

The Politics of Masculinity: Exploring Political Attitudes of Men in Contemporary India

Rajeev Paripoornam and Dr.Krishan Gopal

Lovely Professional University Phagwara

Received:
08/09/2025
Revised:
20/10/2025
Accepted:
07/11/2025
Published:
19/11/2025

ABSTRACT

This study explores the political attitudes of men in contemporary India, examining their ideologies, engagement with the political process, and views on key political, economic, and social issues. Using a qualitative approach with open-ended questionnaires, the research reveals a high level of political awareness and interest among respondents. While ideological alignments vary, there is a common emphasis on qualities like integrity and accountability in political leaders. The study uncovers nuanced perspectives on issues such as economic growth, national security, and social justice. Notably, while there is strong support for gender and racial equality, views on LGBTQ+ rights remain diverse. The research also highlights the evolving nature of Indian democracy, with respondents expressing both optimism for India's future and concerns about current challenges. This study provides valuable insights into the complex and dynamic political landscape of India, as seen through the eyes of its male citizens.

Keywords: Political Attitudes, Indian Democracy, Nationalism, Economic Development.

INTRODUCTION:

Political attitudes are a core constituent element of individual temperament that guides human behaviour across domains (Hatemi & McDermott, 2016). According to Oxley et al (2008) a basic premise in an attitude study is that people organise themselves in groups confirming attitude norms and these group behaviour could be studied easily. Converse, (2006) in his seminal paper on “The nature of belief systems in mass publics” said that while these behaviours existed, they did not pan out on expected lines, the line of aggregation was more driven by disparities between the elites and commoners with the elite class having a better understanding of political dynamics and the commoners remaining fragmented by lack of knowledge and understanding of political ideologies. In contrast Nie et al (1977) found a correlation in attitudinal formations of groups to espouse common ideologies. Asher (1988) in his book noted that traditional elements like branding ideologies into set labels like conservative or liberal had given way to more social issues like ideas towards alternative lifestyles, attitudes towards feminism and social arrangements. Knoke (1990) expanded this movement from tradition by postulating that political attitudes have economic. Social and racial issues through which people develop political attitudes.

How does studying Political Attitudes help?

Attitudes and Voting: Political attitudes have a big impact on voting behaviour because they show people's preferences for certain political parties, programs, and leaders, which influences how they vote. Voters' economic beliefs also matter since, depending on their class, they may favour market freedom or economic redistribution. Research demonstrates that these beliefs are shaped by cultural norms and class-based economic interests, which influence election results. (Achterberg

& Houtman, 2006). Voting is heavily influenced by political views since they shape people's perceptions of political organizations, candidates, and topics. Voters moved away from ethnoreligious allegiance and toward issue-based politics, giving national issues like poverty and insecurity precedence above regional or religious allegiance (Babayo Sule et al., 2017). Voting consistency is correlated with the intensity of political attitudes, as measured by their tenacity and influence. Voting behaviour is more predictable in attitude networks that are well-linked (Dalege et al., 2017) .

Attitudes and Public Policy: In a democracy, citizens preferences revolve around how responsive the government policies are (Arrow, 2004; Dahl, 1956; Sen, 1984) and there is no shortage of theories on how occurrent they are. While Inglehart (1997) posited that policy changes occur with social and economic development due to greater participation, Newton & Van Deth (2005) felt that the political elite were well submerged in directing policy. Studies suggested that suggesting people to think in an abstract way helped mitigate policy distances (Luguri, 2024). Authoritarian personality theory Adorno et al (2019), helps explain how people attitude towards government policy changed to back Hitler. It linked psychology and culture through socialisation (Whiting & Whiting, 1975). Another study on public policy being affected by group attitudes shown a direct and inverse relationship (Foyle, 2004; Pierson, 1993; Sobel, 2001). It was also seen that initial negative attitudes towards policy graduate into acceptance over time (Naurin, 2009; Page & Shapiro, 1983). As changes happen to the democratic ecosystem, there is adaptation on the citizens attitudes shifting from a short term premise to a long term well being (Brady & Sniderman, 1985; Lodge et al., 1989; Sears & Funk, 1990). Another paradox observed was ,while people attitudinally align

How to cite: Rajeev Paripoornam, *et. al.* The Politics of Masculinity: Exploring Political Attitudes of Men in Contemporary India. *Advances in Consumer Research*. 2025;2(5):1753–1762

as moderate or conservative, their responses on policy matters could be ambivalent, for example an democrat might have a republican view on certain policy movements like abortion or gun control (Cacioppo et al., 1997; Jonas et al., 1997).

Attitudes and Gender: Men and women have different political views depending on their gender. The importance that men and women place on various issues, as well as the substantive stances they take on issues like social expenditures, foreign policy, and military involvement, frequently differ. Gender is the "fault line of maximum potential cleavage," acknowledging the number of individuals impacted and the occasionally dramatic gender disparities (Jennings, 1988). Since the 1980s, even though gender differences were affected by contextual factors. Shapiro & Mahajan, (1986) in their researched examined 267 policy questions in a 20 year period covering both domestic and international policies of the USA found great divide between men and women. However, it was limited to white voters, as Lien, (1998) opined, there was no attitudinal difference in the Black, Latino and Asian voters.

The gender differences increase is proportional to political knowledge (Bittner, 2007). It was found that men interact frequently with public officials compared to women (Green & Schwam-Baird, 2016). Men are more open discussing politics with friends and relatives (Huckfeldt & Sprague, 2006) and men try to influence others vote than women (Rapoport, 1983; Wassenberg et al., 1983).

Influence of Media and technology: The use of media and technology in politics has seen a dramatic rise due to new media and also the effect that media has in shaping political attitudes. Stroud, (2010) found that media is being used to programme people's attitude in behaviour by reshaping view points to reflect narratives in favour of the media or its sponsor. Even satirical media coverage hopes to have the audience consume what is being portrayed (Boukes, 2019). It is not about the width of media coverage but the perception about the coverage that people have regardless of the actual coverage that affect people's attitudes (Stoycheff et al., 2018).

Other researchers have found evidence that, although social media and online searches are linked to

ideological segregation more strongly than normal browsing, they are also linked to exposure to other points of view (Flaxman et al., 2016). Additionally, experimental studies has established the relationship between political interest and the usage of political entertainment media, with considerable impacts on views toward social policy (Swigger, 2017; Weinmann, 2017).

Research Questions

- RQ1: How do men in India perceive their political ideologies and how do these ideologies transform to political engagement?
- RQ2: What are the factors that influence political attitudes in men?
- RQ3: How do men in India view the government addressing issues like economic growth, social security and national security?
- RQ4: How do political attitudes influence the perception of gender equality, LGBT+ rights and representation of women in Politics?
- RQ5: How do men in India engage with the political process and how does it shape their interest?

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design to explore political attitudes of men across India. Qualitative research design was chosen as it allows for in-depth understanding of nuances and complexities and contextual factors that shape political attitudes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Holloway & Todres, 2003).

Data Collection

Data was collected using an self-constructed open ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to elicit detailed responses about the participants political attitudes, experiences and beliefs. The topics covered included:

- Respondents understanding of the current political landscape
- Understand their current political ideologies and political affiliation.
- Perceptions of key political issues.
- Factors influencing political decisions.
- Engagement with political processes.
- This questionnaire was pilot tested with a small group of participants to ensure clarity and effectiveness before the final roll out.

Procedure

Potential participants were identified using researcher's LinkedIn network and other social media channels and snow ball sampling. The potential participants were contacted to explain the purpose of the study, confidentiality measures and their right to opt out. Questionnaires were administered either in person or through secure online platform (Google Forms) depending on the participants preference and location. Participants were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire with a provision to revert for any clarifications with the researcher.

Data Analysis

The data was analysed using a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

1. Familiarisation: The researcher acquired familiarity with the data that was collected by reading it multiple times.
2. Initial Coding: The data was coded systemically across the entire data set looking at the relevancy. These codes are basic units of meaning.

How to cite: Rajeev Paripoornam, *et. al.* The Politics of Masculinity: Exploring Political Attitudes of Men in Contemporary India. *Advances in Consumer Research*. 2025;2(5):1753–1762

3.Theme Development: Codes were organised into potential themes. A theme captures something about the data in relation to the research question.

4.Theme Review: The themes and codes were reviewed looking at the coded extracts and the entire data set.

5.Theme definition and naming: Themes were clearly defined and named accordingly.

6.Report Production: Compelling examples were taken for each theme and the analysis was collated with the literature.

A representative coding table :Table 1.

Theme	Description	Representative Quotes/Ideas
Political Ideologies	Expressions of right-wing, left-wing, centrist, liberal views	Not sure of my ideology, probably between centrist and liberal. Disenfranchised Centre Left. Though I do strongly believe in Individual rights as well. Small government with some degree of social safety nets, but largely meritocratic society
Political Engagement	Interest in politics and reasons for engagement or disinterest	Yes. Like to keep track of politics, policy, efficacy in implementation and the corruption and lies that follow. No , waste of time
Desirable Qualities in Politicians	Integrity, empathy, leadership qualities valued in politicians	“Honesty, humble, patient open to critical scrutiny and definitely not blind bhakths.” “Honest, Have a clear plan of action, and definitely must be self made man.”
Policy Priorities	Focus areas such as economic growth, cultural preservation, education, etc.	“Cryptocurrency, startup and business support, rational fiscal spending, infrastructure development, defence” “Education, Employment, Healthcare, Law and order, Economic reforms”
Role of Government	Views on government intervention and policymaking agendas	“Governments should balance available national resources to benefit large sections of the population and not concentrate it in the hands of few.” “It's important, government needs to lift poor people, give them dignity and create opportunities for poor people to earn more and contribute to economy”
Social Justice	Perspectives on gender equality, racial equality, LGBTQ+ rights	“Idiocy, derailed fantasy world. The core idea of equality has been replaced with equity which is plain wrong.” “There should not be any discrimination on the basis of the social, racial and LGBTQ rights.”
Secularism and Religion	Opinions on religion and caste-based politics	“Secularism is that irrespective of religion, every individual has equal chances to all opportunities in the country.” India is perfectly secular “A fraud concept used by Abrahamic cults to demand extra rights”
Representation of Women	Concern for women's role and representation in politics	“No. It's all lip service. We are too steeped in 'women as the home maker, bonded to the kitchen and bearer of children'.” “I don't think so we have very few female representatives”
Nationalism and Democracy	Definitions and views on these key civic concepts	“Nationalism is the people's sentiment towards the nation. Respect for the flag and national anthem is necessary, but forcing others to standup when national anthem is playing is not nationalism.” “By my idea of democracy is that there has to be inner appetite of every individual to respect and knowing the aspirations and

		needs of the other culture of the society as well.”
--	--	---

RESULTS

Interest in Politics: It was found that most of the respondents showed a deep interest in politics, as they believed that this interest affects people and their welfare, be it political policies that affect their daily well being to healthcare to social justice. It is an oft held belief that interest in politics determines the state of political participation of the people of the state and this leads to a strong democracy. For some, it was the preservations of the Indian culture and identity. For some it was to curb the misinformation existent and to hold political leaders responsible for their actions. One of the respondents did not find politics appealing as he wanted to concentrate on their personal development.

“No, I'm not particularly interested in politics. Firstly, I find the political landscape complex and often divisive, which doesn't appeal to me. Secondly, I believe my focus at this stage should be on personal growth, education, and career rather than engaging deeply in political affairs. Thirdly, the frequent news about corruption and inefficiencies in governance further discourage my interest in politics. Instead, I prefer to stay informed about current events and social issues that directly impact my life and community.”

Another interesting statement came from a respondent who showed interest in politics to ensure that the “privileged few” were kept in check. “Yes, I am deeply interested in politics because it directly impacts every aspect of our lives, especially those of marginalized communities like mine. Politics shapes policies on education, healthcare, employment, and social justice. As a Dalit man, I see politics as a tool for challenging entrenched inequalities and advocating for rights that have historically been denied to us. It's crucial for me to be politically engaged to ensure our voices are heard and our concerns addressed. Politics offers a platform to push for meaningful change, dismantle caste-based discrimination, and fight for inclusive policies that benefit all sections of society, not just the privileged few.”

Ideology: In many parts of the world, we see political parties stand out for their ideology (Bartels, 2013).In India, political parties are not recognised for their ideological commitment to any economic thought. Scholar agree that most political parties broadly pursue similar policies regardless of the party or the coalition at the centre (Chhibber & Petrocik, 1989; Kothari, 1964).It is interesting the note the coining of the term “Right Wing” for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after it retained power over the last three elections (Jaffrelot & Verniers, 2020). The responses reflect this change in political dynamics. There is an identification of left-winged ideology equating them to liberals. “I identify as left-wing or liberal. My ideology is rooted in a belief in social equality, justice, and a strong welfare state that

provides essential services to all citizens. I support policies that promote inclusivity, environmental sustainability, and economic equity. This ideology resonates with me because I believe in collective responsibility towards uplifting the disadvantaged and ensuring that everyone has access to basic rights and opportunities. I value diversity, freedom of expression, and policies that address structural inequalities in society.”

People who identified as right wing had this to say. “I identify as right-wing in my political ideology. This stems from my belief in preserving our cultural heritage, promoting national sovereignty, and advocating for free-market principles. Right-wing values emphasize personal responsibility, strong national defence, and limited government intervention in private affairs. These ideals resonate with me because they prioritize individual liberties and meritocracy, which I believe are crucial for a thriving society. Additionally, I support policies that encourage economic growth through entrepreneurship and minimal bureaucracy, ensuring a robust and competitive environment for all. “While many respondents identified themselves as centrist, some with a flavour of left and some with a flavour of right. “I consider myself a centrist with liberal leanings. My ideology prioritizes pragmatic solutions that balance social welfare with economic growth and individual freedoms. This stance is influenced by my upbringing, which emphasized compassion, equality, and tolerance—values that resonate deeply in Sikh teachings. Centrism appeals to me because it seeks common ground amidst diverse viewpoints, fostering unity and stability crucial for a pluralistic society like India. I value liberalism for its advocacy of civil liberties and progressive policies that uphold the dignity and rights of all citizens, irrespective of religion, caste, or gender.”

Qualities of a politician: Adjectives like “Principled, Transparent, Decisive, Integrity, Accountability” are used to describe the qualities the respondents want in their politicians.

One response makes note of the fact the ideology shouldn't matter.

“My ideal politician is a social justice warrior with a brain. They fight for equality with policies like progressive taxes, but also get stuff done. No more pointless bickering - collaboration over ideology! Transparency is key, no hiding behind closed doors. Honesty and empathy are a must - they should truly care about us, not their pockets.”

Another respondent who is an ideological right-wing says, “I value integrity, dedication, and a strong sense of nationalism in a politician. They should have a deep

understanding of India's cultural and historical context and work towards policies that strengthen national unity and pride. Honesty and transparency are crucial, as is the ability to communicate effectively with the public. A politician should also be fearless, willing to take a stand on issues of national interest, such as cow protection, the abrogation of Article 370, and the promotion of Sanskrit and other Indian languages. Additionally, they should be accessible to their constituents, genuinely listening to their concerns and working tirelessly to address them. Leadership qualities that inspire confidence and respect are essential for anyone in a position of political power." The response were more or less similar in nature, which highlights the fact that regardless of the ideological affiliation, respondents idea of the quality they wanted in a politician were similar.

Issues in the current political climate: The top five issues that the respondents listed were

- 1.Education highlighting the need for educational reforms and improving access to quality education
- 2.Economy:Economic growth, addressing job creation and eliminating unemployment, battling inflation and debt.
- 3.National Security: Most of the respondents were particular about national security.
- 4.Social Justice: Issues related to caste discrimination, promoting equality, securing minority rights and social harmony were the issue articulated under this.
- 5.Culture: Respondents emphasize on the preservation and promotion of Indian culture and heritage.

Religion and Caste Based Politics: All the respondents opined with the fact that religion and caste should not be political fodder. This response elucidates this. "Religion and caste-based politics are detrimental to the secular and inclusive fabric of our democracy. They perpetuate divisions, undermine social cohesion, and hinder progress towards true equality and justice for all. Politics should focus on policies that uplift the socio-economically disadvantaged rather than exploiting identities for electoral gains."

Some respondents believed that the government track record of this issue was abysmal. The following statement highlights this position "This should be banned .

Any reference to caste based or religion based politics should not be allowed.

Also no schemes like jobs should be allowed on caste or religion. Only on merit."

Views on gender and racial equality and LGBTQ+ rights: Based on the responses in the questionnaire, the views can be classified on the basis of strong support, qualified support, opposition and indifference. Views in support, "Equality isn't just fair, it builds a stronger society. We fight for equal rights for all genders, races, and LGBTQ+ folks. Everyone deserves a shot, not just the privileged few. Policies like paid leave and anti-discrimination laws help level the playing field. When everyone can

contribute, everyone benefits. It's about fairness, but also about building a more united and successful society."

There was qualified support to these social issues like "I believe in gender equality , racial equality etc. But I feel LGBTQ+ is going a bit too far." Indifference was shown by a response, "Idiocy, derailed fantasy world. The core idea of equality has been replaced with equity which is plain wrong." Opposition was shown by a respondent stating "Completely messed up. Can write volumes on the subject. Current dispensation can't see beyond their hindutva agenda and institutionalised loot."

On India's political culture and discourse: The opinions expressed in the questionnaire show a wide range of views, some respondents see it from a positive outlook while some have expressed concerns about the same. The major themes that are covered include Polarisation and divisiveness signifying increased polarisation in the political discourse, where some respondents feel the need for more dialogue and less confrontation. On the quality of the discourse, respondents feel the lack of respect and civility in political debates. "From what I've observed, political debates can be intense and sometimes divisive. I believe respectful dialogue and focus on issues rather than personal attacks would lead to better outcomes for the country." Some respondents view this as a mirror to our democracy with some commending the good work done and some thinking, we still need work. These respondents lament that our democracy needs a strong opposition which is missing. "Current political discourse has been leaning towards right wing, there are high chances of winning of the BJP but I do want that the opposition must be stronger, so the blunder decision must not be taken by the government and keeps them under check."

Some respondents feel that discourse is about national pride while others feel this is about identity politics and polarisation. "We are dangerously poised on the edge of a precipice. If not course corrected we will descend into a state of anarchy, a banana beggar republic and in time break up as a country. One respondent surmised "Indian politics are a mix of old and new. Nationalism and religious identity are hot buttons, but economic development is also key. Debates rage over how to fight poverty and corruption is a constant struggle. Media, both old and new, shapes the conversation, but can be biased and spread misinformation."

Women's representation in Politics: The gender demographics of the nation are not at all reflected in the number of women in the Lower House (Lok Sabha) of the Indian Parliament. After 18 Lok Sabha elections, the proportion of women in parliament is still just slightly more than the global average of 22%; India is placed 149th out of 193 nations with a 14% representation of women (IPU Parline, 2024).In this context the opinion of men on this topic is of great interest. Most of the respondents feel that women are not represented enough in politics. Some acknowledge that there has been progress since independence, while a small minority believe that the present representation is sufficient. "It

has improved since independence but there needs to be participation from the common women of the society than the daughters or relatives of the previous politicians, only then we can say that the women are empowering in right manner.” Some believe that existing structural barriers and societal gender roles inhibit women participation. “I believe women are underrepresented in politics, which is a reflection of broader societal challenges and structural barriers. Greater representation of women in politics is essential for more balanced decision-making and addressing issues that uniquely affect women. Some respondents believe that women representation would provide a balanced view of economic decision making. “No, women are still significantly underrepresented in Indian politics. Despite comprising nearly half of the population, women hold only a small fraction of parliamentary seats and leadership roles. This underrepresentation perpetuates gender biases in policy-making and hinders the prioritization of women's issues. It is crucial to promote gender quotas, political empowerment, and inclusive policies to ensure women's voices are heard and their concerns addressed in governance.” Some solutions proposed are to impose gender quotas, empowerment through education, creating a better support system for women, addressing systemic barriers and enhanced grass roots participation.

Nationalism and Democracy: We set out to find out how respondent defined and felt about Nationalism and Democracy. Respondents opined that Nationalism was a sum of one's pride in the country, commitment to its welfare and promoting unity and diversity in the nation. “Nationalism is pride in one's country, its culture, and its achievements. It involves a sense of duty towards preserving sovereignty, promoting national interests, and ensuring prosperity for all citizens. True nationalism embraces diversity while uniting people under a common identity and shared values.” Some respondents feel that nationalism should be inclusive and celebrate diversity, some respondents warm about nationalism being exclusionary or xenophobic forms of nationalism. “Nationalism, to me, is a deep love and pride for one's country combined with a commitment to its values of justice, equality, and pluralism. True nationalism celebrates diversity and works towards the collective well-being of all citizens. It is inclusive and respects the rights of minorities. On the contrary, narrow nationalism excludes or discriminates against certain groups based on religion, ethnicity, or other identities. It prioritizes an exclusive national identity over shared humanity and can lead to xenophobia and conflict.”

Democracy has been defined by respondents as a sum of freedom and rights available to the citizens and subject to change with time, “Freedom of choice. Right to religion, to free speech, education, livelihood and ownership. Definition of democracy is bound to change with time. It's inbuilt in its very construct.” The essential elements brought out by the respondents were governance through elected representatives, free and fair elections, accountability of people in power, impartial judiciary, protection of minority rights. The respondents also pointed out the changing face of democracy in India

with issues like misinformation and polarisation and the impact of technology in political participation. There was a note of caution, “Democracy is everyone having an equal vote in things. Pure democracy is equally evil as it ends up with the rule of the many. Balance is necessary to be achieved. Yes the meaning is changing.”

Views on Secularism : Although there are still many favourable allusions to secularism in Indian political discourse, it is becoming harder to define what the term actually means. Secularism is sometimes seen as being in a crisis in modern India (Needham & Sunder Rajan, 2007).

The common themes seen across responses for the respondents views on secularism is around separation of religion and the state, equal treatment for all religions, religious freedom, promotion of social harmony and neutrality of the state. These were positive views, there were sceptic view too, “A fraud concept used by Abrahamic cults to demand extra rights”. A few expressed concerns about the state of secularism in the country.

Views on Indian Economy: The key themes that was thrown up in the study were: a. Economy and growth potential, where many respondents expressed optimism in the Indian growth story, indicated positive growth trajectories like the GDP and promising future in certain industrial sectors. b. Challenges and concerns: The common refrain of the respondents circled around unemployment, job creation, economic inequality, structural imbalances and agrarian distress. c. Reform and Policy measures: Respondents stressed the need for structural reforms like labour laws, land acquisition and the ease of doing business in India. d. Sectoral Focus: The highlighted areas were technology and digital infrastructure, manufacturing with emphasis on ‘Make in India’, agricultural sector and rural and agrarian economy. e. There was also some responses that spoke about Social and environment considerations which included topics like inclusive growth and equitable distribution of wealth, investments in education, healthcare and skills development. Another concern was environmental sustainability and green initiatives. This view sums it all up, “As of the latest data, the Indian economy is in a phase of recovery and growth following the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key indicators like GDP growth, industrial production, and exports show a positive trajectory, yet structural issues remain for long-term sustainability.

India's GDP growth has been robust, driven by revival in manufacturing, services, and agriculture. However, unemployment remains high, especially in informal sectors, requiring targeted job creation and skills improvement.

Inflation, particularly in food and fuel prices, remains volatile, managed cautiously by the Reserve Bank of India amidst global commodity price risks.

The fiscal deficit has widened due to increased government spending aimed at economic stimulus and support for vulnerable populations. Balancing this with investments in health, education, and infrastructure is crucial.

Looking ahead, continued structural reforms in labour laws, land acquisition, and the financial sector will boost productivity and attract foreign investment. India's digital economy, expanding infrastructure, and green initiatives in renewable energy promise growth. Investments in education and healthcare are vital for leveraging demographic advantages, while global trade integration will enhance export performance and attract foreign investment. In conclusion, while challenges persist, strategic policy reforms and investments in human capital and sustainability can propel India towards a promising economic future.”

Women’s participation in Politics: There was an all-round appreciation for the need for women to be politically active. Participants spoke about the need for diverse perspective and inclusive governance. An overwhelming majority spoke about the importance of women to be politically active to address gender specific issues like health care, safety, reproductive rights and education for women. They believe women would make role models for future generations. “Yes, it is crucial for women to be politically active as their perspectives and experiences bring diversity to decision-making processes. Women's participation can lead to policies that address gender-specific issues, promote equality, and enhance social development. Empowering women politically strengthens democracy and ensures that governance reflects the needs and aspirations of all citizens.”

There was only one condescending response, “Yes . Unfortunately after a while they all become just a politician.”

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study indicates a high level of political awareness and interest among men. Participants viewed political engagement as critical to social welfare with myriad motivations from addressing social justice to preserving cultural identity.

The ideological positioning too show cased remarkable complexity, while traditional left – right dichotomies existed, many participants identified themselves as centrists with nuanced perspectives. Regardless of their ideological leanings, their expectations from the political leadership were similar. This suggests a shift from rigid ideological positions to a more pragmatic and solution oriented approach.

Respondents prioritized five critical policy areas like education reform, economic development, national security, social justice and cultural preservation reflecting a balanced approach to national development, balancing progressive aspirations with cultural preservation.

Participants also exhibited a progressively inclined perspective on social issues like a strong support for gender and racial equality, varied opinions on LGBTQ+ rights, rejection of religion and caste – based political strategies and emphasis on inclusive and equitable social policies.

The respondents demonstrated sophisticated understanding of democracy and nationalism, where democracy was viewed as a dynamic concept emphasising individual rights, free elections and minority rights, nationalism was conceptualised as inclusionary pride rather than an exclusionary ideology. Concerns were raised about potential polarization and democratic erosion.

The participants recognised the support for a greater women’s political inclusion. They also understood systemic barriers that needs to be addressed to have a better representation among women.

While the study provides rich insights, it also highlights ongoing challenges in Indian political discourse, including:

Potential democratic fragmentation

Need for more inclusive political representation

Balancing economic development with social equity
The research captures a pivotal moment in Indian political consciousness, demonstrating an engaged, nuanced citizenry navigating complex social and political transformations. The findings suggest that Indian democracy is evolving, with citizens seeking balanced, pragmatic approaches to national development.

The study underscores the importance of continuous dialogue, inclusive policies, and responsive governance in addressing the multifaceted challenges facing contemporary Indian society.

Limitations of the study

The qualitative nature of the study, while allowing for in-depth exploration of individual perspectives, limits the ability to make broad generalizations about the wider population(Sinclair et al., 2013). The study's focus on men's perspectives excludes the views of women and non-binary individuals, limiting a comprehensive understanding of political attitudes across genders in India. The potential for a social desirability bias should also factored(Grimm, 2010).The cross-sectional nature of the study presents its output which may stick now and may not have long term validity (Taris et al., 2021). These limitations highlight the need for caution in interpreting and generalizing the findings of this study. While the research provides valuable insights into the political attitudes of a segment of Indian men, it should be viewed as an exploratory study that lays the groundwork for more comprehensive and representative research in the future.

Future Direction

The findings and limitations of this study point to several promising avenues for future research on political attitudes in India. These future directions can help address gaps in the current study and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of India's political landscape.

Mixed-Methods Approach: Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods could provide both depth and breadth in understanding political attitudes.

Comparative Studies: Comparing the political attitudes of the other genders would also help align this study.

Focus: While this study was broad based, getting more specific with a single or couple of variables would help. The other ways that this study can be extrapolated could be in terms of understanding generational differences, analysing regional variations and exploration of identity politics.

REFERENCES

- Achterberg, P., & Houtman, D. (2006). Why do so many people vote 'unnaturally'? A cultural explanation for voting behaviour. *European Journal of Political Research*, 45(1), 75–92. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2005.00291.x>
- Arrow, K. J. (2004). Uncertainty and the welfare economics of medical care. 1963. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 82(2), 141–149.
- Asher, H. B. (1988). *Presidential elections and American politics: Voters, candidates, and campaigns since 1952* (4th ed). Dorsey Press.
- Babayo Sule, Mohd, S., Mohd, A., & Mat, B. (2017). Political Behaviour and Voting Pattern in Nigeria: A Study of 2015 Presidential Election.
- Bartels, L. (2013, September 29). Party systems and political change in Europe [Paper presentation].
- Bittner, A. (2007). The Effects of Information and Social Cleavages: Explaining Issue Attitudes and Vote Choice in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne de Science Politique*, 40(04). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000842390707117X>
- Boukes, M. (2019). Agenda-Setting With Satire: How Political Satire Increased TTIP's Saliency on the Public, Media, and Political Agenda. *Political Communication*, 36(3), 426–451. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2018.1498816>
- Brady, H. E., & Sniderman, P. M. (1985). Attitude Attribution: A Group Basis for Political Reasoning. *American Political Science Review*, 79(4), 1061–1078. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1956248>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Cacioppo, J. T., Gardner, W. L., & Berntson, G. G. (1997). Beyond Bipolar Conceptualizations and Measures: The Case of Attitudes and Evaluative Space. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 1(1), 3–25. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0101_2
- Chhibber, P. K., & Petrocik, J. R. (1989). The Puzzle of Indian Politics: Social Cleavages and the Indian Party System. *British Journal of Political Science*, 19(2), 191–210. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123400005433>
- Converse, P. E. (2006). The nature of belief systems in mass publics (1964). *Critical Review*, 18(1–3), 1–74. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08913810608443650>
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, N. C. (2018). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Dahl, R. A. (1956). A Preface to Democratic Theory.
- Dalege, J., Borsboom, D., Van Harreveld, F., & Van Der Maas, H. L. J. (2017). Network Analysis on Attitudes: A Brief Tutorial. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 8(5), 528–537. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550617709827>
- Flaxman, S., Goel, S., & Rao, J. M. (2016). Filter Bubbles, Echo Chambers, and Online News Consumption. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 80(S1), 298–320. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfw006>
- Foyle, D. C. (2004). Leading the Public To War? The Influence of American Public Opinion on the Bush Administration's Decision to go to War in Iraq. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 16(3), 269–294. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edh025>
- Green, D. P., & Schwam-Baird, M. (2016). Mobilization, participation, and American democracy: A retrospective and postscript. *Party Politics*, 22(2), 158–164. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068815605678>
- Grimm, P. (2010). Social Desirability Bias. In J. Sheth & N. Malhotra (Eds.), *Wiley International Encyclopedia of Marketing* (1st ed.). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444316568.wiem02057>
- Harary, F., & Norman, R. (1953). Graph Theory as a Mathematical Model in Social Science. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research,. *Bulletin de l'Institut de Recherches Économiques et Sociales*, 26(8), 737–737. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1373971900075089>
- Hatemi, P. K., & McDermott, R. (2016). Give Me Attitudes. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 19(1), 331–350. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-103113-034929>

22. Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The Status of Method: Flexibility, Consistency and Coherence. *Qualitative Research*, 3(3), 345–357.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794103033004>
23. Huckfeldt, R., & Sprague, J. (2006). Citizens, politics, and social communication: Information and influence in an election campaign (Digitally printed 1. paperback version). Cambridge University Press.
24. Inglehart, R. (1997). Modernization and postmodernization: Cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies. Princeton University Press.
25. IPU Parline, G. D. on N. P. (2024). Monthly ranking of women in national parliaments. IPU Parline: Global Data on National Parliaments. <https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking/>
26. Jaffrelot, C., & Verniers, G. (2020). A new party system or a new political system? *Contemporary South Asia*, 28(2), 141–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09584935.2020.1765990>
27. Jennings, R. C. (1988). Translation, Interpretation and Understanding. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 18(3), 343–353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004839318801800303>
28. Jonas, K., Diehl, M., & Brömer, P. (1997). Effects of Attitudinal Ambivalence on Information Processing and Attitude-Intention Consistency. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 33(2), 190–210. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jesp.1996.1317>
29. Knoke, D. (1990). Networks of Political Action: Toward Theory Construction. *Social Forces*, 68(4), 1041. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2579133>
30. Kothari, R. (1964). The Congress “System” in India. *Asian Survey*, 4(12), 1161–1173. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2642550>
31. Lien, P.-T. (1998). Does the Gender Gap in Political Attitudes and Behavior Vary Across Racial Groups? *Political Research Quarterly*, 51(4), 869–894. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106591299805100402>
32. Lodge, M., McGraw, K. M., & Stroh, P. (1989). An Impression-Driven Model of Candidate Evaluation. *American Political Science Review*, 83(2), 399–419. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1962397>
33. Luguri, J. (2024). How We Think Affects What We Think About Public Policies | Institution for Social and Policy Studies. <https://isps.yale.edu/news/blog/2014/04/how-we-think-affects-what-we-think-about-public-policies>
34. Naurin, E. (2009). Promising democracy: Parties, citizens and election promises. Department of Political Science, University of Gothenburg.
35. Needham, A. D., & Sunder Rajan, R. (Eds.). (2007). The crisis of secularism in India. Duke University Press.
36. Newton, K., & Van Deth, J. W. (2005). Foundations of Comparative Politics (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511806810>
37. Nie, N. H., Verba, S., & Petrocik, J. R. (1977). The changing American voter (3. print). Harvard Univ. Pr.
38. Nowak, A., Szamrej, J., & Latané, B. (1990). From private attitude to public opinion: A dynamic theory of social impact. *Psychological Review*, 97(3), 362–376. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.97.3.362>
39. Oxley, D. R., Smith, K. B., Alford, J. R., Hibbing, M. V., Miller, J., Scalora, M. J., Hatemi, P., & Hibbing, J. R. (2008). Political Attitudes Vary with Physiological Traits. *American Association for the Advancement of Science*, 321(5896), 1667–1670. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1157627>
40. Page, B. I., & Shapiro, R. Y. (1983). Effects of Public Opinion on Policy. *American Political Science Review*, 77(1), 175–190. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1956018>
41. Pierson, P. (1993). When Effect Becomes Cause: Policy Feedback and Political Change. *World Politics*, 45(4), 595–628. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2950710>
42. Rapoport, A. (1983). Development, culture change and supportive design. *Habitat International*, 7(5–6), 249–268. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0197-3975\(83\)90076-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0197-3975(83)90076-0)
43. Roettger, W. B., & Winebrenner, H. (1983). The Voting Behavior of American Political Scientists: The 1980 Presidential Election. *Western Political Quarterly*, 36(1), 134–148. <https://doi.org/10.1177/106591298303600109>
44. Ryan, C. (2017). Political Self-Identification and Political Attitudes.
45. Sears, D. O., & Funk, C. L. (1990). The limited effect of economic self-interest on the political attitudes of the mass public. *Journal of Behavioral Economics*, 19(3), 247–271. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-5720\(90\)90030-B](https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-5720(90)90030-B)
46. Seltzer, N. A., Johnson, A. A., & Amira, K. A. (2013). Revisiting dynamic social impact theory: Extensions and applications for political science. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 2013, 26, 349–367.
47. Sen, A. (1984). Collective choice and social welfare. North-Holland Sole distributors for the U.S.A. and Canada, Elsevier Science Pub. Co.
48. Shapiro, R. Y., & Mahajan, H. (1986). Gender Differences in Policy Preferences: A Summary of Trends From the 1960s to the 1980s. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 50(1), 42. <https://doi.org/10.1086/268958>
49. Sinclair, R. R., Tetrick, L. E., & Wang, M. (Eds.). (2013). Research methods in occupational health psychology: Measurement, design, and data analysis. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203095249>

50. Sobel, R. (2001). The impact of public opinion on U.S. foreign policy since Vietnam: Constraining the colossus. Oxford University Press.
51. Stoycheff, E., Pingree, R. J., Peifer, J. T., & Sui, M. (2018). Agenda Cueing Effects of News and Social Media. *Media Psychology*, 21(2), 182–201.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15213269.2017.1311214>
52. Stroud, N. J. (2010). Polarization and Partisan Selective Exposure. *Journal of Communication*, 60(3), 556–576.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2010.01497.x>
53. Swigger, N. (2017). The Effect of Gender Norms in Sitcoms on Support for Access to Abortion and Contraception. *American Politics Research*, 45(1), 109–127.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X16651615>
54. Taris, T. W., Kessler, S. R., & Kelloway, E. K. (2021). Strategies addressing the limitations of cross-sectional designs in occupational health psychology: What they are good for (and what not). *Work & Stress*, 35(1), 1–5.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02678373.2021.1888561>
55. Wassenberg, P. S., Wolsborn, K. G., Hagner, P. R., & Pierce, J. C. (1983). GENDER DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION 1956-1980. *American Politics Quarterly*, 11(2), 181–203.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/004478083011002003>
56. Weinmann, C. (2017). Feeling political interest while being entertained? Explaining the emotional experience of interest in politics in the context of political entertainment programs. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 6(2), 123–141. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000091>
57. Whiting, B. B., & Whiting, J. W. M. (1975). *Children of Six Cultures: A Psycho-Cultural Analysis*. Harvard University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674593770>