to just 14 percent who favour the Indian education system. In contrast, among those who, or whose acquaintances, haven't studied abroad, around 37 percent believe the German education system is better. Notably, the perception of the Indian education system as superior remains consistent at 14 percent, regardless of whether a family member or relative has studied abroad *(**Table 7.3**)*.

**Table 7.3: Opinion on the German Education System among those whose Family Member or a Relative has Studied Abroad**

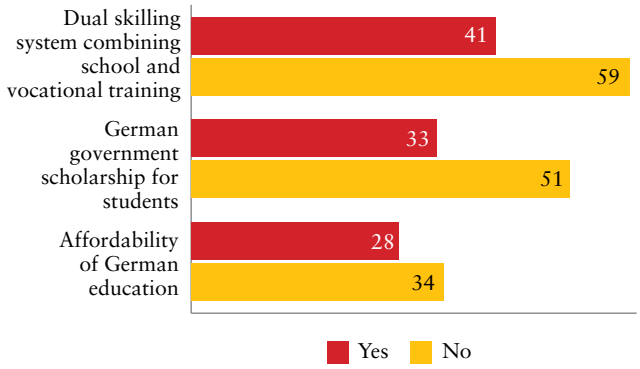
| Family member/ relative who has studied abroad | People's perception of German and Indian education system | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | The German education system is better | The Indian education system is better | Both are of equal standing | Not aware of the German education system |
| Yes | 50 | 14 | 16 | 17 |
| No | 37 | 14 | 18 | 25 |

*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Some people think that the German education system is better than the Indian education system, while others are likely to believe that the Indian education system is better. What do you think?*

However, the data also highlights significant gaps in awareness about the unique features of the German education system. Most respondents (59%) are unaware of the dual skilling system, a hallmark of German education that combines schooling with vocational training and offers financial incentives. Similarly, perceptions of affordability remain mixed, with only 28 percent considering higher education in Germany accessible to Indians. Awareness of scholarships provided by both the Indian and German governments for studying in Germany is also limited, with over half (51%) of respondents unfamiliar with such opportunities *(**Figure 7.5**)*.

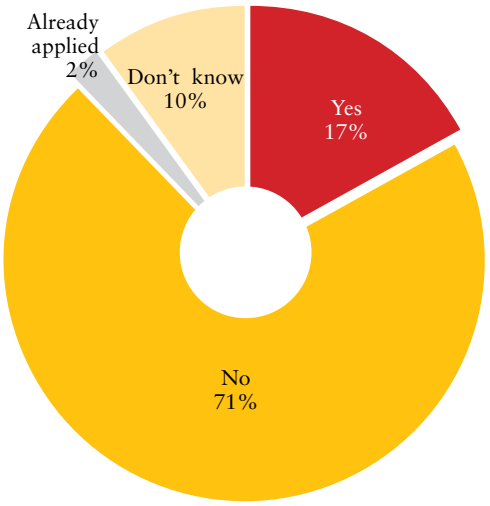
Despite Germany's reputation for academic excellence, the data reveal that only 17 percent of students plan to apply for courses in Germany, while a large majority (71%) do not *(**Figure 7.6**)*. This limited interest can be attributed to barriers such as lack of awareness, concerns about affordability, linguistic handicaps and logistical challenges. Among those planning to apply, career growth opportunities are the most compelling reason, cited by over one in three (34%) students. This aligns with earlier findings about the aspirational value of international education, where global exposure is often linked to upward mobility. Other motivations, including better courses, superior infrastructure, and affordability, highlight Germany's strengths as an education destination *(**Figure 7.7**)*.

**Figure 7.5: Awareness about some of the features of German Education System**



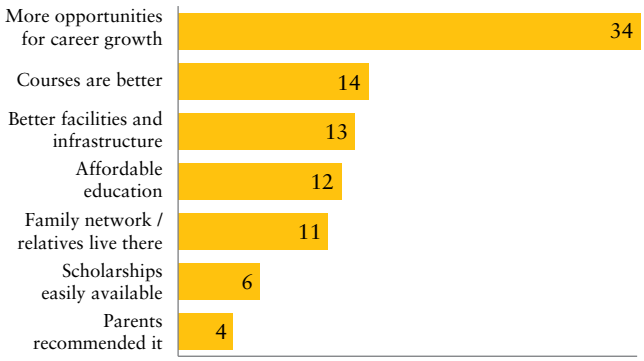

*Note: All the figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: a. Are you aware of the dual skilling system in Germany, where you learn a profession simultaneously with studies (in school) and get paid during this time? b. Do you think higher education in Germany is affordable for Indians? c. Are you aware of the scholarships provided by both the Indian government and the German government for studying in Germany?*

**Figure 7.6: Students planning to apply for any course in Germany**




*Question asked: Are you planning to apply for a course in Germany?*

**Figure 7.7: Reason for Applying for a Course in Germany**




*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: What is the reason for planning to apply for a course in Germany?*

**Table 7.4: Awareness About German Companies by Age and Economic Class**

| | People who can name the following companies | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Adidas | Audi | BMW | Bosch | Mercedes– Benz (Daimler AG) | Volkswagen |
| **Age group** | | | | | | |
| 18-25 years | 42 | 45 | 54 | 10 | 20 | 13 |
| 26-35 years | 37 | 40 | 51 | 8 | 16 | 16 |
| 36 to 45 years | 31 | 34 | 45 | 9 | 15 | 11 |
| 46 to 55 years | 25 | 34 | 41 | 8 | 15 | 9 |
| 56 years and above | 17 | 22 | 32 | 5 | 14 | 8 |
| **Economic class** | | | | | | |
| Poor | 24 | 31 | 35 | 5 | 12 | 6 |
| Lower | 33 | 38 | 46 | 7 | 15 | 11 |
| Middle | 35 | 39 | 53 | 10 | 17 | 13 |
| Upper | 38 | 40 | 53 | 11 | 21 | 18 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Can you name any three popular German companies?*

## 7.3. Indians' Perception of German Products

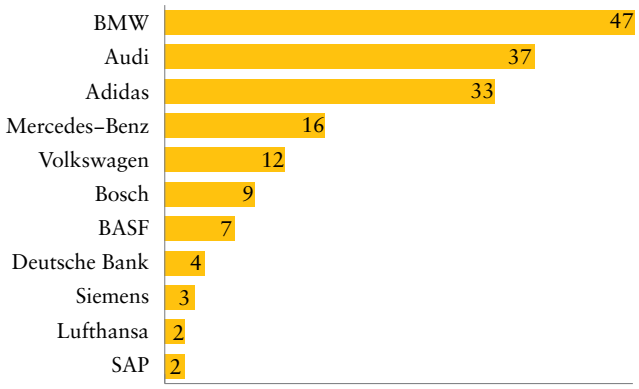
Germany is widely recognised as one of the world's most advanced and stable economies. As Europe's largest economy and the fourth-largest globally by nominal GDP, Germany is a powerhouse of industrial production, technological innovation, and export-oriented growth. Its economy is defined by a strong emphasis on engineering and manufacturing, and it has a highly skilled workforce, which together contribute to the global reputation of "Made in Germany" products.

According to the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), Germany is one of India's key partners on both bilateral and global platforms. As India's largest trading partner in Europe and a leading international trading nation, Germany has played a pivotal role in strengthening economic and political ties with India, particularly over the past decade. Over time, Germany has solidified its position as India's critical trade and investment partner. Bilateral trade between the two nations has grown significantly, with Germany emerging as a vital contributor to India's economic development.

While Germany's economic contributions to India are considerable, the perception of German products among Indian consumers presents a fascinating landscape of awareness and preference. This section delves into how Indians perceive German products and examines variations in awareness across different demographic groups.

Survey data indicates that recognition of German companies in India is primarily dominated by luxury and consumer-focused brands. Among respondents, BMW leads, with nearly half (47%) of surveyed urban Indians being familiar with the brand, followed by Audi (37%) and Adidas (33%). (***Figure 7.8***)

**Figure 7.8: Awareness About German Companies**




*Note: All the figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: Can you name any 3 popular German companies?*

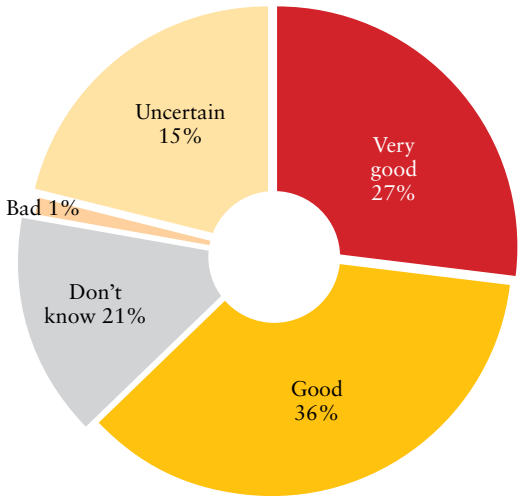
Awareness of German brands varies significantly across age groups. Younger respondents (18–25 years) exhibited the highest recognition of brands such as BMW (54%), Audi (45%), and Adidas (42%). Awareness decreases with age, with respondents aged 56 years and above showing notably lower recognition across all brands. These variations suggest that younger Indians, often more exposed to global consumer culture, are more familiar with German products than older age groups ***(Table 7.4)***.

Economic class also influences the awareness of German brands. Upper-class and, to some extent,

middle-class respondents reported higher familiarity with brands like BMW, Audi, and Adidas compared to their counterparts from lower and poor economic classes. The data suggests that the financial ability to purchase or aspire to own luxury goods correlates with increased awareness of these brands *(**Table 7.4**)*.

German products are widely perceived as high-quality among Indian respondents. Nearly two-thirds (63%) rate the quality of German products as either "very good" (27%) or "good" (36%). However, nearly one in six surveyed respondents (15%) remain uncertain about the quality, and two-fifths (21%) do not know about these products *(**Figure 7.9**)*. The perception of quality also varies by urbanity, with small-city respondents showing slightly more favourable views than those from mid-sized and big cities *(**Figure 7.10**)*.

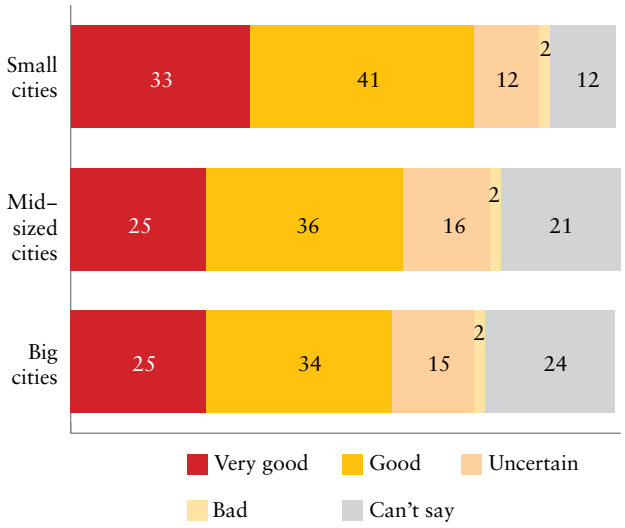
**Figure 7.9: Opinion On the Quality of Products Imported from Germany**




*Question asked: How good do you think the quality of products imported from Germany – very good, good, bad or very bad?*

Education plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of German products. Respondents with higher levels of education (college and above) were more likely to rate German products as very good, with nearly one-third (32%) doing so, compared to only 10% of non-literate respondents. This could be attributed to more educated individuals being generally more exposed to information about Germany and German companies. Economic class and age also influenced perceptions of the quality of imported German products. Wealthier respondents were more likely to consider German products of superior quality, with one-third of middle-class and upper-class respondents (33 percent and 32 percent respectively) rating them as "very good." Similarly, younger respondents (up to 25 years) were more inclined to view German

**Figure 7.10: Opinion On the Quality of Products Imported from Germany by Urbanity**




*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: How well do you think the quality of products imported from Germany is - very good, good, bad or very bad?*

products favourably than older age groups. The findings suggest that individuals at the marginal ends of age, economic class, and education were less aware of German products, which may have limited their ability to share informed opinions on the quality of products imported from Germany *(**Table 7.5**)*.

## 7.4. India's Reliance on Germany for Crisis Support

Against the backdrop of India and Germany's partnership in aiding each other during crises, the data reveals a mixed perception among Indians regarding the extent to which India can rely on Germany for help during times of crisis. While a significant proportion—nearly two in every five (39%) respondents—believe that India can somewhat depend on Germany, only eight percent felt India could rely on it to a great extent. Conversely, one in ten think India cannot at all be dependent on Germany in such situations. However, more than one in four (27%) respondents expressed uncertainty, indicating a lack of awareness or definitive opinion (***Figure 7.11***).

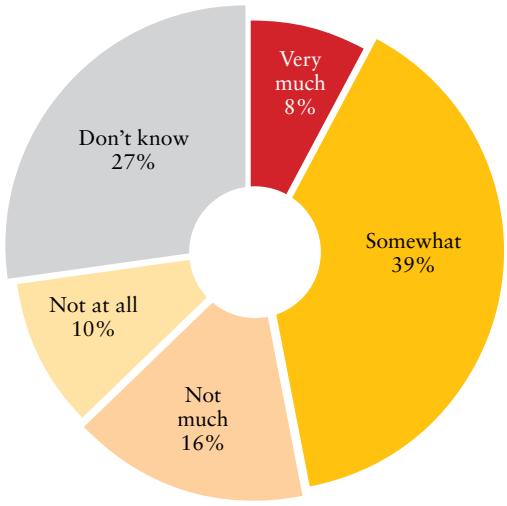
The perception of Germany's dependability for crisis support shows significant variation when analysed through the lens of personal connections or aspirations involving Germany. Respondents with family members or relatives who have travelled to Germany for work or studies perceive a higher level of dependability than those without such connections. Among those with family members working abroad, nearly two in three (64%) believe India can somewhat (50%)

**Table 7.5: Opinion On the Quality of Products Imported from Germany by Demographics**

| | People's perception about the quality of products imported from Germany | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very good | Good | Uncertain | Bad | Can't say |
| **Level of educational attainment** | | | | | |
| Non-literate | 10 | 14 | 9 | 1 | 66 |
| Some schooling | 16 | 28 | 14 | 4 | 38 |
| Intermediate-under graduate | 20 | 35 | 16 | 2 | 27 |
| College and above | 32 | 39 | 15 | 2 | 12 |
| **Age groups** | | | | | |
| 18 to 25 years | 30 | 40 | 14 | 1 | 14 |
| 26 to 35 years | 27 | 39 | 15 | 2 | 17 |
| 36 to 45 years | 27 | 32 | 17 | 3 | 20 |
| 46 to 55 years | 24 | 34 | 14 | 2 | 26 |
| 56 years and above | 17 | 28 | 12 | 4 | 39 |
| **Economic class** | | | | | |
| Poor | 17 | 31 | 15 | 2 | 35 |
| Lower | 24 | 35 | 16 | 3 | 22 |
| Middle | 33 | 38 | 12 | 2 | 15 |
| Upper | 32 | 38 | 16 | 2 | 13 |

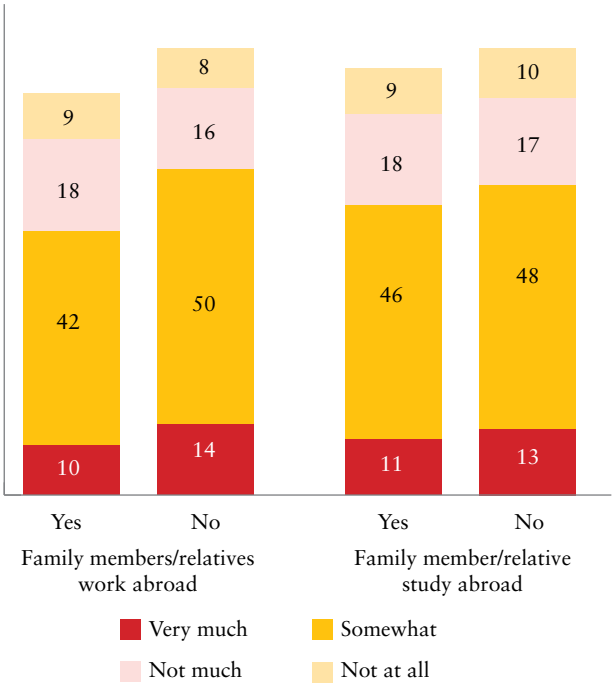
*Note: All figures are in percentages.*
*Question asked: How well do you think the quality of products imported from Germany; very good, good, bad or very bad?*

**Figure 7.11: Germany's Perceived Dependability for Help During Critical Times**




*Question asked: To what extent can India depend on Germany to help it during a period of crisis – very much, somewhat, not much or not at all?*

**Figure 7.12: Germany's Perceived Dependability for Help During Critical Times If Known Person Abroad for Work or Studies**




*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: To what extent can India depend on Germany to help it during a crisis ˇ very much, somewhat, not much or not at all?*

or very much (14%) depend on Germany, reflecting their exposure to international perspectives and personal experiences (***Figure 7.12***). However, respondents with family members studying abroad showed a slightly higher perception of Germany's dependability during times of crisis, with 13 percent compared to

11 percent for those without family studying abroad. This trend suggests that proximity to Germany through personal networks fosters a stronger belief in its reliability as a crisis partner, mainly if family networks work abroad.

The willingness to work, study, or settle in Germany is another critical factor shaping perceptions of dependability. Respondents who express a desire to work and study in Germany are more likely to perceive stronger dependability, with 12 percent believing India can depend on it and nearly half (49%) considering India can somewhat rely on Germany during times of crisis. A similar pattern emerges among those willing to settle down in Germany, where 15 percent believe in very much dependability and half believe in somewhat dependability. This indicates that individuals who see Germany as a potential long-term destination are more inclined to view the country as a reliable partner during crises *(**Table 7.6**)*.

The perception of dependability is also influenced by how respondents view the relationship between India and Germany. Positive perceptions of India's relationship with Germany are associated with greater confidence in Germany's willingness to assist India during crises. Those who consider the relationship very friendly are significantly more likely to perceive a high level of dependability. Among this group, 15 percent believe India can dramatically depend on Germany, and 49 percent view it as somewhat dependable. By contrast, respondents who see the relationship as not friendly express lower perceptions of dependability, with only a tiny percentage believing in dependability, and nearly one in three (33%) perceiving somewhat dependability *(**Table 7.7**)*.

**Table 7.7: Germany's Perceived Dependability for Help During Critical Times by Perceived Relationship with Germany**

| India's relationship with Germany | India's dependency on Germany to help it during a period of crisis | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very much | Somewhat | Not much | Not at all |
| Very friendly | 15 | 49 | 15 | 10 |
| Friendly | 8 | 47 | 20 | 10 |
| Not friendly at all | 9 | 33 | 19 | 16 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond.*
*Question asked: To what extent can India depend on Germany to help it during a crisis ˇ very much, somewhat, not much or not at all?*

## 7.5. Conclusion

Perceptions of the German education system among Indian respondents are predominantly positive; however, variations were observed across different demographics, including age, level of education, and economic class. The primary reason for these differing responses was that individuals with limited exposure to or distance from the education system were less aware of Germany's education offerings. Consequently, they were unable to respond comprehensively to questions about German education. Many respondents were unfamiliar with key features of the German education system, such as dual-skill education, scholarships, and affordable education. Nonetheless, nearly three in ten respondents were aware of these features.

The data also reveals a nuanced relationship between Indian perceptions of German products. Ger-

**Table 7.6: Germany's Perceived Dependability for Help During Critical Times if a Person Willing to Work or Study Abroad**

| Willing to... | India's dependency on Germany to help it during a period of crisis | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Very much | Somewhat | Not Much | Not at All |
| **Work in Germany** | | | | |
| No | 6 | 34 | 16 | 12 |
| Yes | 12 | 49 | 18 | 8 |
| **Study in Germany** | | | | |
| No | 6 | 34 | 16 | 12 |
| Yes | 12 | 49 | 17 | 8 |
| **Settle in Germany** | | | | |
| No | 6 | 36 | 16 | 12 |
| Yes | 15 | 49 | 16 | 6 |

*Note: All figures are in percentages. The rest did not respond or did not know.*
*Question asked: To what extent can India depend on Germany to help it during a crisis is - very much, somewhat, not much or not at all?*

man luxury and consumer brands enjoy high recognition and favourable quality assessments, while awareness of German industrial and financial companies remains comparatively limited. Younger, wealthier, and more educated individuals demonstrate greater familiarity with and appreciation for German products, suggesting that tailored marketing and educational initiatives could enhance brand visibility across diverse demographic groups.

Lastly, perceptions of Germany's dependability during crises are shaped by various factors, including personal connections, aspirations, and views on bilateral relations. Individuals with direct or indirect exposure to Germany—whether through family ties, employment, or education—are more likely to perceive Germany as a reliable ally in times of crisis. Similarly, those who view India-Germany relations as amicable tend to believe strongly in Germany's support during critical situations.

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# 8

# Conclusion

CHAPTER 8

# Conclusion

This study attempted to understand the popular perceptions of the 'West' among Indians. The survey probed various dimensions ranging from public opinion on Western culture, lifestyle, economic and educational opportunities to foreign policy concerns and priorities. The findings shed light on the different nuances of popular opinion on these multiple areas. In important ways, the study helps one understand how vital demographic factors like education levels, occupation, age, and place of residence shape a person's perception of the West.

The study comes at a crucial time, when Indian society is experiencing layers of change. Over three decades after economic liberalisation, India is on the cusp of a major transformation. As more Indians move to urban and semi-urban areas and experience upward economic mobility, their perception and thinking evolve and often undergo a major change. There is much greater exposure to Western ideas and ways of life across urban and semi-urban India. This exposure comes in the form of access to western products, cuisine and popular culture. At the same time, avenues for direct contact with the West are also increasing with more Indians travelling abroad for leisure, studies, and employment. Yet, the strong grounding and socialisation in an Indian social context continues to have an abiding influence.

The last three decades have also witnessed important changes at the foreign policy level. This in turn, has the potential to influence and transform popular opinion. Indian foreign policy has moved away from non-alignment and is actively forging new partnerships with Western countries. During the Cold War years, India's relations with Western countries was marked by pursuing a policy of maintaining equidistance. At the same time, a closed economy meant that foreign companies had little incentives to bring in large scale investments into India. This has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War. On the economic front, liberalisation has slowly transformed India into a more attractive investment destination. At the same time, India has forged closer ties with the United States and major European powers. For the West, India is often seen as an important counterweight against an increasingly belligerent China.

This study sought to explore perceptions of Indians about the West in general, and Germany in particular. While among the poor and less educated urban Indians, there is considerable ambiguity or absence of strong views about the 'West', the study still shows many interesting patterns with a strong flavour of curiosity, friendliness and concerns about self and identity. Overall, one can carve out six important takeaways from the findings flowing from this study.

## *Take-away One: A Favourable View of Western Economies and Quality of Life*

Overall, Western economies are viewed as being more prosperous in comparison to India. The West is perceived to have access to better employment opportunities. There is also a visible consensus that salaries are higher in the West. The same kind of work is likely to get better pay in the West in comparison to India. There is also a popular perception that the quality of life is better in Western countries when compared to India. The positive view of Western economies is likely to be strongest amongst those who have family members who either study or work in the West.

The overall positive perception of Western economies and quality of life has translated to a greater willingness to settle down abroad. The findings clearly indicate that amongst those who believe that employment opportunities and quality of life is better in the West, there is an increased aspiration to settle down abroad. Yet, there is also the realisation that a prosperous West also brings with it a higher cost of living and in real monetary value terms, the clear impact of the limited purchasing power is being recognised. In this context, the quality of life in the West is also measured by many in terms of the higher costs and the wider socio-cultural context.

## *Take-away Two: A Preference for Indian Cultural Values and Practices*

When it comes to cultural preferences, individuals have a less favourable attitude towards the West. Across all groups, there is a stronger preference for Indian cultural practices. When it comes to choice of clothes, there is a stronger preference for Indian wear during official meetings and family functions. On the other hand, for everyday wear, those in the younger age groups, demonstrate a stronger preference for Western clothing. This practical approach is clearly visible among most people. These findings also match the responses with regards to dietary choices. There is greater preference for Indian cuisine vis-à-vis Western food. Preference for Western food tends to increase amongst younger respondents and those with greater affluence.

Western culture is viewed more favourably when it comes to gender equality and cleanliness. Across a cross-section of responses, Western culture is seen as placing a premium on cleanliness. However, when it comes to emotional attachment to the family and overall helpfulness at times of distress, there is a more favourable outlook towards Indian cultural norms. There is also strong support for family structures where children and parents live together. There is a widespread willingness to practise Indian cultural norms and protect them from Western influences. The impact of family values and bonding seems to be clearly influencing socio-cultural attitudes.

The findings clearly indicate that support for Indian cultural values is strong across class, education, and employment categories. As Indians become more affluent and gain greater exposure to Western culture, their connectedness to Indian roots remains strong. While individuals may become a little more open to exploring western cuisine and clothing, their broader attitude towards Indian family values and culture remains the same.

## *Take-away Three: Willingness to Travel Abroad Depends on Various Factors*

While the number of Indians travelling abroad has increased significantly over the last two decades, the responses suggest that willingness to travel abroad is dependent on multiple factors. Those with higher levels of income, higher education, and employment in skilled jobs are more likely to have plans to travel abroad. Likewise, those living in big cities are more likely to be willing to travel abroad when compared to those in mid-sized and small cities. These trends hold true for those wanting to travel abroad for leisure, studies, and employment.

True to general expectations, the findings clearly indicate that foreign travel is closely dependent on class and income levels. It has an aspirational element. As people move up the social ladder, they are more willing to plan foreign travel. Further, the findings also indicate that foreign travel is closely associated with higher social status. India's growing middle class, with their increased disposable incomes are more likely to travel abroad. The data showed that there is a marked increase in the willingness to travel among those of a middle-income background. For the middle class, foreign travel is not just limited to leisure. Individuals in the middle class are likely to aspire to study and work abroad.

As individuals move up the social ladder and enter the middle class, studying and settling abroad is seen as a tool for that upward economic and social mobility. Economically, a foreign degree and job are likely to increase disposable income. Socially, studying and working abroad are associated with higher status. The findings reflect this attitude, as the aspirational element of studying and working abroad is relatively higher amongst those in the middle class.

## *Take-away Four: Public Perception of Russia and the USA is Largely Positive*

Overall, the public perception towards Russia is very positive. Across age, educational background, income, and professional categories, Russia is perceived as a friendly country. The positive attitude towards Russia is much stronger compared to the United States across all categories. This may well be linked to popular perceptions of the past relations between India and these western nations. The public perception towards the USA, the UK, Germany, and other European countries are also generally positive. It needs to be stressed that in consonance with contemporary developments, while people have a more positive attitude towards Russia, there is a widespread agreement

that the United States has a greater influence on Indian foreign policy. The attitude towards China on the other hand is widely negative.

Interestingly, the trend indicating a higher positive rating of Russia vis-à-vis the USA can be observed across all categories: education levels, social class, employment bands, and place of residence. This revealed that the overall positive view of Russia and the USA is deep rooted. Issues like the Russia-Ukraine War and the conflict in Gaza, which do not impact India directly, are unlikely to have a big impact on public opinion. On the other hand, as seen in the case of China, when the issue has a direct impact on India, it goes a long way in shaping public opinion.

A linked development merits attention: when it comes to spending on India's global image and domestic priorities, popular opinion calls for domestic issues to be given a higher degree of priority. Interestingly, this was an opinion held across income categories, with those in higher income groups also calling for prioritisation of domestic issues.

## *Take-away Five: Semi-urban India Witnessing Rising Aspirations*

An interesting trend was observed with regards to small and medium sized cities. While large urban centres like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad have been at the forefront of India's growth story, a quiet transformation is taking place in small and mid-sized cities. The increase in disposable income in these small towns has resulted in growing aspirations and changing attitudes. The survey results capture this change. Respondents in small and mid-sized cities also have strong aspirations to travel to the West. Similarly, these respondents are likely to have significant exposure to Western culture, consumer products, and popular media. The growing affluence and aspirations in small and mid-sized cities has emerged as a key finding in this study.

While a part of the aspiration to travel abroad has to do with the increased air connectivity to smaller towns, the rise in affluence and aspirations is an equally important factor. The data also shows that on issues like exposure to Western media and cuisine, the attitudes of those from small and medium sized cities are similar to those of respondents from big cities. The findings of this study are further complemented by spending patterns, which indicate that tier 2 and tier 3 cities account for a large share of expenditure on luxury goods. Overall, the findings underscore the transformation taking place in smaller towns, a development that has attracted significant attention. Over the next few years, this trend is likely to gather momentum. The increased private and public investment in tier 2 and tier 3 cities is likely to bring with it better opportunities.

## *Take-away Six: Overall Positive Perception of Germany*

Respondents generally had a positive opinion of Germany. Specifically, the German education system was admired, particularly by those with some level of exposure to Western media. At the same time, popular perception views German products as reliable and of high quality. German automobile giants like BMW, Audi, Mercedes, and Volkswagen are well known among Indian consumers. Younger consumers are more likely to be aware of German brands. Popular perception views Germany as a very friendly country, one that can be relied upon in times of crisis.

The attitude towards Germany broadly mirrors the popular attitudes towards Western countries. Respondents generally have a favourable outlook towards the West when it comes to quality of life, employment, and education opportunities. Likewise, popular opinion looks at European states as being generally friendly and reliable partners. For many Indians, automotive brands are the most important point of contact with German manufacturing. German cars are often viewed as being reliable and well built. These attitudes are reflected in the survey results.

### Placing the Findings in Context

The findings highlight the complex makeup of Indian society. Factors like age, social class, education, type of employment and place of residence are elements that shape a person's view of Western countries. Generally, the younger, more educated, and those employed in higher professions are likely to have a more positive view of the West. This positive attitude is closely connected to greater exposure to Western culture and popular media. The same group of respondents are more likely to hold aspirations to travel abroad for leisure, education, and work.

The findings also closely reflect India's foreign policy choices. Respondents generally had a positive view of Russia and the United States of America. Similarly, there is also a positive view of countries in Europe. This is in contrast to the current geo-political situation, where Western countries and Russia are at loggerheads. Popular attitudes in many ways mirror India's stand on the Russia-Ukraine War. India has actively chosen to maintain its strategic autonomy, not being drawn into either the Russian or the Western camp. Over the last five years, India's relations with China have seen major challenges following the confrontations along the border. The findings suggest that these developments have impacted broader public opinion. Most respondents, irrespective of their social or economic class, have indicated a very negative attitude towards China.

As India navigates the ever transforming domestic and international spheres, public attitudes towards Western countries are likely to evolve further. The increased exposure to Western culture and popular media is likely to shape the attitudes of more Indians in the coming years. More Indians are going to be exposed to Western popular culture. More Indians are likely to buy products made by Western brands. Importantly, more Indians are likely to aspire to travel abroad for tourism, education, and employment. This is going to deepen India's engagement with the 'West'. Less than a century ago, colonisation was the cornerstone of this engagement. Moving forward, trust and mutual respect are going to be at the heart of this relationship.

As a new generation of Indians are socialised into a new interconnected world, the increased exposure to Western cultural practices will bring with it certain challenges. With Indians still rooted strongly in Indian cultural values, how would this generation navigate between the two value systems? Would they be able to incorporate some elements of Western lifestyle into their Indian cultural roots? How the upcoming generation of Indians navigate this dilemma would be interesting to watch.

The strong preference for Indian cultural practices is a key finding. While individuals are more exposed to Western lifestyle and modes of behaviour, and hold aspirations to travel abroad, they are still rooted in Indian cultural practices. On the issue of family values, there is an overwhelming preference for Indian cultural norms. Broadly, these findings reinforce what previous studies conducted by Lokniti have established. While Indians who are more connected to the world have larger global aspirations, their culture preferences remain rooted in India. More specifically, there is a dichotomy as far as aspirational life style and attachment to perceived Indian culture are concerned. Whether this reflects a deeper dichotomy between Indian tradition and western modernity is perhaps a broader question that this study throws up.

# Appendices

APPENDIX 1

# Method Note

This study was designed and conducted by Lokniti, a programme for comparative democracy at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi, in collaboration with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). A total of 5,248 respondents were interviewed through face-to-face interactions at their places of residence. A systematic random sampling method was employed to select the respondents. To ensure nuanced responses, the sample was deliberately selected from urban areas. The fieldwork was carried out across 50 cities spanning 10 states and three Union Territories (UTs) (***Table 1***). These regions were chosen based on their urban population exceeding the national average, as per the Census 2011 data. The sampling framework ensured balanced representation across urban strata, with cities classified into Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 categories based on population size.

## Sampling Method

The study employed a systematic random sampling technique to ensure representation from diverse demographics and urban regions. The selection process involved four key steps.

### Step 1: Selection of States

States and UTs were ranked according to their level of urbanisation. Units with urban populations exceeding the national average were shortlisted. However, due to logistical constraints, four units—Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Mizoram, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands—were excluded. The final sample included 13 units: Delhi, Chandigarh, Puducherry, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Punjab, Telangana, Haryana, and West Bengal.

### Step 2: Selection of Cities

Cities were classified into three tiers using the population data from Census 2011. Tier 1 includes cities with population exceeding 10 lakhs, Tier 2 comprises cities with populations between 5 and 10 lakhs, and Tier 3 covers cities with populations between one and five lakhs. For the study, 20 cities were sampled from Tier 1, 20 from Tier 2, and 10 from Tier 3. The selection was made using the Probability Proportional to Size (PPS) method. Details of the cities sampled across different states are provided in **Table 1**.

### Step 3: Sampling of Locations within Cities

Each city was divided into four economic zones and with the help of state coordinators, one lower-income, one high-income, and two middle-income localities were selected. Twenty-five interviews were conducted in each locality, ensuring coverage across diverse economic strata. Slums and poorly developed localities were excluded due to the nature of the survey questions.

**Table 1: List of Sampled Cities Within States**

| State Name | Tier 1 (Big cities) | Tier 2 (Mid-sized cities) | Tier 3 (Small cities) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Delhi** | Delhi | | |
| **Chandigarh** | | Chandigarh | |
| **Puducherry** | | | Puducherry, Ozhukarai |
| **Goa** | | | Margao UA, Panaji |
| **Tamil Nadu** | Madurai, Chennai, Coimbatore | Salem, Tiruchirappalli | |
| **Kerala** | | Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram | Kozhikode, Kollam |
| **Maharashtra** | Kalyan and Dombivli, Thane, Pune, Mumbai, Nagpur | Kolhapur, Amravati, Bhiwandi/Mira and Bhayander | |
| **Gujarat** | Vadodara, Surat, Ahmedabad, Rajkot | Bhavnagar | |
| **Karnataka** | Bangalore | Gulbarga, Mysore, Hubli and Dharwad | |
| **Punjab** | Amritsar, Ludhiana | Jalandhar | Patiala |
| **Telangana** | Hyderabad | Warangal | Secunderabad, Nizamabad |
| **Haryana** | Faridabad | Gurgaon | Rohtak |
| **West Bengal** | Kolkata, Haora | Siliguri, Asansol | Durgapur |

### Step 4: Sampling of Households and Respondents within Locations

Within each sampled location, households were selected using a random walk method with a common interval of 20 households. Starting from a central point in the locality, field investigators conducted interviews by following a predetermined random route. This approach ensured systematic coverage of the area while maintaining randomness in household selection.

Respondents were chosen based on a pre-designed age and gender quota to ensure balanced representation across age groups and gender. In each locality the 25 interviews conducted were distributed as follows: 7 respondents in the age group of 18–25 years, 9 in the age group of 26–40 years, 7 in the age group of 41–60 years, and 2 in the age group above 60 years. An equal gender ratio was maintained within each age group to maintain inclusivity and representation. Field investigators recorded respondents' details on a respondent sheet, marking the age group and gender of each participant with a checkmark (✓). This ensured accuracy in maintaining quotas and facilitated data representation.

## Fieldwork and Achieved Sample Size

A survey instrument was designed and tested prior to the actual fieldwork. For data collection, an app was developed, and the survey instrument was uploaded onto this app. Trained field investigators were deployed to the field to carry out the data collection. To prepare them, a day-long training workshop was conducted one day before the actual fieldwork in each state or UT. The main objective of the workshop was to provide hands-on training on using the app for data collection, along with instructions on the nitty-gritty of fieldwork and survey ethics. The fieldwork adhered to a predefined timeline, determined by the number of interviews to be conducted at each sampled location. It was conducted between 29th August and 26th September 2024, ensuring that all locations were covered within the stipulated timeframe.

In each city, a team of four field investigators (FIs) carried out the fieldwork. Each FI was responsible for completing 25 interviews over four days, averaging 6–7 interviews per day. Each interview took approximately 30–35 minutes to complete.

After the completion of fieldwork, the data collected via the server was downloaded. To ensure minimal errors during the fieldwork, the data and the FI's work were constantly monitored. The cleaned data was then prepared for analysis. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) across several variables, which helped in preparing the report.

The study achieved a total sample size of 5,248 interviews, exceeding the initial target of 5,000. This oversampling was intentional to account for potential non-responses or data inconsistencies. The distribution of the targeted and achieved sample sizes across the selected states is summarized below in **Table 2**.

**Table 2: Distribution of Sample Across States**

| Selected States | Targeted Sample | Achieved Sample |
|---|---|---|
| Chandigarh | 100 | 112 |
| Delhi | 300 | 316 |
| Goa | 200 | 205 |
| Gujarat | 500 | 511 |
| Haryana | 300 | 317 |
| Karnataka | 400 | 419 |
| Kerala | 400 | 442 |
| Maharashtra | 800 | 819 |
| Puducherry | 200 | 203 |
| Punjab | 400 | 430 |
| Tamil Nadu | 500 | 560 |
| Telangana | 400 | 408 |
| West Bengal | 500 | 506 |
| Total | 5,000 | 5,248 |

APPENDIX 2

# Interview Schedule

F1. Name of the Investigator: .....

F1a. Investigator Roll No.: .....

F2. State name: .....

F3. City name: .....

F4. City/Area distribution/pocket: .....

F5. City type: .....
1. Small City (1-5 lakh)
2. Medium-sized city (5-10 lakh)
3. Big city (Above 10 lakh)

**INVESTIGATOR'S INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT**

My name is .....and I have come from Lokniti-CSDS, a research organization that studies public opinion, elections and democracy (also give your University/College's name). We are conducting an opinion survey to understand what kind of perception Indians hold about peoples and cultures of Europe. For this purpose, we are interviewing thousands of people living in cities across India. This survey is an independent study and is not linked to any political party or government agency. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. It usually takes 45 minutes to complete the interview. Please spare some time and help me in completing the survey.

F6. Can I start the interview?
1. Yes
2. No

F7. What is your name? .....

Z1: Since how long have you been living in this city?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1: Up to 10 years | 2: 11-20 years | 3: 21-30 years |
| 4: 30 years & above | 5. Since birth/entire birth | 98: No response |

Z1a. ***(Option 1 to 4 in Z1)*** Which state have you come from? (***Please note down the name of the state and click on the options given below***)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Andhra Pradesh | 2. Arunachal Pradesh | 3. Assam |
| 4. Bihar | 5. Goa | 6. Gujarat |
| 7. Haryana | 8. Himachal Pradesh | 9. Jammu & Kashmir |
| 10. Karnataka | 11. Kerala | 12. Madhya Pradesh |
| 13. Maharashtra | 14. Manipur | 15. Meghalaya |
| 16. Mizoram | 17. Nagaland | 18. Odisha |
| 19. Punjab | 20. Rajasthan | 21. Sikkim |
| 22. Tamil Nadu | 23. Tripura | 24. Uttar Pradesh |
| 25. West Bengal | 26. Andaman & Nicobar Islands | 27. Chandigarh |
| 28. Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 29. Daman & Diu | 30. Delhi |
| 31. Lakshadweep | 32. Puducherry | 33. Jharkhand |
| 34. Chhattisgarh | 35. Uttarakhand | 36. Telangana |
| 37. Ladakh | 96. Different city/village from same state | 97. County outside India |
| 98. No response | | |

Z1b. ***(Option 1 to 4 in Z1)*** Is your home place - in a city, a small town or a village?

1. City
2. Small Town
3. Village
98: No response

Z2. What is your age? _____ (***Write the age told by the Respondent. If not told type 00***)

Z3. Gender (**identify on your own**)

1. Male
2. Female
3. Other

Z4a. What is your main occupation? ***(If retired, find out previous job. First note down the response in the space given below and then click on the right/most suitable option from the menu provided)***

01. Higher Professionals: Engineers, Doctors, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants/Financial Experts, Professors, Corporate managers/Chief Executives (CEO), Company secretaries, Production and operation managers, Scientists, Architects, Statisticians/Mathematicians, Writer, Creative or performing Artists, etc.
02. Lower Professionals: Science technicians, Computer Operator, Data Entry, Finance and Sales Associate Professionals, Traditional Medicine practitioners (Ayurvedic/homeopathic Doctor, Faith healer), Nurse, Compounder, School Teacher, Tutor, Priest, Astrologer, NGO worker/Social worker, librarians, etc.
03. Government Managerial job: Manager, Director, Executive, MP, MLA etc.
04. Government Administrative job: Administrators (First-Second Class Officer), Major in Army, Colonel, Brigadier, Police Inspector, Safety and Quality Inspectors
05. Government Clerical Jobs: Class III Officers, Clerk, Cashiers/Tellers, Typists, Army Jawan, Police Constable
06. Government Class IV: Peon, Postman, Gram Sevak, Amin, Safai Karamchari, library assistants, etc.
07. Big and Medium Traders: Big Shopkeepers, Factory Owners, Hotel Owners, Petrol Pumps, Taxi Owners, Big Travel Agency, Small Hotels, Property Dealers, Jewelers etc.
08. Small Trader: Grocery Shop, Small Travel Agency, Phone Booth, Broker, Parlour, Rickshaw Owner, Landlord, etc.
09. Small/Temporary Business: Temporary Shopkeeper, Sales Man, Delivery Boy, Shop Assistant, Small Shopkeepers, etc.
10. Service/Service Area: Cook, Waiter, Washerman, Barber, Domestic Servant/personal care workers, Chowkidar, Travel attendants/Guides, Shop sales persons and Demonstrators, Delivery boy, Private Guard, SafaiKaramchari etc.
11. Skilled Workers: Driver, Mechanic, Electrician, Plumber, Tailor, Cobbler, Carpenter, Sailor, Gardners, Fishery workers, Miners, Stone cutter and Carvers, Sculptors, Painters, Welders, Sheet metal workers, Blacksmith, Goldsmith, Glass makers, Handicraft workers, Printing and related workers, etc.
12. Semi-skilled workers: Artisans, bricklayers, potters, stone cutters, furniture, basketry, mat makers, Food processing workers, etc.
13. Wage labourers (non-agriculture): Rickshaw pullers, loaders, construction workers, Street Vendors, Garbage collectors, Mining and manufacturing labourers, etc.
14. Farmer: tilling own land or someone else's land
15. Agricultural labourers: Landless farm labourers
16. Dairy/Fish/Poultry/Animal Husbandry work
17. Student but doing part time job
18. Housewife/househusband but doing part time job
19. Student
20. Housewife/househusband
21. Unemployed or looking for employment
97. Any other work (specify) .....
98. Did not answer

Z4b. Are you the main earner of your household?

1. No
2. Yes
98. Don't Know/Can't Say

Z4c. ***(If 1 in Z4b)*** What is the occupation of the main earner of your household? ***(If retired, find out previous job. First note down the response in the space given below and then click on the right/most suitable option from the menu provided)***

01. Higher Professionals: Engineers, Doctors, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants/Financial Experts, Professors, Corporate managers/Chief Executives (CEO), Company secretaries, Production and operation managers, Scientists, Architects, Statisticians/Mathematicians, Writer, Creative or performing Artists, etc.
02. Lower Professionals: Science technicians, Computer Operator, Data Entry, Finance and Sales Associate Professionals, Traditional Medicine practitioners (Ayurvedic/homeopathic Doctor, Faith healer), Nurse, Compounder, School Teacher, Tutor, Priest, Astrologer, NGO worker/Social worker, librarians, etc.
03. Government Managerial job: Manager, Director, Executive, MP, MLA etc.
04. Government Administrative job: Administrators (First-Second Class Officer), Major in Army, Colonel, Brigadier, Police Inspector, Safety and Quality Inspectors
05. Government Clerical Jobs: Class III Officers, Clerk, Cashiers/Tellers, Typists, Army Jawan, Police Constable
06. Government Class IV: Peon, Postman, Gram Sevak, Amin, SafaiKaramchari, library assistants, etc.
07. Big and Medium Traders: Big Shopkeepers, Factory Owners, Hotel Owners, Petrol Pumps, Taxi Owners, Big Travel Agency, Small Hotels, Property Dealers, Jewellers etc.
08. Small Trader: Grocery Shop, Small Travel Agency, Phone Booth, Broker, Parlour, Rickshaw Owner, Landlord, etc.
09. Small/Temporary Business: Temporary Shopkeeper, Sales Man, Delivery Boy, Shop Assistant, Small Shopkeepers, etc.
10. Service/Service Area: Cook, Waiter, Washerman, Barber, Domestic Servant/personal care workers, Chowkidar, Travel attendants/Guides, Shop sales persons and Demonstrators, Delivery boy, Private Guard, Safai Karamchari etc.
11. Skilled Workers: Driver, Mechanic, Electrician, Plumber, Tailor, Cobbler, Carpenter, Sailor, Gardners, Fishery workers, Miners, Stone cutter and Carvers, Sculptors, Painters, Welders, Sheet metal workers, Blacksmith, Goldsmith, Glass makers, Handicraft workers, Printing and related workers, etc.
12. Semi-skilled workers: Artisans, bricklayers, potters, stone cutters, furniture, basketry, mat makers, Food processing workers, etc.
13. Wage labourers (non-agriculture): Rickshaw pullers, loaders, construction workers, Street Vendors, Garbage collectors, Mining and manufacturing labourers, etc.
14. Farmer: tilling own land or someone else's land
15. Agricultural labourers: Landless farm labourers
16. Dairy/Fish/Poultry/Animal Husbandry work
17. Student but doing part time job
18. Housewife/househusband but doing part time job
19. Unemployed or looking for employment
97. Any other work (specify) _____
98. Did not answer

Z5. What is the highest educational level you have attained?

1. Non-literate (Can't read or write a simple statement in any language)
2. Less than Primary
3. Primary completed (Class 5)
4. Middle/upper primary completed (Class 8)
5. High school completed/Matriculation pass (Class 10)
6. Studying in Class 11 or 12
7. Intermediate/Higher secondary completed (Class 12)
8. Diploma/certificate (after Class 10 or 12 grades)
9. Pursuing Graduation
10. Graduation completed
11. Post-Graduation completed
12. Higher degree (MPhil, PhD)
97. Any other (Please specify) .....
98. No response

Q1. Were you taught any foreign languages other than English in your school?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Option was there was I didn't opt
98. Can't remember
99. Non-literate

Q1a. (***If 1 in Q1***) Which foreign languages were taught in your school? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Arabic | 2. Chinese (Mandarin) | 3. French |
| 4. German | 5. Italian | 6. Japanese |
| 7. Korean | 8. Portuguese | 9. Russian |
| 10. Spanish | 97. Any other (**specify**) ____ | 98. No response |

Q2. Have you ever travelled/thought of travelling abroad or out of India?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Yes | 2. No | 98. Can't say |

Q2a. ***(If 1 in Q2)*** To which country? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China |
| 4. France | 5. Germany | 6. Italy |
| 7. Japan | 8. Malaysia | 9. Maldives |
| 10. Mauritius | 11. New Zealand | 12. Singapore |
| 13. South Africa | 14. Spain | 15. Sri Lanka |
| 16. Switzerland | 17. Thailand | 18. United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) |
| 19. U.K. | 20. U.S.A | 97. Any other (Specify) ____ |
| 98. No response | 99. Not applicable | |

Q3. To what extent do you aspire to study abroad or send a family member to study abroad - to a great extent, to some extent, not much or not at all?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. To a great extent | 2. To some extent | 3. Not much |
| 4. Not at all | 98. No response | |

Q4. Generally speaking, which country comes first to your mind when I say the words "Western Countries"? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Austria | 3. Belgium |
| 4. Brazil | 5. Canada | 6. Denmark |
| 7. Finland | 8. France | 9. Germany |
| 10. Iceland | 11. Ireland | 12. Italy |
| 13. Luxembourg | 14. Netherlands | 15. New Zealand |
| 16. Norway | 17. Portugal | 18. Spain |
| 19. Sweden | 20. Switzerland | 21. U.K. |
| 22. U.S.A | 97. Any other (specify) ..... | 98. No response |
| 99. Don't know what are western countries | | |

Q5. Do you know about any European country?

1. Yes
2. No
99. Not aware Europe continent

Q5a. ***(If 1 in Q5)*** Can you name any three European countries?

Q5a_1. First name.....
98. Don't know

Q5a_2. Second name.....
98. Don't know

Q5a_3. Third name.....
98. Don't know

Q6. Has someone from your family/relative moved to abroad or out of India in search of job?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Yes | 2. No | 98. Can't say |

Q6a. *(If 1 in Q6)* To which country? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China |
| 4. France | 5. Germany | 6. Italy |
| 7. Japan | 8. Malaysia | 9. Maldives |
| 10. Mauritius | 11. New Zealand | 12. Singapore |
| 13. South Africa | 14. Spain | 15. Sri Lanka |
| 16. Switzerland | 17. Thailand | 18. United Arab Emirates (U.A.E) |
| 19. U.K. | 20. U.S.A | 97. Any other (***Specify***) ____ |
| 98. No response | 99. Not applicable | |

Q7. Has someone from your family/relative moved to abroad or out of India to pursue their studies?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Can't say

Q7a. *(If 1 in Q7)* To which country? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China |
| 4. France | 5. Germany | 6. Ireland |
| 7. Italy | 8. Japan | 9. Malaysia |
| 10. Netherlands | 11. New Zealand | 12. Poland |
| 13. Russia | 14. Singapore | 15. South Korea |
| 16. Sweden | 17. Switzerland | 18. Ukraine |
| 19. U.K. | 20. U.S.A. | 97. Any other (specify) ____ |
| 98. No response | 99. Not applicable | |

Q8. Nowadays, we are seeing a trend amongst Indians going to Europe for different reasons. If given a chance, would you like to go to any of the following country for these things?

a. Tourism (upon clicking open option of all European countries)
b. Education (upon clicking open option of all European countries)
c. Employment (upon clicking open option of all European countries)
d. Business (upon clicking open option of all European countries)
e. Settling down (upon clicking open option of all European countries)

(**The option should be clickable for the last question**)

| | **1. Yes** | **2. No** | **98. Can't say** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. France | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 2. Germany | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 3. Ireland | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 4. Italy | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 5. Netherlands | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 6. Norway | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 7. Spain | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 8. Sweden | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 9. Switzerland | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 10. U.K. | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| 97. Any other (**specify**) ____ | 1 | 2 | 98 |

Q9a. In your opinion, who typically has higher social status: a person studying in a European country or one studying in India?

1. Person studying in the European country
2. Person studying in India
3. Both persons have equal social status
98. Can't choose/ Don't understand
99. Declined to answer

Q9b. Do you perceive your social status as higher, lower, or equal to those who vacation in European countries?
1. Their social status is higher than mine
2. Their social status is lower than mine
3. Their social status is equal to mine
98. Can't choose/ Don't understand
99. Decline to answer

Q9c. If a person is working in a European country then would their social status be higher, lower or equal to you?
1. Their social status is higher than mine
2. Their social status is lower than mine
3. Their social status is equal to mine
98. Can't choose/ Don't understand
99. Decline to answer

Q10. Please tell me whether the European countries are ahead, equal or behind India in the following fields?

| | 1. Ahead | 2. Equal | 3. Behind | 98. Can't say |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Infrastructure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| b. Quality of life | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| c. Technology | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| d. Culture | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |

Q11. If given the chance, how eager would you be to live in a European country—very eager, somewhat eager, not eager, or not at all eager?
1. Very eager
2. Somewhat eager
3. Not much eager
4. Not eager at all
98. Don't know

Q12. Do you think it is easy for an Indian to obtain a visa for a European country?
1. Yes, very easy
2. Yes, somewhat easy
3. Not easy
98. Can't say/Don't know

Q12a. ***(If 1 or 2 in Q12)*** Which country has the most flexible visa system? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Austria (Schengen) | 2. Belarus | 3. Belgium (Schengen) |
| 4. Bulgaria (Schengen) | 5. Croatia (Schengen) | 6. Cyprus (Republic of) (Schengen) |
| 7. Czech Republic (Schengen) | 8. Denmark (Schengen) | 9. Estonia (Schengen) |
| 10. Finland (Schengen) | 11. France (Schengen) | 12. Germany (Schengen) |
| 13. Greece (Schengen) | 14. Hungary (Schengen) | 15. Ireland |
| 16. Italy (Schengen) | 17. Latvia (Schengen) | 18. Lithuania (Schengen) |
| 19. Luxembourg (Schengen) | 20. Malta (Schengen) | 21. Netherlands (Schengen) |
| 22. Norway | 23. Poland (Schengen) | 24. Portugal (Schengen) |
| 25. Romania (Schengen) | 26. Russia | 27. Serbia |
| 28. Slovakia (Schengen) | 29. Slovenia (Schengen) | 30. Spain (Schengen) |
| 31. Sweden (Schengen) | 32. Ukraine | 33. U.K. |
| 96. None | 97. Any other (specify) ____ | 98. No response/ Don't know |

Q13. Which European country is more willing to welcome Indian citizens….?
a. For pursuing education
b. For employment
c. For tourism
d. For business and trading
e. For settling down

*(The following options are applicable for Q13 a, b, c, & d; enumerators may select as many as options applicable)*

1. Austria
2. Belarus
3. Belgium
4. Bulgaria
5. Croatia
6. Czech Republic
7. Denmark
8. Estonia
9. Finland
10. France
11. Germany
12. Greece
13. Hungary
14. Ireland
15. Italy
16. Latvia
17. Lithuania
18. Luxembourg
19. Malta
20. Netherlands
21. Norway
22. Poland
23. Portugal
24. Republic of Cyprus
25. Romania
26. Russia
27. Serbia
28. Slovakia
29. Slovenia
30. Spain
31. Sweden
32. Ukraine
33. U.K.
96. None
97. Any other (specify) ____
98. No response/ Don't know
99. Never been to a European country

Q14. If you get any opportunity to study aboard, then would you like to go to a European country or to any other countries?

1. European countries
2. Other countries (***Please specify***) _____
98. Don't Know
99. Not interested in studying abroad.

Q14a. ***(If 1or 2 in Q14)*** Do you think students might face the following challenges or obstacles when aspiring to study in these countries?

| | 1. Yes | 2. No | 98. Can't say |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. Visa and immigration processes | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| b. Language barriers | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| c. Cultural adaptation | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| d. Cost of living | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| e. Academic workload and expectations | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| f. Access to scholarships and funding | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| g. Discrimination or racism | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| h Health and safety concerns | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| i. Finding suitable accommodation | 1 | 2 | 98 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| j. Job opportunities and work rights | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| k. Distance from family and support networks | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| l. Climate and weather conditions | 1 | 2 | 98 |

Q15. ***(If 1in Q14)*** The different levels of education would now be read out to you. Please tell me which European country you would wish to go to study for each level?

a. For post high school education
b. Higher education
c. More specialized education

***(The following options are applicable for Q15 a, b & c; enumerators will take only one response)***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Austria | 2. Belarus | 3. Belgium |
| 4. Bulgaria | 5. Croatia | 6. Czech Republic |
| 7. Denmark | 8. Estonia | 9. Finland |
| 10. France | 11. Germany | 12. Greece |
| 13. Hungary | 14. Ireland | 15. Italy |
| 16. Latvia | 17. Lithuania | 18. Luxembourg |
| 19. Malta | 20. Netherlands | 21. Norway |
| 22. Poland | 23. Portugal | 24. Republic of Cyprus |
| 25. Romania | 26. Russia | 27. Serbia |
| 28. Slovakia | 29. Slovenia | 30. Spain |
| 31. Sweden | 32. Ukraine | 33. U.K. |
| 96. None | 97. Any other (***specify***) ____ | 98. No response/ Don't know |
| 99. Don't want to pursue this level of study | | |

Q16. Now I will ask you some questions related to Germany. Please tell me how good do you think is their education system?

1. Very good
2. Good
3. Not good nor bad
4. Bad
5. Very Bad
98. Can't say due to lack of knowledge about German education system ***(Only if respondent say so)***
99. No response

Q17. Some people think that German education system is better than Indian education system, while others are likely to believe that India education system is better. What do you think?

1. German education system is better
2. Indian education system is better
3. Both are of equal standing
98. Can't say due to lack of knowledge about German education system ***(Only if respondent say so)***
99. No response

Q18. Are you aware of the dual skilling system in Germany, where you learn a profession simultaneously with studies (in school) and also get paid during this time?

1. Yes
2. No

Q19. Do you think that higher education in Germany is affordable for Indians?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Can't say due to lack of knowledge about German education system ***(Only if respondent say so)***
99. No response

Q20. ***(Only for students, options 17 or 19 in Z4a)*** Are you aware of the scholarships provided by both the Indian government and the German government for studying in Germany?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know

Q21. *(**Only for students, options 17 or 19 in Z4a)*** Are you planning to apply for a course in Germany?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Already applied
98. Don't know

Q21a. *(**If 1 or 3 in Q21)*** What is the main reason for applying to/having studied in Germany?
1. Cheap and affordable education
2. My relatives live there
3. Scholarships are easily available
4. Better facilities and infrastructure
5. Someone from my family/relative studied there
6. Courses are better
7. My parents recommended it
8. More prestige
9. More opportunities for career growth
97. Any other reason (specify) .....
98. No response

Q22. If you get a chance to work abroad, would you like to go to a European country or some other country?
1. Go to a European country
2. Go to some other country (***Please specify***) .....
98. Don't know/Can't Say
99. Not interested in working abroad

Q22a. (***If option 1 in Q22***) Which European country would you like to go to? (**Select as many as applicable**)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Austria | 2. Belarus | 3. Belgium |
| 4. Bulgaria | 5. Croatia | 6. Czech Republic |
| 7. Denmark | 8. Estonia | 9. Finland |
| 10. France | 11. Germany | 12. Greece |
| 13. Hungary | 14. Ireland | 15. Italy |
| 16. Latvia | 17. Lithuania | 18. Luxembourg |
| 19. Malta | 20. Netherlands | 21. Norway |
| 22. Poland | 23. Portugal | 24. Republic of Cyprus |
| 25. Romania | 26. Russia | 27. Serbia |
| 28. Slovakia | 29. Slovenia | 30. Spain |
| 31. Sweden | 32. Ukraine | 33. U.K. |
| 96. None | 97. Any other (specify) ..... | 98. No response/ Don't know |

Q23. Do you think Europe has better employment opportunities as compared to India?
1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know

Q24. Some people believe that people living in Europe are paid more for the same work that people do in India. Others believe that Indians are paid more for the same work that people do in Europe. What is your opinion?
1. Indians are paid more
2. Europeans are paid more
3. Both are paid equally
98. Don't know

Q25. Are you planning to apply for a work visa to Europe?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Already applied
98. Don't know

Q25a. (*If 1 or 3 in Q25)* What is the main reason for having applied/applying for the work Visa?

1. Work wages/better pay/guarantee of minimum wages
2. Work ethics
3. Vacation liberty
4. Work Insurance
5. Developed infrastructure
6. Working hours
7. Work life balance
8. More prestige
9. More opportunities for career growth

97. Any other (specify) ____

98. No response

Q26. Do you know any European language? If so, which one? (**Select as many as applicable**)
***Here is the list arranged in alphabetical order:***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Bulgarian | 2. Croatian | 3. Czech |
| 4. Danish | 5. Dutch | 6. English |
| 7. Estonian | 8. Finnish | 9. French |
| 10. German | 11. Greek | 12. Hungarian |
| 13. Irish | 14. Italian | 15. Latvian |
| 16. Lithuanian | 17. Maltese | 18. Polish |
| 19. Portuguese | 20. Romanian | 21. Russian |
| 22. Slovak | 23. Slovenian | 24. Spanish |
| 25. Swedish | 26. Turkish | 96. I know a language other than European languages |
| 97. Any other (**specify**) ____ | 98. I don't know any foreign Language | 99. No response |

Q27. If given a chance, which of these languages would you prefer to learn?

| | 1. Yes | 2. No | 98. Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. French | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| b. Spanish | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| c. Portuguese | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| d. German | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| e. Russian | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| f. Italian | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| g. Any other (Specify) | 1 | 2 | 98 |

Q28. How far have you been influenced by western culture with regard to…?

| | (Read out the following response categories every time ) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1. A lot | 2. Some-what | 3. A little | 4. Not at all | 98. Don't know |
| a. Your views about cleanliness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |
| b. The position that men and women should have in a society | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |
| c. What an unmarried couple can or cannot do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |

Q29. In most western societies children start living separately from their parents after reaching adulthood while in India many children and parents often continue to live together even after adulthood. According to you which is a better practice?

1. Children living separately
2. Children and parents living together
3. Neither is better or worse

98. Don't Know

Q30. What kind of outfit do you prefer for the following occasions – Indian or Western?

| | 1. Indian | 2. Western | 3. Both equally | 98. Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. For family functions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| b. For vacations/holidays | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| c. For formal/official meetings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| d. Everyday wear for colleges/work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |

Q31. Do you feel more confident wearing Western outfits or Indian outfits?

1. Indian
2. Western
3. I am equally confident in both the outfits
4. Neither
98. No response

Q32. When dining out do you prefer to eat Indian cuisines (like Dal, sabzi, roti, south Indian) or Western cuisines (Pizza, Pasta, Croissant, Pancakes)?

1. Indian cuisines
2. Western cuisines
3. Like/Prefer Both
4. Neither
97. Cuisines from some other country or region (other than India)
98. No response
99. Don't go out for dining

Q33. Have you read more works of fiction like novels, short stories etc. written by authors belonging to European countries or Indian authors?

1. European authors
2. Indian authors
3. Read both in equal numbers
4. Neither
97. Authors of some other country or region (other than India)
98. Don't know
99. Not interested in reading

Q34. Do you think that people living in Europe have a more comfortable life than the ones living in India?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know

Q35. Please tell me which of the following two statements do you agree with the most?
**Statement 1**. India should do more to defend its culture from the culture coming from other countries.
**Statement 2.** India should do more to learn more from other countries even if we might lose our own culture or way of life

1. Statement 1
2. Statement 2
98. Don't know/ Can't say
99. Refuse to answer

Q36. How often do you do these things– Monthly, weekly, daily, multiple times a day?

| | 1. Monthly | 2. Weekly | 3. Daily | 4. Multiple times a day | 5. Never | 98. Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Watch foreign movies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 98 |
| b. Listen to western music | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 98 |
| c. Watch western TV shows | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 98 |
| d. Interact with foreigners from the western countries over social media platforms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 98 |
| e. Eat western food | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 98 |
| f. Watch online content posted by Western social media personalities on YouTube, Instagram, etc. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 98 |

Q36aa. To what extent do you believe that Western media influences Indian culture -a lot, somewhat or not at all?

1. A lot
2. Somewhat
3. Not at all
98. Don't

Q37. I will now read out the names of some historical monuments in Europe. Please tell me the country where each one is located? ***(Names in brackets should go as a hint for the FIs to get the correct answers; not to be read out by FIs)***

| | 1. Correct answer | 2. Wrong answer | 98. Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. Colosseum (Italy) | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| b. Eiffel Tower (France) | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| c. Leaning Tower of Pisa (Italy) | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| d. Brandenburg Gate (Germany) | 1 | 2 | 98 |
| e. Big Ben (United Kingdom) | 1 | 2 | 98 |

Q38. Do you think people from European countries consider themselves to be superiors to the people from other countries?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't Know

Q39. I will read out some major events from European history. Please indicate if you are very familiar, somewhat familiar, or not familiar with each?

| | 1. Very familiar | 2. Somewhat familiar | 3. Not at allfamiliar | 98. No response |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Industrial Revolution | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| b. Fall of the Berlin War | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| c. Enlightenment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| d. Munich massacre | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| e. Brexit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |

Q40. Suppose a person returns from abroad after spending two or more years, how much change do you think will occur in these things – a lot, somewhat, not much, or not at all?

| | 1. A lot | 2. Some-what | 3. Not much | 4. Not at all | 98. Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Their way of speaking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |
| b. Their behaviour/ mannerisms | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |
| c. People having a positive attitude towards such persons | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |
| d. Dietary habits | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |
| e. Way of dressing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 |

Q41. To what extent do you think European sports have influenced sports culture in India – a lot, somewhat or not at all?

1. A lot
2. Somewhat
3. Not at all
98. Don't

Q42. Now I will read out about some public facilities. Please indicate if these facilities are better in India or Germany?

| | 1. India | 2. Germany | 98. Don't know | 99. Not aware of German systems |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Means of transport (Bus, train) | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| b. Education | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| c. Roads | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| d. Availability of drinking water | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| e. Electricity | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| f. Healthcare/hospitals | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| g. Public toilets | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |

Q43. Do you think people in European countries have stronger, equal, or weaker emotional attachment to their family members compared to people in India?

1. Stronger
2. Equal
3. Weaker
98. Don't Know/Can't Say

Q44. If someone encounters a problem like losing their phone or struggling with language barriers in a new city, who do you think would be more helpful – people living in European countries or people living in India?

1. People living in the European countries
2. People living in India
3. Both
4. None of them
98. Don't Know/Can't Say

Q45. In which country – India or Germany?

| | 1. India | 2. Germany | 98. Don't know | 99. Not aware of German systems |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. More women perform similar jobs like men and get paid equally | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |
| b. Members of different religions live in greater harmony | 1 | 2 | 98 | 99 |

Q46. Among the following activities, please indicate which government allows more freedom—Indian or European government?

| | 1. Indian | 2. European | 3. Both | 4. Neither | 98. No response | 99. Lack of knowledge about Europe |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Freedom to express opinions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 | 99 |
| b. Freedom to form assemblies/groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 | 99 |
| c. Freedom to protest | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 | 99 |
| d. Freedom to practice religion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 98 | 99 |

Q47. Which government is more likely to address and resolve issues raised by protesters—the Indian government or European governments

1. Indian government
2. Governments in Europe
3. Both equally
4. Neither
98. No response
99. Can't say due to lack of knowledge about European countries

Q48. Please tell me which of the following two statements you agree with the most:
**Statement 1**: India should focus on exporting goods and products to Europe and other foreign countries to improve its international image.
**Statement 2**: India should focus on strengthening its domestic market to reduce inflation and unemployment by limiting exports.

1. Statement 1
2. Statement 2
98. Don't know/ Can't say
99. Refuse to answer

Q49. Please tell me which of the following two statements you agree with the most:
**Statement 1:** India should limit the import of food grains from Europe and other foreign countries to protect our farmers.
**Statement 2:** India should import more food grains from Europe and other foreign countries even if this might harm our farmers.

1. Statement 1 | 2. Statement 2 | 98. Don't know/ Can't say
99. Refuse to answer

Q50. Can you name any **3 popular** German companies? (***Take upto three responses***)

1. Adidas | 2. Audi | 3. BASF
4. BMW | 5. Bosch | 6. Deutsche Bank
7. Lufthansa | 8. Mercedes-Benz (Daimler AG) | 9. SAP
10. Siemens | 11. Volkswagen | 97. Any other (specify) .....
98. Don't know

Q51. How good do you think is the quality of products imported from Germany – very good, good, bad or very bad?

1. Very Good | 2. Good | 3. Neither good nor bad
4. Bad | 5. Very Bad | 98. Don't know

Q52. In your opinion, which country do you think is the most profitable to make an investment? ***(Don't read out the answers)***

1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China
4. Germany | 5. Singapore | 6. United Arab Emirates (UAE)
7. U.K. | 8. U.S.A. | 9. Switzerland
10. Japan | 11. Mauritius | 12. Netherlands
13. New Zealand | 14. France | 15. South Korea
16. Qatar | 17. Malaysia | 18. Sweden
19. Ireland | 20. Hong Kong | 97. Any other (specify) .....
98. Can't say

Q53. In your opinion, which country in Europe is the richest?

1. Austria | 2. Belarus | 3. Belgium
4. Bulgaria | 5. Croatia | 6. Czech Republic
7. Denmark | 8. Estonia | 9. Finland
10. France | 11. Germany | 12. Greece
13. Hungary | 14. Ireland | 15. Italy
16. Latvia | 17. Lithuania | 18. Luxembourg
19. Malta | 20. Netherlands | 21. Norway
22. Poland | 23. Portugal | 24. Republic of Cyprus
25. Romania | 26. Russia | 27. Serbia
28. Slovakia | 29. Slovenia | 30. Spain
31. Sweden | 32. Ukraine | 33. U.K.
96. None | 97. Any other (**specify**) ____ | 98. No response/ Don't know

Q54. How would you describe the relations of India with these countries – very friendly, friendly, not friendly?

| | 1. Very friendly | 2. Friendly | 3. Not friendly | 98. Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Australia | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| b. Canada | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| c. China | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| d. France | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| e. Germany | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| f. Ireland | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| g. Israel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| h. Italy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| i. Japan | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| j. Russia | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| k. South Korea | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| l. U.K. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |
| m. U.S.A. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 98 |

Q55. In your opinion which country has the most influence on India? ***(Don't read out the answers)***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China |
| 4. France | 5. Germany | 6. Israel |
| 7. Italy | 8. Japan | 9. Russia |
| 10. Singapore | 11. South Korea | 12. U.K. |
| 13. U.S.A. | 96. None | 97. Any other (specify) ..... |
| 98. Can't say | | |

Q56. To what extent can India depend on Germany to help it during a period of crisis – very much, somewhat, not much or not at all?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Very much | 2. Somewhat | 3. Not much |
| 4. Not at all | 98. Don't Know | |

Q57. Which country's footsteps do you think should India follow for development? ***(Don't read out the answers)***

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China |
| 4. France | 5. Germany | 6. Israel |
| 7. Italy | 8. Japan | 9. Russia |
| 10. Singapore | 11. South Korea | 12. U.K. |
| 13. U.S.A. | 96. None | 97. Any other (specify) ..... |
| 98. No response | | |

Q58. Among Russia, U.S.A, U.K., Germany, France and Israel, which country is the most trustable ally to buy defense weapons from?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Russia | 2. U.S.A. | 3. Germany |
| 4. France | 5. Israel | 6. U.K. |
| 96. None | 97. Any other (specify)..... | 98. No response |

Q59. India is trying to achieve the feat of "Vishwaguru". Which country can help India the most in becoming a world leader?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Canada | 3. China |
| 4. France | 5. Germany | 6. Israel |
| 7. Italy | 8. Japan | 9. Russia |
| 10. Singapore | 11. South Korea | 12. U.K. |
| 13. U.S.A. | 97. Any other (specify)..... | 98. No response |

Q60. Some people believe that beautifying cities before international summits like G20 is essential to enhance India's global image. Others argue that this money could be better spent helping poor people who struggle with poverty. What is your opinion?

1. India's image is important
2. This money can help poor people
98. No response
99. Not heard of the G20 summit

Q61. Suppose if the economy of America collapses tomorrow, which country apart from India can emerge as the world leader?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Australia | 2. Brazil | 3. Canada |
| 4. China | 5. France | 6. Germany |
| 7. India | 8. Italy | 9. Japan |
| 10. Mexico | 11. Russia | 12. South Korea |
| 13. U.K. | 97. Any other (specify) ..... | 98. No response |

Q62. Now I will read two statement on Russia-Ukraine war. Which statement do you agree with more regarding Russia's actions in Ukraine?
**Statement 1**: Russia's actions in Ukraine were necessary to protect its interests and security.
**Statement 2:** Russia's actions in Ukraine were unjustified and violated international norms.

1. Agree with statement 1
2. Agree with statement 2
3. Not aware about it
98. No opinion

**Background**

Z6. Are you married?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. No | 2. Yes | 3. Divorced |
| 4. Widowed | 5. Separated | 98. Did not reveal |

Z7. Which religion do you belong to?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Hindu | 2. Muslim | 3. Christian |
| 4. Sikh | 5. Jain | 6. Parsi |
| 7. Buddhist/ neo-Buddhist | 8. No religion (Atheist) | 97. Any other ***(specify)*** |
| 98. No response | | |

Z8. And what caste group do you belong to - SC, ST, OBC or General?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. SC | 2. ST | 3. OBC |
| 4. General | 98. Did not disclose | |

Z9**.** What is your Caste/Jaati biradari/tribe name? ***(Note down the caste/Jati biradari/tribe name and click on the relevant answer category displayed on the App)***

.....
999. Did not disclose

Z10**.** Type of house in which respondent lives?

1. House/Flat/ Bungalow
2. House/Flat with 5 or more rooms
3. House/ Flat with 4 rooms
4. House/ Flat with 3 rooms
5. House with 2rooms
6. House with 1 room
7. Kuccha house
8. Slum/Jhuggi/ Jhopadi
98. Did not respond

Z11. In normal circumstances, what is your monthly household expenditure? (***First code the number and then mark range option depending on answer)***

1. Up to 5,000
2. 5,001 to 10,000
3. 10,001 to 30,000
4. 30,001 to 50,000
5. 50,001 to 80,000
6. 80,001 to 1 lakh
7. 1 lakh to 2 lakh
8. 2 lakhs and above

98. No answer

Z12. Do you or members of your household have the following things?

| | 1. No | 2. Yes |
|---|---|---|
| a. Car/Jeep/Van | 1 | 2 |
| b. Scooter/Motorcycle/Moped | 1 | 2 |
| c. Air conditioner | 1 | 2 |
| d. Computer/laptop/i-Pad | 1 | 2 |
| e. Electronic Fan/Cooler | 1 | 2 |
| f. Washing machine | 1 | 2 |
| g. Fridge/refrigerator | 1 | 2 |
| h. Television | 1 | 2 |
| i. Bank/Post office account | 1 | 2 |
| j. ATM/Debit/Credit card | 1 | 2 |
| k. LPG gas | 1 | 2 |
| l. Internet connection in the house ***(Excluding mobile phone)*** | 1 | 2 |
| m. Toilet inside the house | 1 | 2 |

Z13. What's your monthly household income after putting together the income of all members? (***First code the number and then mark range option depending on answer)*** .....

1. Up to 5,000
2. 5,001 to 10,000
3. 10,001 to 30,000
4. 30,001 to 50,000
5. 50,001 to 80,000
6. 80,001 to 1 lakh
7. 1 lakh to 2 lakh
8. 2 lakhs and above

98. No answer

Z14. Could you give me your mobile/telephone no.? We may want to get in touch with you later if we have any queries. ***(If mobile number is not provided, please type 'zero' ten times)***

Mobile no. .....

GPS. .....