



Indians Proud of Country but Worried Caste System Is Holding Country Back

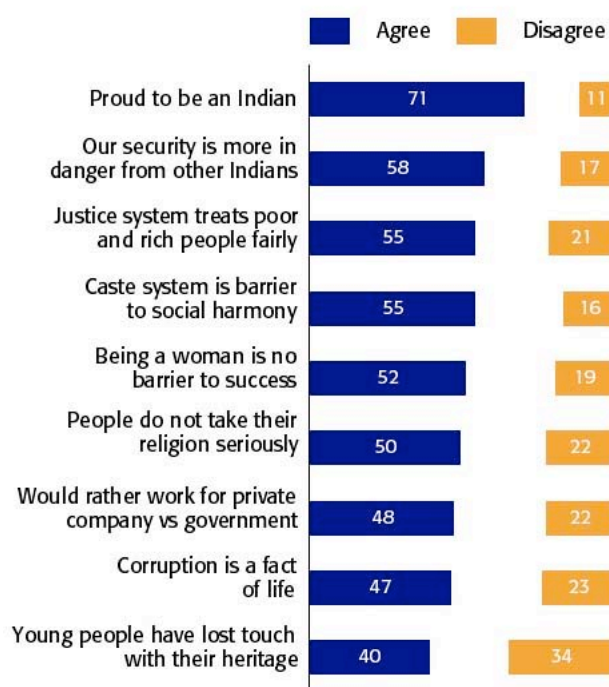
Indians are proud of their country and want to see it punch its economic weight around the world – but are worried the caste system is holding the country back, according to a new BBC World Service poll looking at the way Indians view their country.

Visitors to BBC websites were invited to choose which questions they would like to see asked in the survey, which interviewed a nationally representative sample of 1,616 Indians in December.

The poll found that a majority (71%) are proud to be an Indian, and nearly as many (65%) think it is important that India is an economic superpower. Most also think it is important that India should be a political (60%) and military (60%) superpower.

Views of India Today

Agree vs Disagree



Base: Representative sample of 1,616 adult Indians

Indians are optimistic about many aspects of the modern Indian state – over half (55%) think the Indian justice system treats rich and poor people fairly, while nearly as many (52%) think being a woman is no barrier to success any more. And these days, over twice as many (48%) would rather work for a private company than the government than the other way round.

But Indians also show a level of ambivalence about the country's traditions and heritage. While a majority think the country is being held back by the caste system, with over half (55%) viewing it as a 'barrier to social harmony in India', one in two (50%) feels that 'people in India don't take their religion seriously enough', while two in five (40%) believe that 'young people have lost touch with their heritage and traditions'.

And if Indians are agreed on the need for India to be an economic superpower, they are less sure that recent economic growth has benefited them. Asked whether India's economic growth over the last ten years has benefited them and their families directly, exactly the same proportion (45%) say that it has, and that it has not.

The survey also reveals that many Indians are resigned to corruption being unavoidable – a plurality (47%) agrees that ‘corruption is a fact of life which we should accept as the price of doing business in today’s world’. It also shows that the young are less tolerant of corruption than the older generation, with 45 percent of 18-24 year olds regarding corruption as a fact of life, compared to 53 percent of the over-65s.

In total 1,616 citizens in India, were interviewed between 5-13 December 2006. Polling was conducted for the BBC World Service by the international polling firm GlobeScan and its research partner in India. The margin of error is +/-2.5. For more details, please see the Methodology section or visit www.globescan.com.

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The BBC exists to enrich people's lives with great programmes and services on television, radio and online that inform, educate and entertain. Its vision is to be the most creative, trusted organization in the world. BBC reporters and correspondents at home and abroad can be called on for expert coverage across a huge range of subject areas. With over sixty foreign bureaux, the BBC has the largest newsgathering operation in the world. BBC World Service provides international news, analysis and information in English and 32 other languages.

Backgrounder

The poll was conducted with a representative sample of adult Indians using a face-to-face interviewing methodology, from 5-15 December, 2006.

Respondents were asked a series of questions focusing on social and political issues of relevance in India today. The first question focused on nine statements and required respondents to either agree or disagree. Overall Indians exhibit a positive sense of identity with seven in ten (71%) agreeing to the statement, 'I am proud to be an Indian.' This view is commonly held among all age and income groups, however, differs between religions – Christians (73%) and Hindus (71%) are more likely to express pride in being Indian than Muslims (60%).

Positive perceptions are also extended to the Indian marketplace – majorities (55%) believe the justice system 'treats poor people as fairly as rich people,' and that (52%) 'being a woman is no barrier to success,' while a plurality (48%) mention that they would rather 'work for a private company than for the government.' Opinions are slightly more pronounced among urban dwellers and southern Indians – not surprising given the double-digit economic growth in India's technology hub in Bangalore.

In terms of the social aspects of life, Indians do express a level of concern. Six in ten (58%) believe India's security is 'more in danger from other Indians than from foreigners,' and majorities (55%) believe that the 'caste system is a barrier to social harmony.' These views are common among age, income and religious groups.

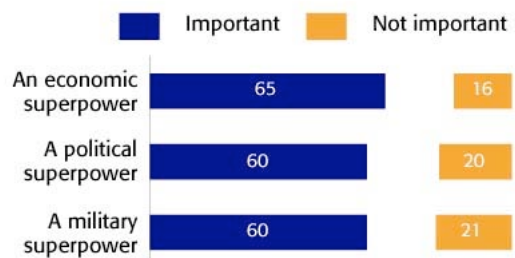
Issues related to religion, heritage and tradition are very much in the forefront – one in two (50%) adult Indians believes 'people don't take their religion seriously enough,' and two in five (40%) believes 'young Indians have lost touch with their heritage and traditions.' Surprisingly both views are more common with younger Indians (18-24) than older segments of the population.

Corruption is widely seen as a function of the economy with a strong plurality (47%) agreeing that 'corruption is just a fact of life which we should accept.' Urban Indians are more likely (50%) to agree with the statement than rural Indians (43%).

Next, respondents were asked how important it was for India to project an economic, political or military image to the world at large. A strong majority (65%) believes that India should be an economic superpower, 'a country whose economic success is seen as vital to that of the rest of the world.' Younger segments of the population are more likely to share this view of India. An equal number (60%) of Indians believes that the country should be a political or military superpower. Those with little or no

Importance That India Be...

Important vs Not Important

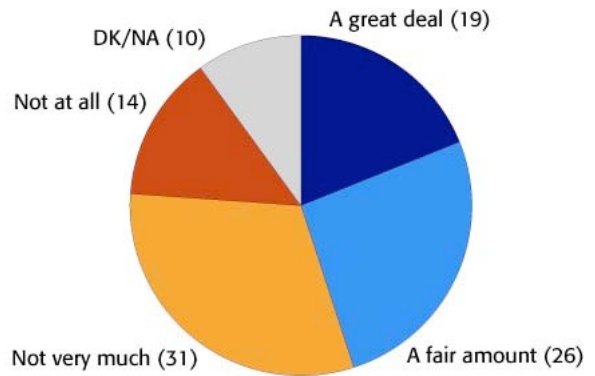


Base: Representative sample of 1,616 adult Indians

formal education are more likely to see India as a military superpower, while those with secondary or post secondary education are likely to see India as a political superpower.

Lastly, respondents were asked to what extent, they and their family have benefited from India's economic growth over the last decade. An equal number (45%) believes that they have benefited, versus have not benefited. The results are fairly distributed among age, income, education and religious groups.

India's Economic Growth Has Benefited Self and Family



Base: Representative sample of 1,616 adult Indians

Questionnaire

Q1. I am going to read out a list of statements. Using the scale below, please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each one.

- a) Our security is more in danger from other Indians than from foreigners
- b) The Indian justice system treats poor people as fairly as rich people
- c) Corruption is just a fact of life which we should accept as the price of doing business in today's world
- d) Being a woman is no barrier to success in India today
- e) People in India nowadays don't take their religion seriously enough
- f) Young Indians have lost touch with their heritage and traditions
- g) I would rather work for a private company than for the government
- h) I am proud to be an Indian
- i) The caste system is a barrier to social harmony in India

- 01 - Strongly agree
- 02 - Tend to agree
- 03 - Neither agree nor disagree
- 04 - Tend to disagree
- 05 - Strongly disagree
- VOLUNTEERED DO NOT READ
- 99 - DK/NA

Q2 India is often talked about these days as a potential global leader. Using the scale below, please tell me how important is it to you personally that India is:

- a) An economic superpower – a country whose economic success is seen as vital to that of the rest of the world
- b) A political superpower – a country which is able effectively to assert its own interests diplomatically and through institutions like the UN
- c) A military superpower – a country with nuclear weapons that is able to send a strong military presence all around the world

- 01 - Very important
- 02 - Fairly important
- 03 - Not very important
- 04 - Not at all important
- VOLUNTEERED DO NOT READ
- 99 - DK/NA

Q3 To what extent, if at all, have you and your family benefited from India's economic growth over the last ten years?

- 01 - A great deal
- 02 - A fair amount
- 03 - Not very much
- 04 - Not at all
- VOLUNTEERED DO NOT READ
- 99 - DK/NA

Detailed Results

Views of India Today

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Neither | Don't know |
|---|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|---------|------------|
| Proud to be an Indian | 57 | 13 | 7 | 4 | 10 | 8 |
| Our security is more in danger from other Indians | 31 | 28 | 10 | 7 | 15 | 10 |
| Justice system treats poor and rich people fairly | 22 | 33 | 10 | 12 | 17 | 7 |
| Caste system is barrier to social harmony | 26 | 28 | 8 | 8 | 15 | 14 |
| Being a woman is no barrier to success | 25 | 27 | 11 | 8 | 17 | 11 |
| People do not take their religion seriously | 19 | 30 | 12 | 10 | 17 | 11 |
| Would rather work for private company vs government | 26 | 23 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 15 |
| Corruption is a fact of life | 21 | 26 | 9 | 15 | 18 | 12 |
| Young people have lost touch with their heritage | 20 | 20 | 15 | 19 | 15 | 10 |

Importance That India Be...

| | Very important | Fairly important | Not very important | Not at all important | Don't know |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------|
| An economic superpower | 46 | 19 | 10 | 6 | 19 |
| A political superpower | 37 | 23 | 13 | 6 | 20 |
| A military superpower | 40 | 20 | 14 | 7 | 19 |

Methodology

| Country | Sample size (unweighted) | Field dates | Sample | Survey methodology | Type of sample |
|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| India | 1616 | Dec 05-13, 2006 | 18+ | Face-to-face | National |

Research Partner

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