

THE ORF FOREIGN POLICY SURVEY 2021



YOUNG INDIA AND THE WORLD

Harsh V Pant
with

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Preface

The word ‘unprecedented’ has often been used in the past year-and-a-half to describe the sheer scale of disruption that COVID-19 has unleashed upon the world. Indeed, now we know that the pandemic has spared no one, its wrath reaching the most cosmopolitan of cities and the remotest villages alike. Yet, in early 2020, as the outbreak of COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, leaders across the world would have thought the battle could be quickly won. They sounded off a war cry: Test, Trace, and Isolate. Countries shut down all movement in their cities and towns and closed their borders too, in an attempt to contain the spread of the virus. As lockdowns became the norm, the global economy was buffeted with strong headwinds, and many countries soon plunged into deep recession. Today, while we have a

count of over 4 million lives lost (and counting), the real human cost of the pandemic remains immeasurable. The battle has not been won; the war is far from over.

The pandemic revealed the strengths and weaknesses of various governance systems, social welfare policies, principles of economic organisation, and multilateralism. It has also had an extraordinary impact on the churn that was already underway in the global order, even before the first reports of a ‘strange respiratory disease’ started coming out of Wuhan. Growing geopolitical rivalries—characterised by the need to gain technological, economic and military superiority—continue to disrupt the delicate balance of power that exists in the world today. The rise of protectionist sentiments, coupled with the growing discontent towards multilateralism and globalisation, are

dramatically changing the post-Second World War consensus on managing an increasingly integrated, albeit distrustful world.

As India navigates the challenges of this evolving global order amidst the massive fallout of the pandemic, its policy choices need to respond to the current complexities and reflect the needs, aspirations and will of its people. This first iteration of ORF's "Foreign Policy Survey", conducted in collaboration with Impetus Research, endeavours to understand the opinions and views of the country's youth on some of the most important questions that confront India and the choices that the nation must make in this fast changing global environment.

The survey—which reached out to the urban youth and was conducted prior to the second wave—found an optimistic assessment of India's foreign policy and an agreement with many of the current government's recent policy interventions and external engagements. More than seven of every 10 (72 percent) of the respondents rated the conduct of India's foreign policy as either *very good* or *good*. Not surprisingly, global pandemics were assessed as India's biggest foreign policy challenge, followed closely by terrorism, climate change, and border conflicts. The apprehension regarding China's rise was reflected in the low trust ratings for India's eastern neighbour. In contrast, the United States was rated highly in the survey, mirroring the direction taken

by Indian foreign policy in recent years. The poll also takes a deep dive into the nuances of the Indian youth's outlook on the economy, globalisation, and multilateralism, as well as the performance of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Indian government on key issues.

Reflecting this survey's goal of gaining a better understanding and a more rounded view of the youth's perception and opinion of India's foreign policy, the authors of this report are young people who have a stake in the nation's journey in the coming years. Our young scholars—Prithvi Iyer, Nivedita Kapoor, Aarshi Tirkey, and Kartik Bommakanti, led by ORF's Director of Studies and Head of Strategic Studies Programme, Professor Harsh V Pant have worked through this difficult period to produce this very important survey available to all who engage with India and its external relations. As times change, so do aspirations and perceptions. ORF will institutionalise this Foreign Policy Survey as an annual endeavour to better track how India's young demographic comprehends the country's foreign policy goals and its approach to its growing role in world affairs.

Congratulations to the entire team for this effort. We are confident that 'The ORF Foreign Policy Survey 2021' will help bring to the fore voices of young India and help us understand the generation who will shape this country's partnerships and determine its place in the global order.

Dr. Samir Saran
President, ORF
August 2021

Executive Summary

1

Urban Indian youth surveyed in this poll have a positive assessment of the conduct of the country's foreign policy, with 72 percent of respondents rating it as either *very good* or *good*. This is reflected in their support for some of the government's key foreign policies, including on China, Pakistan, and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad). The area where the government has the respondents' least support concerns the country's withdrawal from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

2

The respondents' level of concern about key foreign policy challenges – global pandemics, terrorism, border conflict with China, climate change, and border conflict with Pakistan – runs parallel to their awareness of the most pressing issues facing India. Moreover, the youth perceive the country's challenges from its border conflicts with China to be more acute than those emanating from Pakistan.

3

This assessment explains the views of the youth regarding goal-setting in Indian foreign policy, with the following as the top three priorities: strengthening the Indian economy; combatting terrorism; and improving relations with immediate neighbours (other than Pakistan and China). The next priorities are improving ties with the United States (US), and resolving differences with China and Pakistan.

4

On questions pertaining to India's neighbourhood, respondents were most trusting of Sri Lanka (68 percent) and displayed low levels of trust towards Pakistan with only 10 percent of respondents indicating positive trust ratings. They also hold a positive view of the Maldives, Nepal, and Bhutan.

5

The respondents expressed an overarching optimism on the status of India's bilateral relationships with its neighbours, especially Sri Lanka (68 percent of respondents saw it as a burgeoning bilateral relationship).

6

Eight of every ten (80 percent) of the respondents felt India has *poor* or *very poor* relations with Pakistan. Respondents also believed relations with the Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan have improved in recent years and hold greater potential.

7

More than seven of every ten (77 percent) of the respondents rated the US as the country they trust the most among the leading global powers. The US was followed by Australia, Russia, Japan, France, the United Kingdom (UK), and the European Union (EU). The country that the respondents distrusted the most (77 percent) was China. These perceptions have also been reflected in the respondents' vision for the future, about which powers will be India's leading partners in the coming decade: the Quad, Russia, and Europe are preferred, in that order.

8

The high level of concern about the rise of China as a global power is an important factor driving the response of urban youth regarding Indian foreign policy. The survey found 62 percent of respondents were of the view that India should abandon non-alignment in case of rising US-China tensions. The respondents expressed concern not only about China interfering in India's neighbourhood, but also about its military and economic superiority. They also expressed fears of a breakout of war.

9

More than seven of every 10 (76 percent) were of the view that India's preferred mode of engagement should be global cooperation through multilateral organisations, and over 74 percent felt that India's quest to acquire a permanent seat at the United Nations (UN) Security Council was a *very important* goal for India. The respondents also displayed a higher level of awareness of older multilateral organisations and forums such as the UN and the World Trade Organization, with the exception of the Non-Aligned Movement. In fact, two-thirds of the urban youth respondents said they had not heard of the forum.

10

There is low awareness about more recent platforms and forums, such as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Group of 20 (G20), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Regional groupings score much lower than the bigger power groupings on the list (G20).

11

The urban youth are deeply divided over the impact of globalisation on India and its economy, society and culture, their standard of living, travel to and from other countries, and education opportunities overseas. While the opportunity to study abroad is viewed positively, the optimism regarding moving abroad to work or stay is markedly much lower. Moreover, an overwhelming 71 percent of respondents felt that the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', the Indian government's economic self-reliance mission, would be good for India.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a standstill in 2020. At the same time, the crisis caused the acceleration of certain trends in the international system that had predated the pandemic, among them the rivalry between the United States (US) and China. The same contestation is set to define the structures of the post-pandemic global system.

For some years before COVID-19, China had begun its economic and geostrategic rise, the US's hegemonic position was already diminishing, the gains of globalisation were getting discredited, multilateral organisations were proving ineffective, populism was rising, and the focal point of global geopolitics and geoeconomics was pivoting to Asia. In the past year, all of this stirring has only gathered pace, revealing in stark detail the faultlines within the international system.

To be sure, COVID-19 has given a new urgency to questions around the future of the world order, the contours of which remain unclear. While the post-Cold War US hegemony has come to an end, a bipolar or multipolar world has not emerged. The situation is thus, where the rules of the game are yet to be established, making this period in contemporary history particularly volatile and subject to widespread policy shifts by nation-states responding to the systemic changes. This is already visible in the Asia-Pacific region, which occupies centre-stage in the ongoing US-China rivalry and is being re-imagined by prominent stakeholders as the "Indo-Pacific".

India—a key power in this endeavour—is making efforts to carve out a niche for itself at the decision-making table. It is engaged in efforts to manage China, the rising power on its border, while working on boosting domestic growth. Even as certain contours of this future policy are already emerging, much will

“COVID-19 has given a new urgency to questions around the future of the world order, the contours of which remain unclear.”

depend on how the regional and international system shapes itself, in turn determining India's status in it. It may not be an overreach to conclude that these developments together will have an indelible impact on Indian foreign policymaking.

Not yet a major power but no longer a player that can be ignored – India has a unique position today that has led to an ongoing lively debate on the choices being made as the country positions itself in the world. The fractious nature of the debate reveals the inflection point that has been reached: the roads

taken will define Indian policy in the years to come, just as much as those not taken will.

While foreign policy continues to be an elite decision-making domain, India, as a democracy, should remain steadfast in considering public opinion, especially when it comes to issues with far-reaching consequences. With 65 percent of the Indian population being young—i.e., below the age of 35—taking this demographic along its journey becomes even more significant.

Context and Rationale for the Poll

Various surveys on India's public opinion and foreign policy have been conducted over the past several years, each with their own strengths and limitations. For one, the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (IIOPO) has been conducting annual and sometimes bi-annual surveys since 1959, and it is only recently that these are being analysed.¹ There have also been issue-specific surveys that aimed to assess public opinion on crucial events such as the Gulf War of 1991,² India's 1998 Pokhran 2 nuclear tests,³ the 1999 Kargil

War, the 2003 Iraq War,⁴ and the 2008 Civil Nuclear Deal.⁵ Other polls have sought to understand public mood on broader themes that include Indo-US bilateral ties,⁶ the separatist movement in Sri Lanka,⁷ and the use of nuclear weapons.⁸

While useful in their declared aims, these surveys suffer from several limitations. For instance, the IIOPO did not analyse its survey findings until recently. Some surveys are limited by their scope as they relate to a single event, while others are restricted by their sampled population, usually the urban

¹ Aidan Milliff, Paul Staniland, and Vipin Narang, "Uneven Accountability? Public Attitudes on Indian Foreign Policy since the 1960s," MIT Political Science Department Research Paper No. 2019-21, 2019, 1–66, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3448740#references-widget.

² Shivaji Kumar, "India's Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: A View from New Delhi," *India Review* 17, no. 4 (August 8, 2018): 353–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14736489.2018.1510158>.

³⁻⁷ Kumar, "India's Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: A View from New Delhi."

⁸ Benjamin A. Valentino and Scott D. Sagan, "Atomic Attraction," *The Indian Express*, June 3, 2016, <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/barack-obama-hiroshima-speech-india-nuclear-weapon-terrorism-atomic-attraction-2831348/>.

demographic and those in policymaking circles. The latter trend was seen in different surveys conducted by media houses and scholars on the Indian government's nuclear policy⁹ (1994) and the country's foreign and security policy (2019).¹⁰

In more recent years, some polls have been broader in their aims and have assessed Indian attitudes towards the government's policies,¹¹ and their views on relations with other countries.¹² For instance, Devesh Kapur, the then Director of the Center for Advanced Study of India at the University of Pennsylvania, conducted a survey from 2005-2006 that remains the largest pan-India poll so far, with 212,563 interviews.¹³ The survey assessed how Indians perceive various countries, and also attempted to link India's foreign policy with the perceptions of various Indian socio-economic groups and regions.¹⁴ Other polls with similar aims of gauging the electorate's response towards foreign policy have also been undertaken by the Lowy Institute in collaboration with the Australia India Institute.¹⁵ With a sample of 1,233 Indian adults, the poll gathered opinion on India's relations and reputation with other countries, security threats, and the structure of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. CNN-IBN-Today in 2014 conducted its own survey of 6,280 urban residents, to gauge if the Indian public favoured Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance and policies, including his foreign policy.¹⁶

This survey builds upon the existing strand of polling research, but with a focus on India's urban youth. This is an endeavour to understand how the youth—the most important stakeholders of India's future—perceive crucial foreign policy changes and propositions. As foreign policy initiatives become enmeshed with domestic political considerations, ORF is of the view that an opinion poll of this nature has become more relevant than ever. Since this poll is the first attempt to conduct this exercise, we are surveying a smaller subset i.e., the Indian urban youth.

The poll sampled 2,037 Indians from 14 cities, and the questionnaire was administered in eight regional languages, in addition to English (See Annex B for full details on the methodology.) It is the first Indian survey that targets the age group of 18-35 years. The survey evaluates recent views of the urban youth on the government's foreign policy, their assessment of emerging challenges in this domain, as well as India's ties with regional and global powers. The 18-35 demographic makes up 27 percent of India's urban population, and around 26 percent of the country's overall population. (In the country's rural districts, this age group comprises 25 percent of the population.)^a

The authors believe that this survey is the first of its nature to consider India's public opinion on multilateralism and globalisation, and examine

⁹ David Cortright and Amitabh Mattoo, "Elite Public Opinion and Nuclear Weapons Policy in India," *Asian Survey* 36, no. 6 (May 25, 1996): 545–60, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2645790>.

¹⁰ Dhruva Jaishankar, "Survey of India's Strategic Community" (New Delhi, 2019), <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Survey-of-India's-Strategic-Community.pdf>.

¹¹ Kumar, "India's Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: A View from New Delhi."

¹² Rory Medcalf, "India Poll 2013" (Sydney, 2013), <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/india-poll-2013>.

¹³ Devesh Kapur, "Public Opinion and Indian Foreign Policy," *India Review* 8, no. 3 (August 13, 2009): 286–305, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14736480903116818>.

¹⁴ Kapur, "Public Opinion and Indian Foreign Policy."

¹⁵ Medcalf, "India Poll 2013."

¹⁶ Kumar, "India's Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: A View from New Delhi."

^a These have been estimated through the method of linear interpolation, based on data from the Census of India.

“This poll is an endeavour to understand how the youth—the most important stakeholders in India’s future—perceive crucial foreign policy changes and propositions.”

how these perceptions may be shaped by the COVID-19 crisis, which continues to unfold as we publish this report. This survey was conducted between 3 to 21 December 2020, and reflects the public opinion on foreign policy developments up to that period. Since then, the rapid pace of changes within and outside India has continued unabated.

India, which has been grappling with a devastating second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, has had to rethink questions about its domestic capacity and international ambitions. At the same time, it is aware that the evolving international situation continues to demand its steady involvement and response. Given

the timeline of the poll—i.e., before the second wave hit the country—these dilemmas are inevitably not reflected in the survey responses.

However, even as these conundrums remain unaddressed, the responses to ORF’s survey provide useful insights on the nature of public opinion in India in relation to the government’s key foreign policy decisions. Needless to say, future surveys would benefit from mapping any identifiable differences in public opinion as a result of the second wave of the pandemic, and whether it may have had a lasting impact on how India’s youth interprets the nation’s engagement with the world.

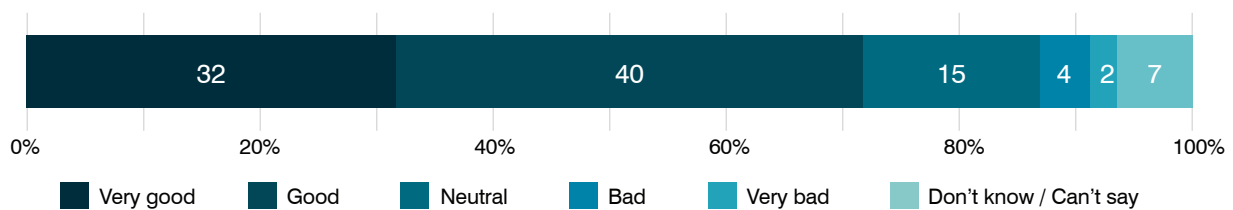
Survey Findings and Analysis

1. INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

The conduct of Indian foreign policy in the past years has received an enthusiastic approval in this urban youth poll. As

many as 72 percent of respondents had a positive assessment of the performance (32 percent *very good*, and 40 percent, *good*). A small 6 percent had a negative view of the situation.

Figure 1: How would you rate India for its foreign policy on an overall basis?



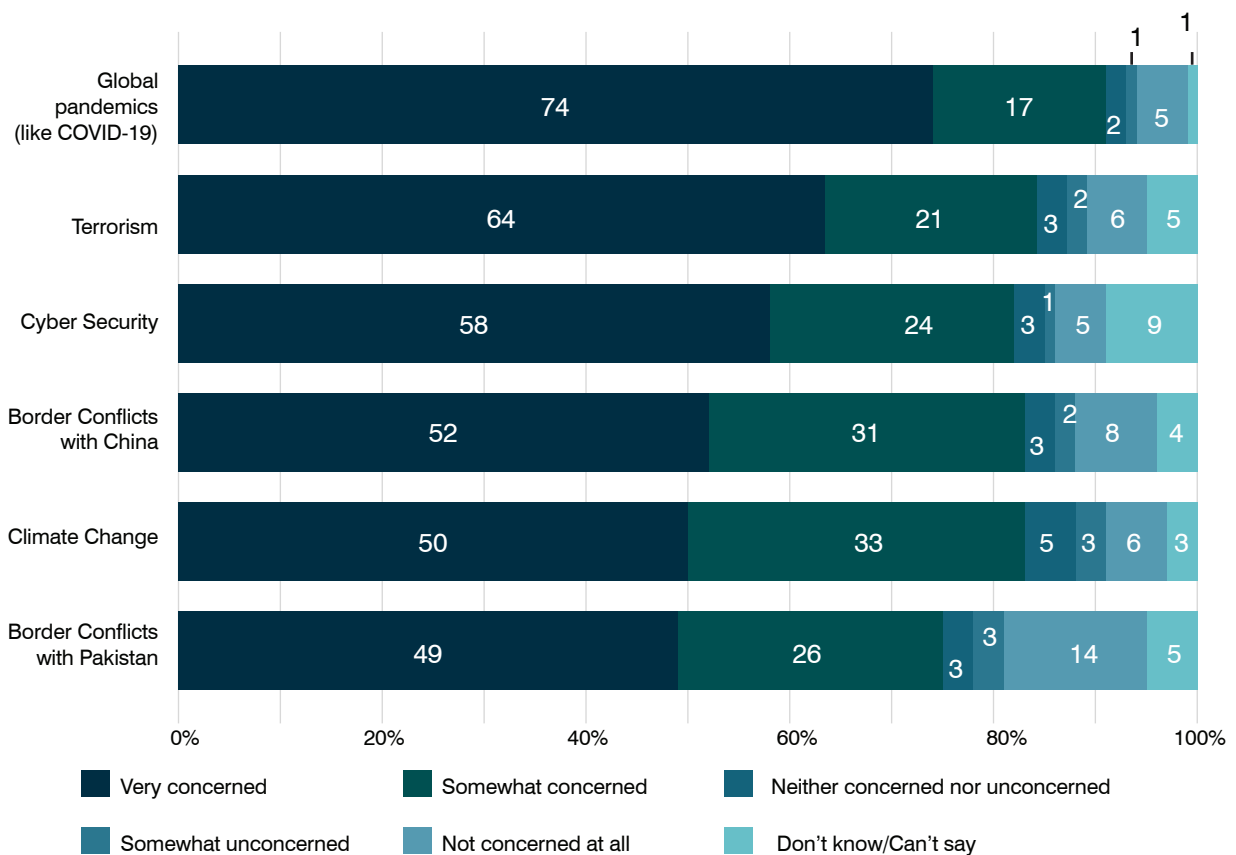
This support extended across metros and non-metros in the country, with 68 percent *overall good* rating in the former, and 73 percent in the latter. When asked about major foreign policy challenges for India, respondents identified global pandemics and terrorism as the areas of highest concern. Other issues, including cybersecurity, border conflicts with China, climate change, and border conflicts with Pakistan (See Figure 2), also garnered a high level of concern.

As India continues to deal with the economic and health ramifications of COVID-19, an overwhelming nine in every ten respondents said they were concerned about such pandemics (74 percent were *very concerned* while 17 percent were *somewhat concerned*). At 85 percent, terrorism was judged to be another key concern for the country. Eight of every ten (83 percent) said they were *very concerned*

or *somewhat concerned* about climate change. The respondents also ranked cybersecurity as an area of concern, with 82 percent being *very concerned* or *somewhat concerned* about it.

At 83 percent, there was higher concern about border conflicts with China as compared to the border conflicts with Pakistan. This is in line with the finding that 70 percent of respondents are concerned about the rise of China as a global power (See Figure 12). Following the border conflict in eastern Ladakh in 2020, the concern regarding border conflicts with China has overtaken worry about the disputes with Pakistan. Three-quarters of respondents (75 percent) said they were *very concerned* or *somewhat concerned* about border conflicts with Pakistan. This has translated into low trust levels for both the neighbours, as shown in Figures 6 and 9.

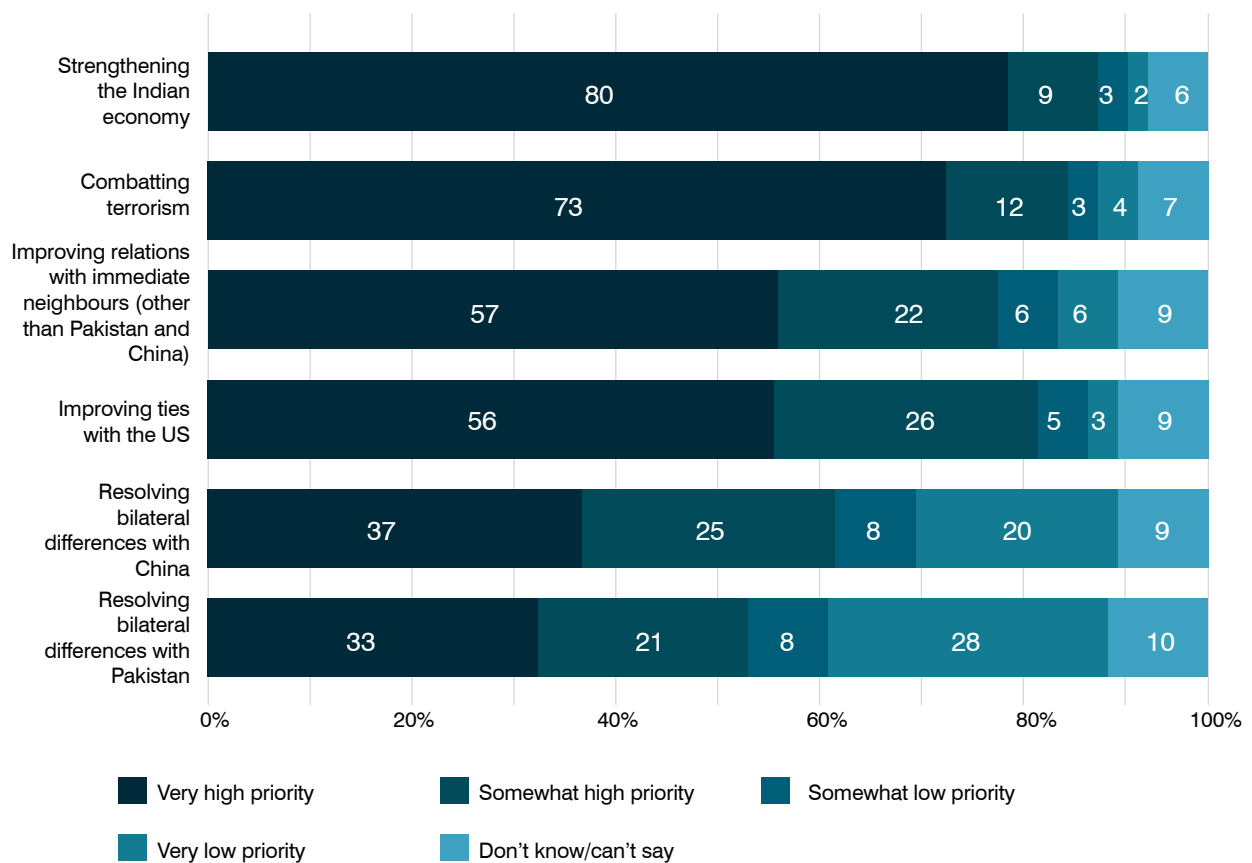
Figure 2: How concerned are you about the following major foreign policy challenges facing India?



The concern about specific foreign policy challenges mentioned above is also reflected in the high priority young Indians accord to strengthening the Indian economy and combatting terrorism. Nearly nine of every ten (89 percent) say strengthening the Indian economy should be a *very high priority* or *somewhat high priority*, and 85 percent say the same about combatting terrorism.

Other focus issues include improving ties with the US (82 percent) and improving relations with immediate neighbours other than Pakistan or China (79 percent). This is echoed in the heightened trust ratings of the survey respondents towards countries like Sri Lanka (68 percent) and Bhutan (55 percent) (See Figure 6). There is lower priority placed on resolving differences with Pakistan and China, as compared to other issues.

Figure 3: How much priority should be given by India to the following matters?

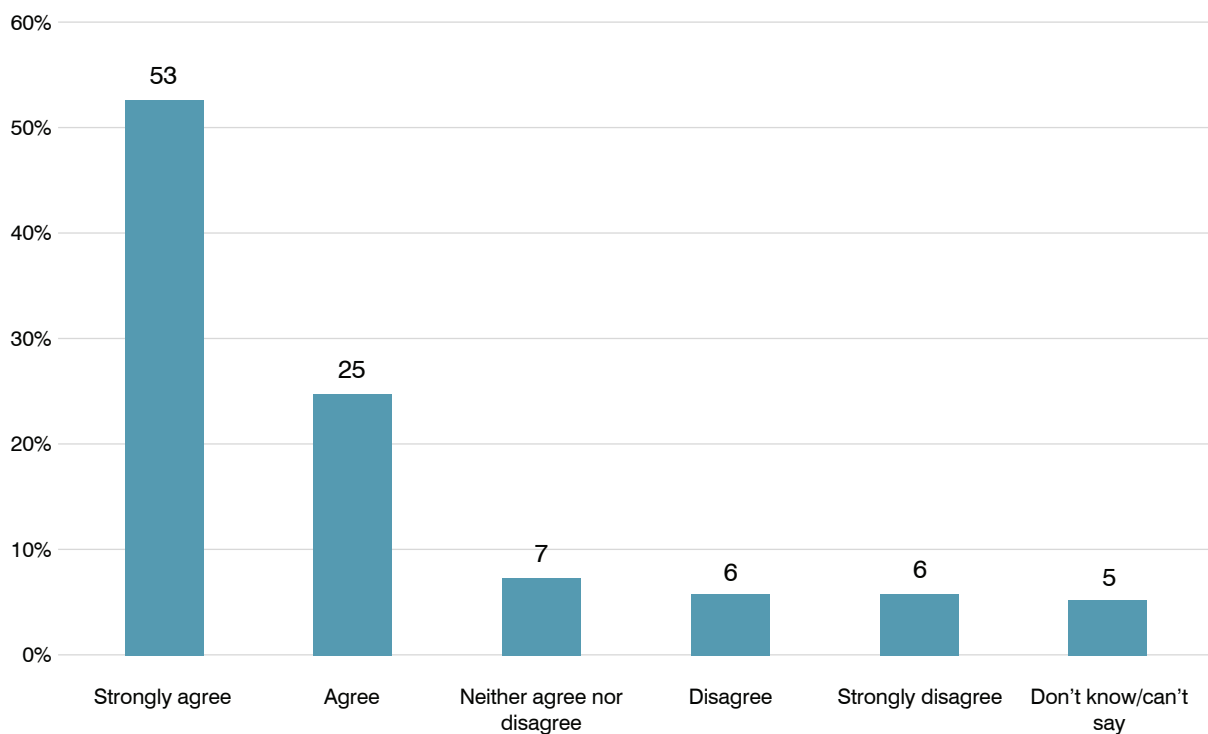


The numbers are sizeable, however: 62 percent of respondents said that *very high priority* or *somewhat high priority* should be given to resolving bilateral differences with China. Thus, there is a strong acknowledgment of the China threat, its implications on India's foreign policy interests, and by extension, on the interests of the Indian people. While respondents displayed an affinity to partner with the US (as will be discussed later in this report), there is also a belief in the value of seeking resolution with China. In the case of Pakistan, only 54 percent of respondents believe that resolving differences

with India's western neighbour should be a *very high priority* or *somewhat high priority*.

Meanwhile, the Modi government's approach to China in the aftermath of the 2020 border clashes garnered support among 78 percent of the respondents. This approach was characterised by a strong military response, stricter rules regarding entry of Chinese investments, banning of certain apps, and a heightened engagement with other regional powers.

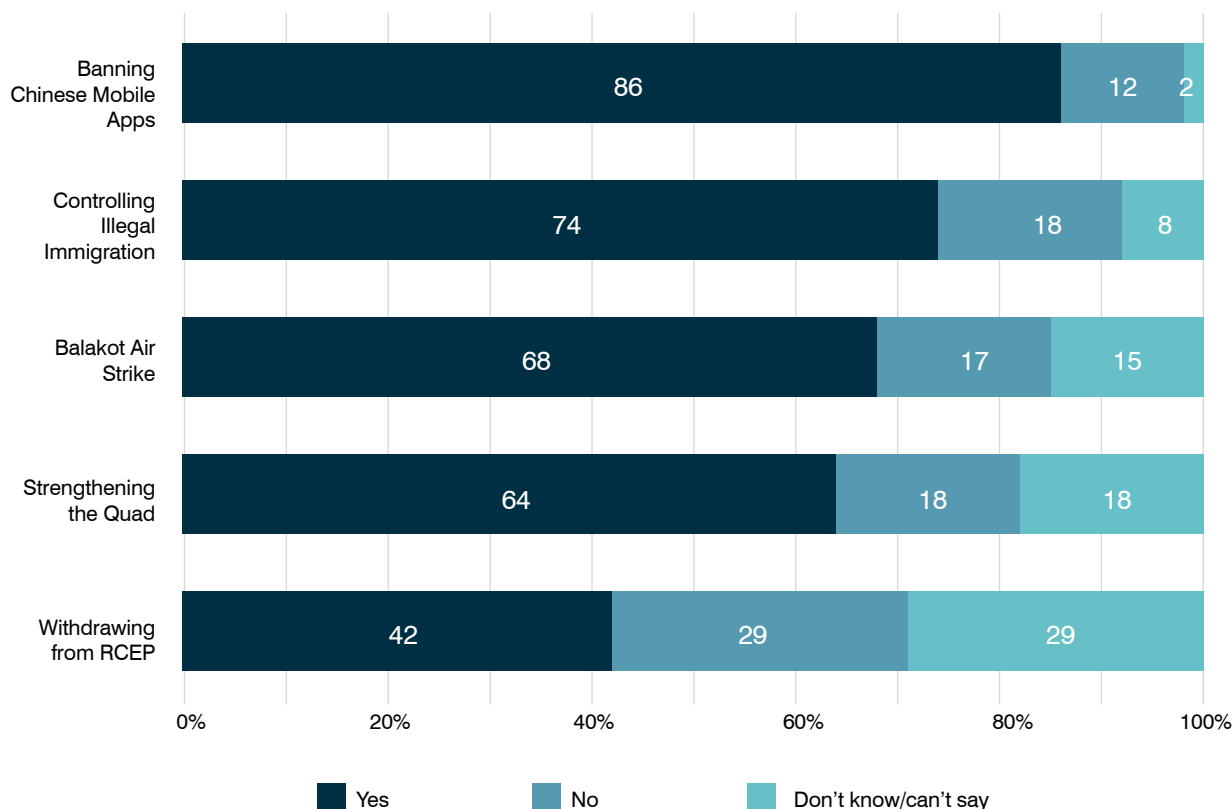
Figure 4: To what extent do you agree with the Modi government's approach to China?



One of the key decisions of the government—to block Chinese mobile apps—saw 86 percent of respondents agreeing with that decision (See Figure

5). This policy move received the highest approval rating among all the foreign policy decisions of the government surveyed by this poll.

Figure 5: Do you agree with the following major foreign policy decisions of the Modi government?



The polling also points to a higher level of awareness about the ban on Chinese mobile apps, seen in the low level of *don't know/can't say* response (2 percent). This is markedly lower than the *don't know/can't say* response for other parts of the question.

On other key foreign policy decisions (See Figure 5)—i.e., controlling illegal immigration, the Balakot air strike, and strengthening the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad)—the percentage of respondents agreeing with the decisions were 74

percent, 68 percent, and 64 percent, respectively. While 42 percent of respondents supported the government's position to withdraw from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), 29 percent did not approve of it, making this the policy measure with the least support from the youth. The significant level of *don't know* responses (29 percent) is in line with lower levels of knowledge among respondents about newer multilateral formats. Especially on questions gauging perceptions about globalisation and multilateralism

(which will be explicated later in this report, see Figure 16), respondents were less aware about smaller, regional, and newer multilateral organisations.

This tendency is lower in the case of the Quad: where 64 percent of respondents agreed with the government strengthening this multilateral format. An equal percentage of 18 percent disagreed with the idea of making the Quad stronger, and expressed

lack of information about the subject. Once again, this reflects the view among young Indians that India needs to deal with the rise of China by building its relations with other like-minded powers, including the US, Australia and Japan.

The following sections will delve into how India's urban youth construe the country's relations with neighbouring countries, and with global powers dominating the international order.

2. INDIA AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

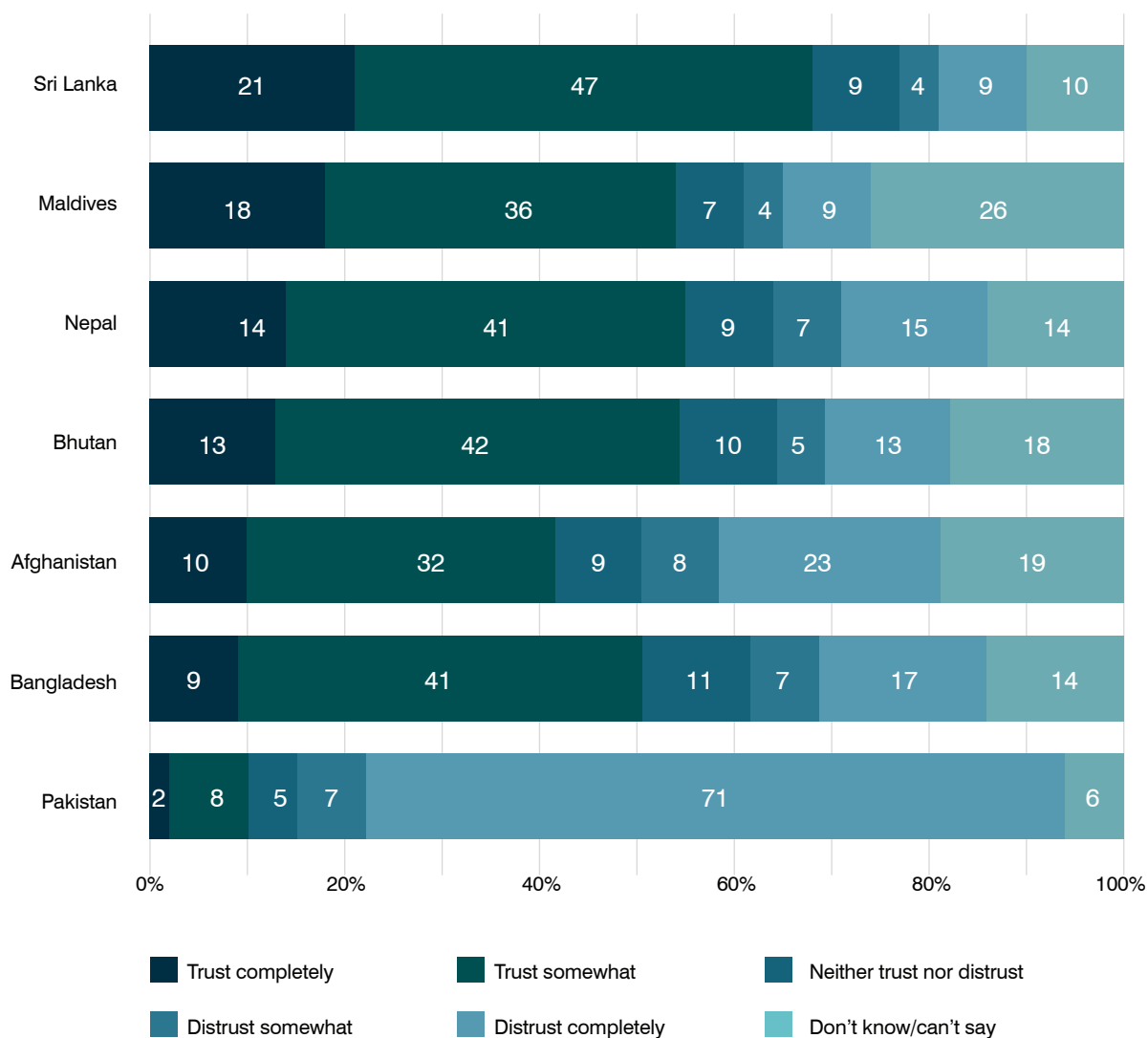
Thriving bilateral relationships between India and its neighbourhood are crucial for bolstering prospects for trade and connectivity along with ensuring that national security concerns are addressed effectively. Given the strategic importance of well-adjusted relationships with neighbouring countries, this poll sought to understand how India's urban youth perceives India's engagement with them.

A majority of Indian youth are largely trusting of India's neighbourhood except in relation to Pakistan, for which there was overarching distrust from the surveyed population. Trust towards Sri Lanka playing a responsible role was the highest at 68 percent. Bhutan and the Maldives also enjoy heightened trust at 55 percent and 54 percent, respectively. However, state-wise comparisons revealed that trust towards Sri Lanka was lowest among respondents sampled from Tamil Nadu,¹⁷ with only 9 percent of respondents saying they *completely trust* Sri Lanka, and 34 percent *somewhat trust* the country.

In relation to Afghanistan, 23 percent of respondents reported a complete lack of trust while 42 percent trusted the country either '*completely* or *somewhat*.' In the case of Bangladesh and Nepal, the majority of respondents were somewhat trusting of their neighbours to act responsibly in the world. Similar to findings related to Tamil Nadu's diminished trust towards their immediate neighbour (Sri Lanka), trust levels for Bangladesh was lowest among respondents from Assam, with only 15 percent of respondents from the state showing favourable trust ratings. Further investigation is needed to determine the reasons why certain states deviate from the seeming consensus on perceptions towards India's neighbours. Nonetheless, the overarching perception towards countries like Bangladesh and Nepal seem to be characterised by favourable trust ratings (See Figure 6).

¹⁷ This could be attributed to the strained relationship between Tamil Nadu and the Sri Lankan state over the treatment of the latter's Tamil population following the civil war involving the government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Figure 6: For each of the following neighbouring countries, please indicate how much you trust each of these nations to act responsibly in the world.



The poll findings point to an inverse relationship between education and proportion of *don't know* responses. More research is required to understand the reasons for this inverse relationship.

The findings on the assessment of India's bilateral relationships with its neighbours showed that similar to their perceptions on trust levels, most respondents believed India to have *very good relations* (14%) or *good relations* (48%) with Sri Lanka (See Figure 7).

The overarching concern about border skirmishes with Pakistan—seen in the finding that 83 percent of respondents are either *very concerned* or *somewhat concerned* about the cross-border threat, may have contributed to the feeling of reduced trust and faith in the bilateral relationship.

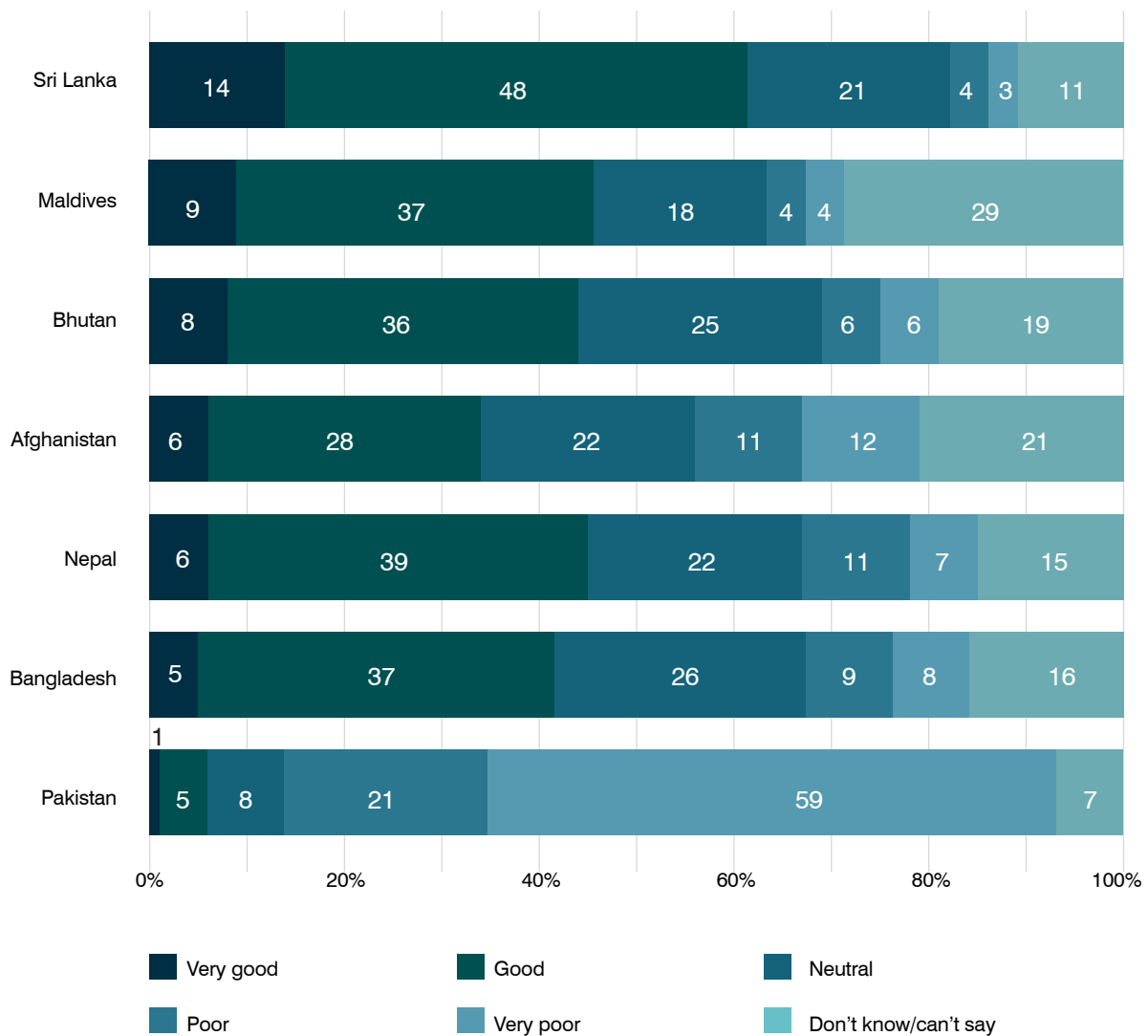
Apart from Pakistan, the respondents were broadly positive about the state of India's bilateral relationship with its neighbours. Slightly less than half (46 percent)

of respondents perceived overall good relations between the Maldives and India, while 44 percent were of the same view about India's relationship with Bhutan. On the question of Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Nepal, the proportion of responses indicating *good relations* or *very good relations* was 41 percent, 34 percent, and 45 percent, respectively.

A sizeable proportion of respondents also displayed neutrality or admitted to not knowing about India's bilateral relationship with countries like the Maldives, Bhutan and Afghanistan. The *don't know* responses for these three countries stood at 29 percent, 19

percent, and 21 percent, respectively. Figure 7 shows a broad consensus among the youth that India has good relations with its neighbours except for Pakistan. However, the *neutral* and *don't know* responses in Figure 7 show that for countries occupying less primacy in public discourse, possibly due to reduced media coverage, the proportion of *don't know* responses is higher. Incidentally, the least number of *don't know* responses on this question was found in relation to Pakistan (7 percent), reiterating that the respondents' perceptions have also been shaped by the amount of public traction received by countries within domestic debates.

Figure 7: How do you assess the status of India's bilateral relationship with each of the following neighbouring countries?



Respondents in the survey were also asked to assess the levels of engagement between India and its neighbours to gauge the extent to which India's urban youth is attuned to the evolution of the relations in the last five years. The proportion of *don't know* responses is especially high on this question as compared to the others.

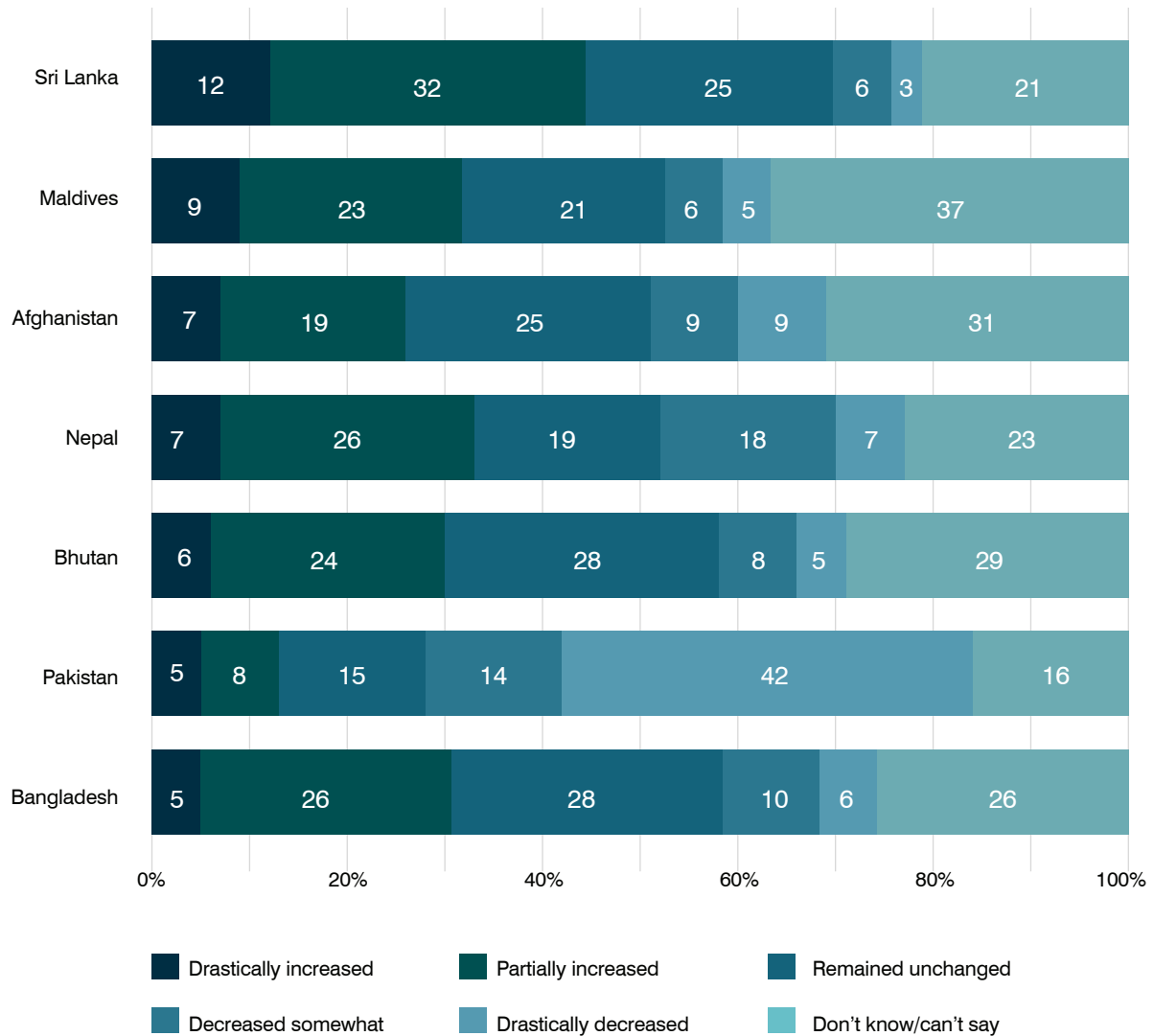
The least *don't know* responses were reported in the case of engagement with Pakistan (16 percent), and Sri Lanka (21 percent). However, in relation to countries like Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan, the *don't know* responses are much higher at 29 percent, 37 percent, and 31 percent, respectively. Barring this, it is evident that Indian youth believe that overall levels of engagement with India's neighbours has improved in recent years except Pakistan, for which 58 percent of respondents believe engagement has decreased.

Like with the questions on trust levels and assessment of bilateral relationship, Sri Lanka was rated highly on the engagement dimension as well, with 12 percent of respondents believing relations to have *drastically*

increased while an additional 32 percent felt relations *partially increased*. In relation to Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal, the proportion of respondents indicating increase in levels of engagement with India were at 30 percent, 31 percent, and 33 percent, respectively (See Figure 8). However, respondents were measured in their answers and resisted claiming relations to have *drastically increased* or *drastically decreased*. The responses to this question indicate that the majority of India's youth has very limited knowledge of the ebbs and flows of India's engagement with its neighbours. However, apart from Pakistan, the lack of awareness is either complemented by neutrality or an optimism about increased engagement.

The responses of Indian youth surveyed in this poll on India's relationship with the neighbourhood has important implications. For countries in India's neighbourhood like Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal, despite little awareness about the nature of India's relationship with these nations, overarching favourability persists. However, in relation to Pakistan, the youth seem sceptical and less trusting across all dimensions.

Figure 8: What do you think about the levels of interaction between India and each of the following neighbouring countries in the last 5 years?



3. INDIA AND THE P5+3

The poll also covered India’s relations with key powers in the world, especially given the ongoing changes in the international order. It recognises that India’s interactions with, and the actions of other powers in the global system can often lead to significant impacts on foreign policy choices.

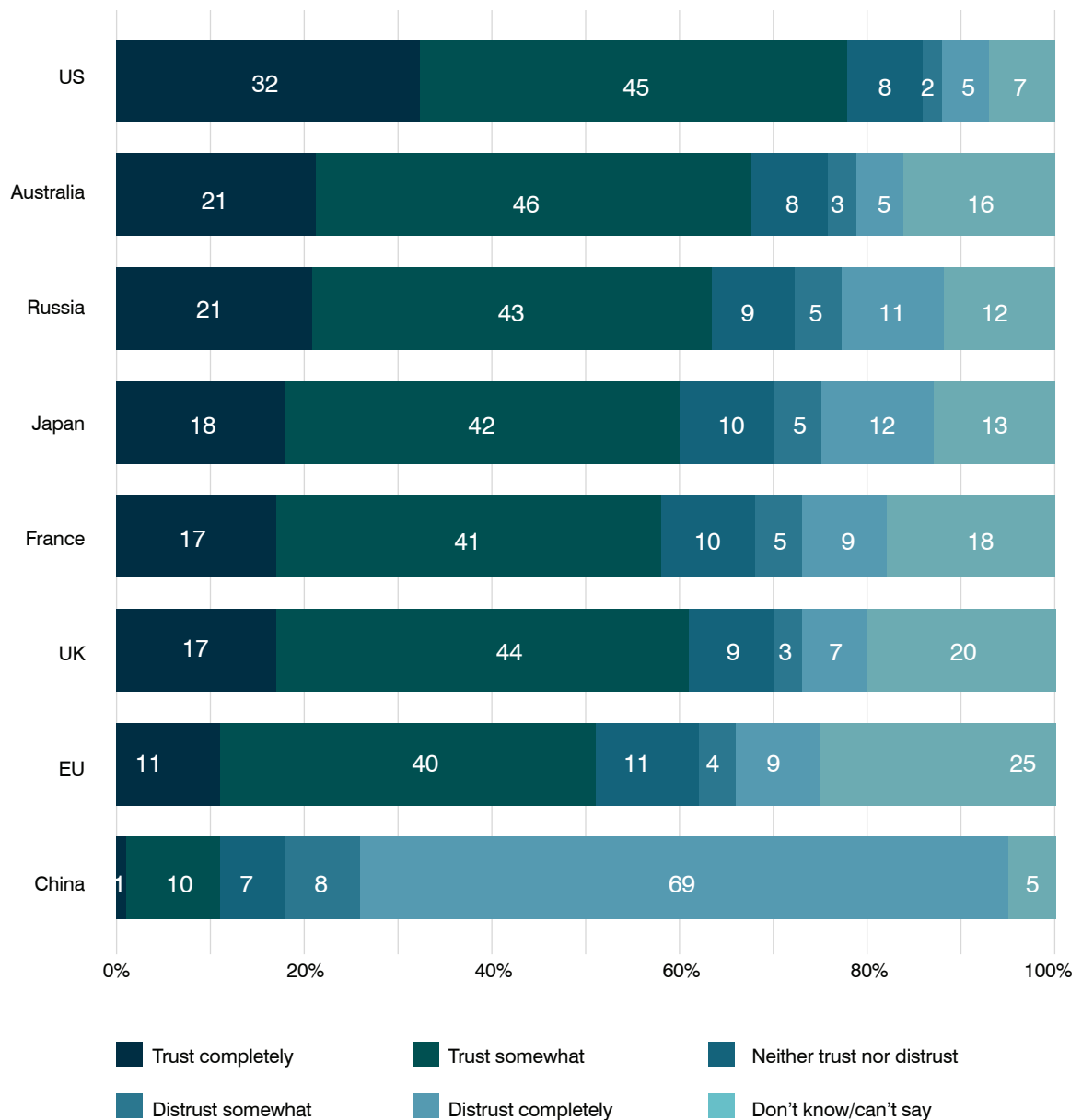
In order to gauge the views of urban Indian youth regarding these leading actors in global affairs,

the survey asked respondents regarding the trust they place in these external powers, as well as their expectations and fears for the future. This topic has been at the forefront in the past year, as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic greatly accelerated the shifts in the world order. When combined with India’s positioning within this structure, the questions acquire a renewed relevance.

Among the sampled powers, as seen in Figure 9, the US at 77 percent leads the pack when it comes to trust among urban Indian youth (32 percent *trust completely*, and 45 percent *trust somewhat*). At the other end of the spectrum is China, with 77 percent of respondents expressing distrust of the neighbouring

power (69 percent *distrust completely*, and 8 percent *distrust somewhat*). It is the only country on the list that scores such a high level of distrust. This result is not surprising, given that 83 percent of respondents also expressed concern about India's border conflicts with China.

Figure 9: How would you rate these powers on the basis of how much you trust them?



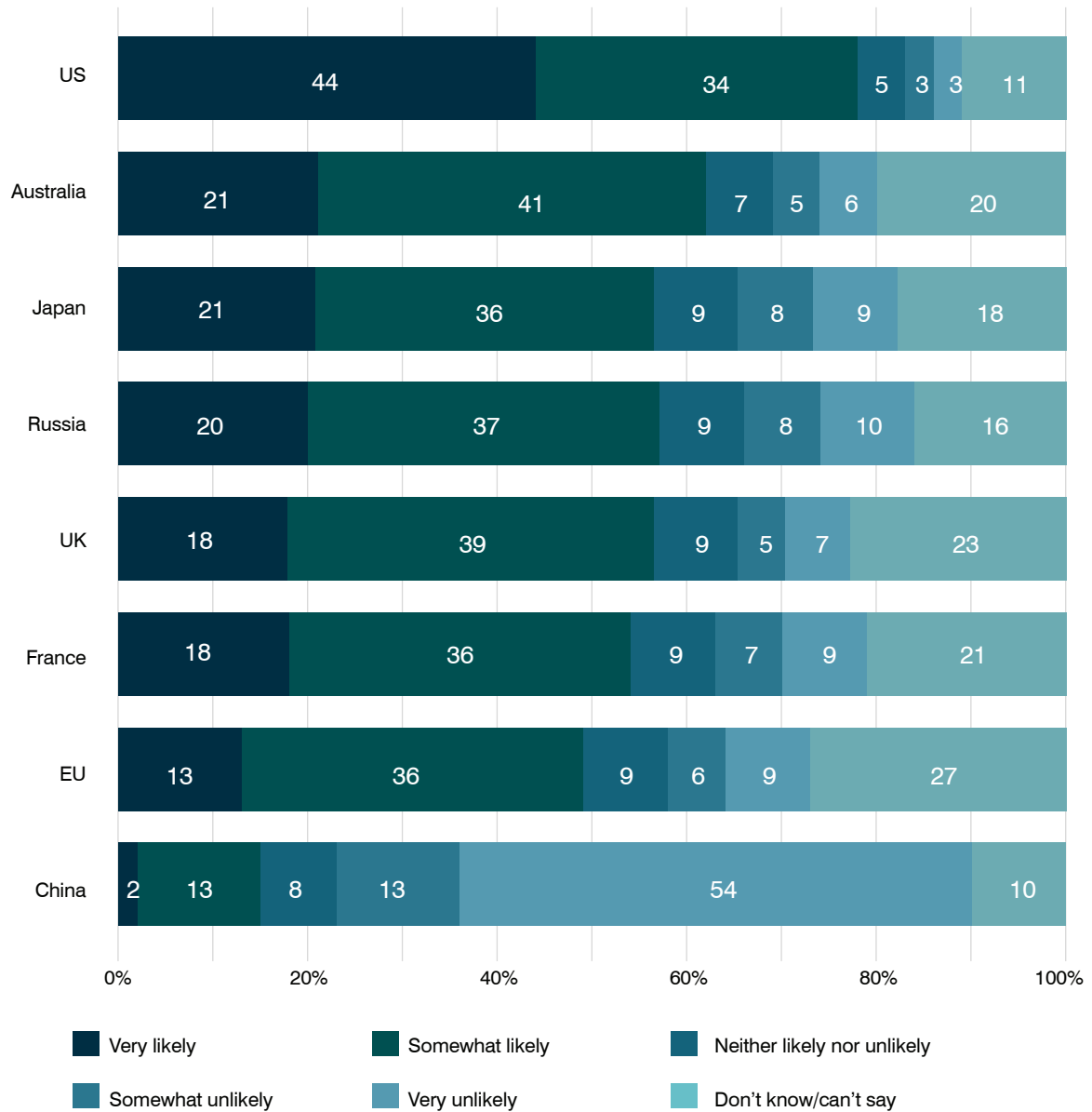
This distrust is reflected across the cross-section of urban youth, regardless of their level of income, religion, occupation, gender, and place of residence. Across these divides, a favourable opinion towards the US is also seen in a cross-section of urban Indian youth.

At 63 percent, Russia continues to enjoy a high level of trust among young Indians, but it comes at third position, with Australia taking the spot of second most trusted country at 68 percent. Japan, the only other Asian country on the list, also scores a high 60 percent. While individual European countries – the United Kingdom (UK) and France – received a trust rating of 61 percent and 58 percent, respectively, the European Union just crossed the halfway mark at

51 percent. The 25 percent *don't know/can't say* result reveals that the level of penetration of information regarding the supranational body remains low.

The trust reposed by the respondents in these powers aligns with their hopes for the future partnership. The highest number of 78 percent of respondents believe that the US is likely to be India's leading partner in the coming decade (See Figure 10). The positive sentiment for the US is reflected in the fact that it is the only country in whom trust for the present is matched by the projections for the future. In fact, the Quad, Russia and Europe (in that order) were identified by the respondents as India's leading partners in the coming decade.

Figure 10: In the next 10 years, how likely are each of the following powers, to become India's leading partners?



Six of every ten (62 percent) of the respondents believe that Australia will be one of India's leading partners in the next ten years. Russia and Japan score evenly at 57 percent. Despite the long-standing ties with Russia, it scores much lower than the US in respondents' perception while looking ahead, with a 21-percent gap between the two when asked about their prediction for the coming decade.

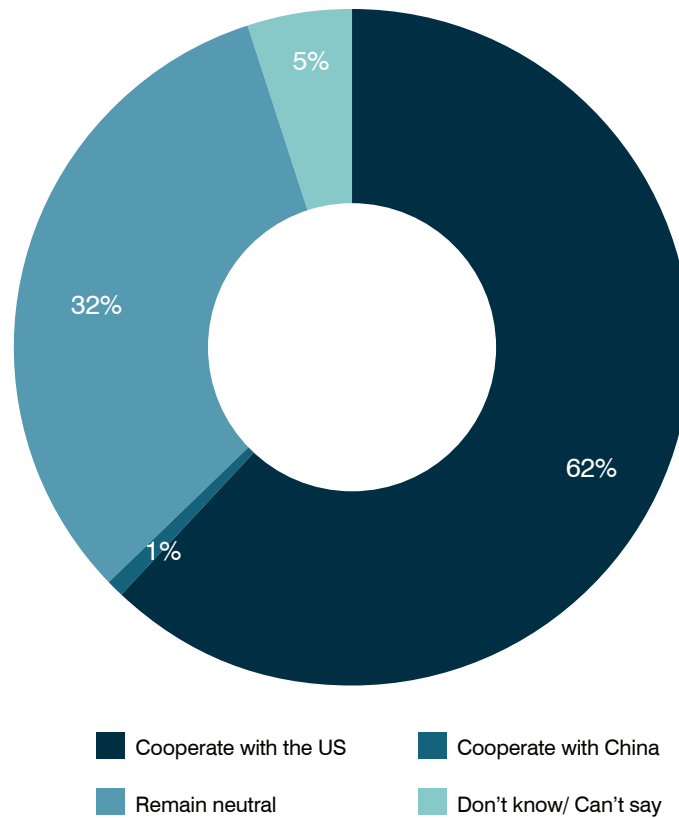
The respondents expect India-China relations to

remain strained, and 67 percent think the rising power is unlikely to become a key partner for New Delhi. In fact, their wariness about bilateral engagement with China also extends to issues of great-power competition. When asked what India's position should be if US-China tensions continue to rise, 62 percent said India must cooperate with the US, and 32 percent favoured a neutral stance. A mere 1 percent thought India must cooperate with China in such a scenario, as shown in Figure 11.

The percentage of respondents calling for cooperation with the US is much higher in the non-metros (65 percent) than the metros (52 percent). About 43 percent of those in metro cities advocated remaining neutral in case of heightened US-China tensions, while a lower 27 percent of those living in

non-metros supported such a policy. Regarding this specific issue, government sector employees have a higher percentage of wanting to stay neutral. Others expressed higher proclivity towards supporting the US (private sector, students, unemployed).

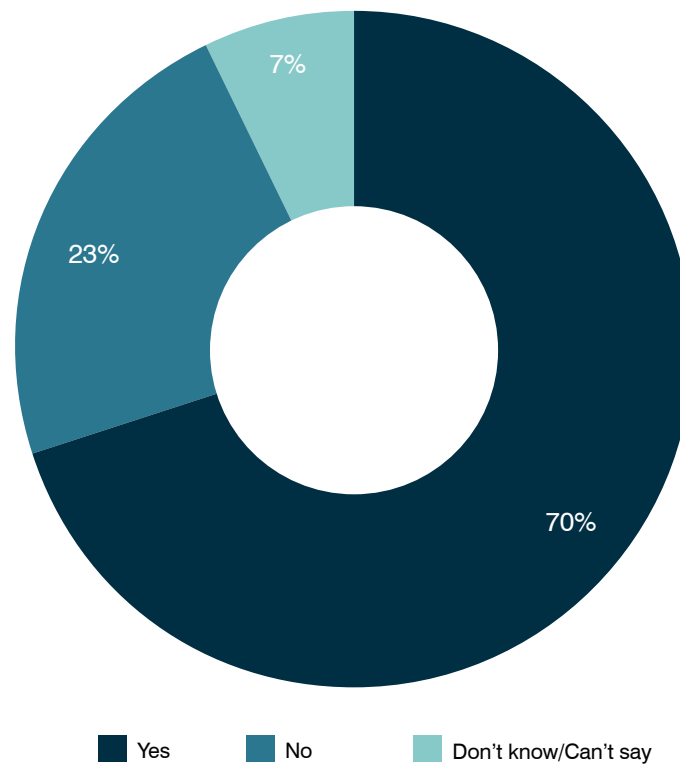
Figure 11: What should be India’s position if US-China tensions continue to rise?



The reason for a large majority supporting the idea of cooperating with the US in this scenario can be linked to their concern about the rise of China as a major power in the neighbourhood. As the survey reveals, an overwhelming 70 percent of respondents said they are concerned about China’s rise, and

only 23 percent said they were not concerned (See Figure 12). In line with the earlier findings on distrust of China, the concern about its rise is also spread fairly uniformly among various income groups, religions and occupations, as well as across gender and metropolitan and non-metropolitan cities.

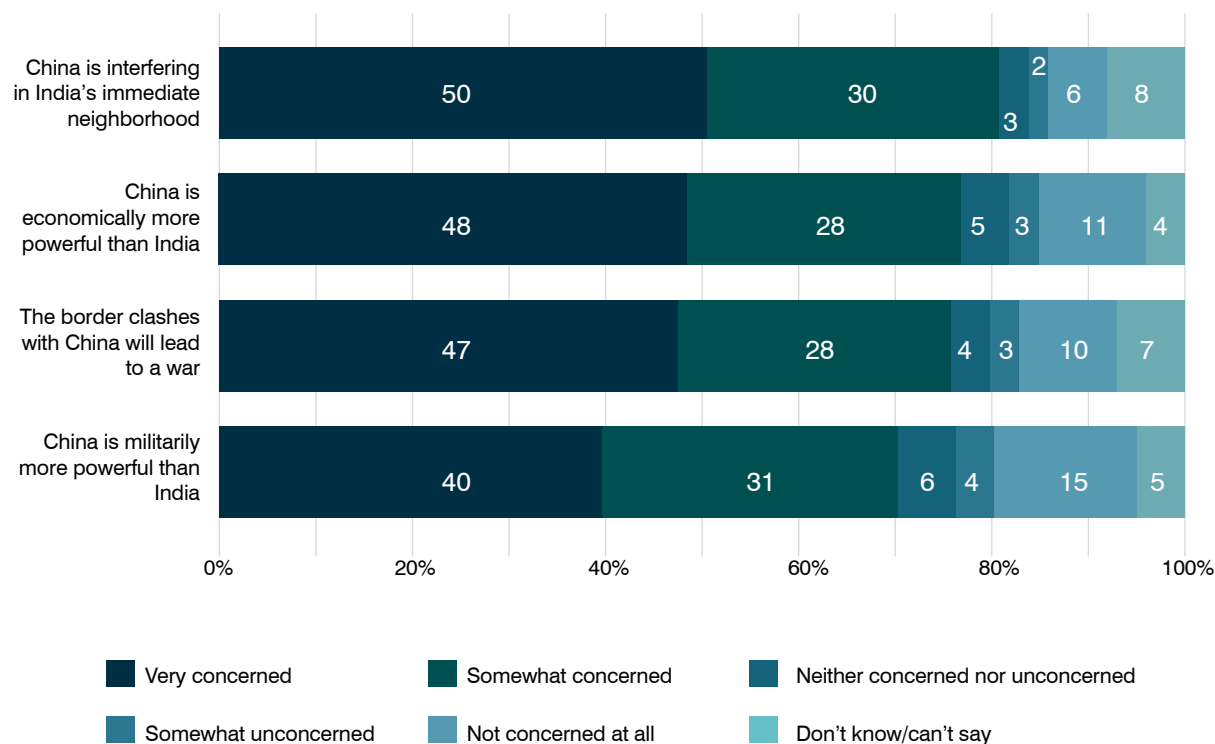
Figure 12: Do you feel concerned about the rise of China as a major power?



Eight of every ten (80 percent) of the respondents said they were concerned about China interfering in India's immediate neighbourhood (See Figure 13). A slightly lower 76 percent were concerned about China being economically more powerful than India, and 75 percent said they were worried that the border clashes with China could lead to a war. Thus, they appear to be troubled by issues beyond the border clashes in eastern Ladakh that were ongoing when the survey was conducted. Seven of every ten (70 percent) expressed concern regarding China being militarily more powerful than India.

Overall, respondents are worried regarding long-term issues related to economic and military development, as well as the ability of a rising power to impact India's interests in its neighbourhood. The urban young population perceives the China challenge as an all-encompassing one – spanning economic, military and foreign policy domains – with potential impact on domestic stability.

Figure 13: How concerned are you about China on the following issues?



It can be argued that this also accounts for an increased support to the US, which is seen as a partner that can help manage the rise of China. Due to their concerns, young India also seems willing to shift away from the policy of non-alignment towards a more active tilt to other powers like the US.

It is evident that the question of relations with the US and China dominates the discourse among the respondents and are issues on which they have

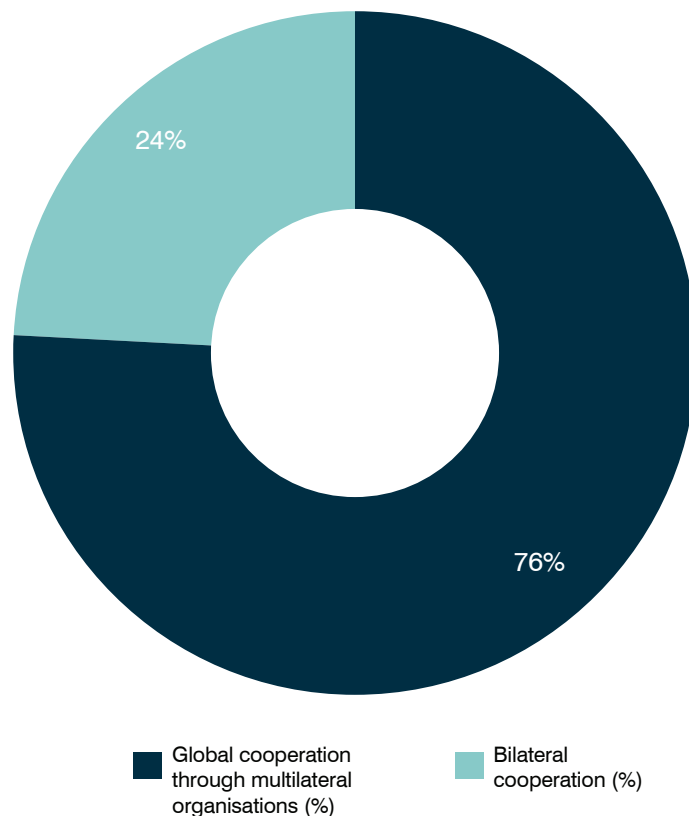
the strongest opinions. This is revealed in the least percentage of *don't know/can't say* responses that were registered on the answers related to these two countries. This reflects a greater awareness among the respondents regarding Washington and Beijing, which is also indicative of the focus on these issues in the larger national debate on mainstream and new media. The role of other leading powers, who are also India's close partners, captures less public attention.

4. MULTILATERALISM AND GLOBALISATION

Apart from bilateral relationships, multilateralism has become a primary channel for enhancing cooperation among countries on global issues in an increasingly interconnected world. However, since the 2008 financial crisis, the efficacy of international organisations has been questioned and certain countries have gradually reduced their engagement with multilateral frameworks.

The survey asked respondents to choose between multilateral and bilateral cooperation as India's preferred mode of engagement with other countries (See Figure 14). Over three of every four respondents (76 percent) said that India should prioritise global cooperation through multilateral organisations. A much lower 24 percent preferred bilateral cooperation as India's mode of engagement with other countries.

Figure 14: In your opinion, what should be India's preferred mode of engagement with other countries?

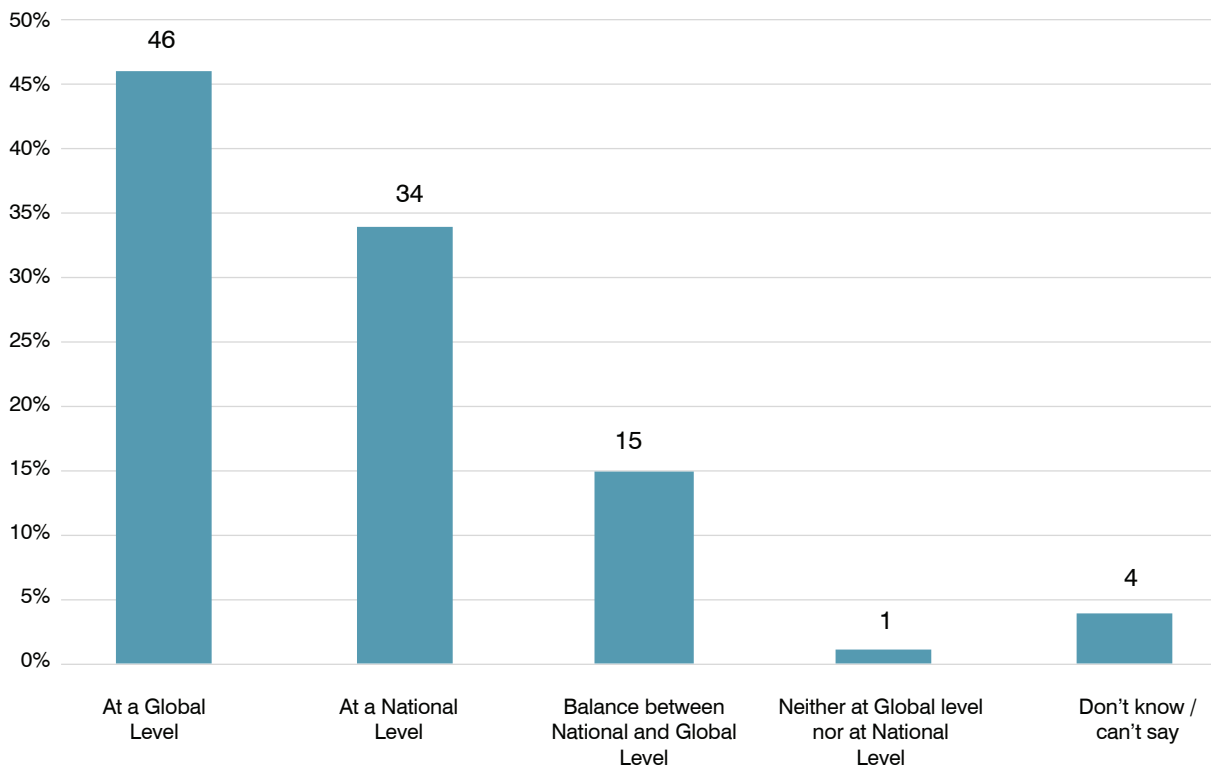


A litmus test for the significance of multilateralism was the COVID-19 pandemic, as states' immediate response was to close down borders and prioritise local and national solutions. At the same time, the very nature of the pandemic highlighted that some solutions, notably vaccine manufacturing and distribution, would be better achieved through global cooperation via multilateral frameworks.

multilateral cooperation or focus on national solutions instead— the respondents appear to be deeply divided. Forty-six percent of the respondents want India to develop solutions at the global level, while 34 percent indicated that India should prioritise solutions at the national level. Only 15 percent said that they would prefer a balance between global and national efforts (See Figure 15).

In response to the question as to whether India should devise global solutions to COVID-19 through

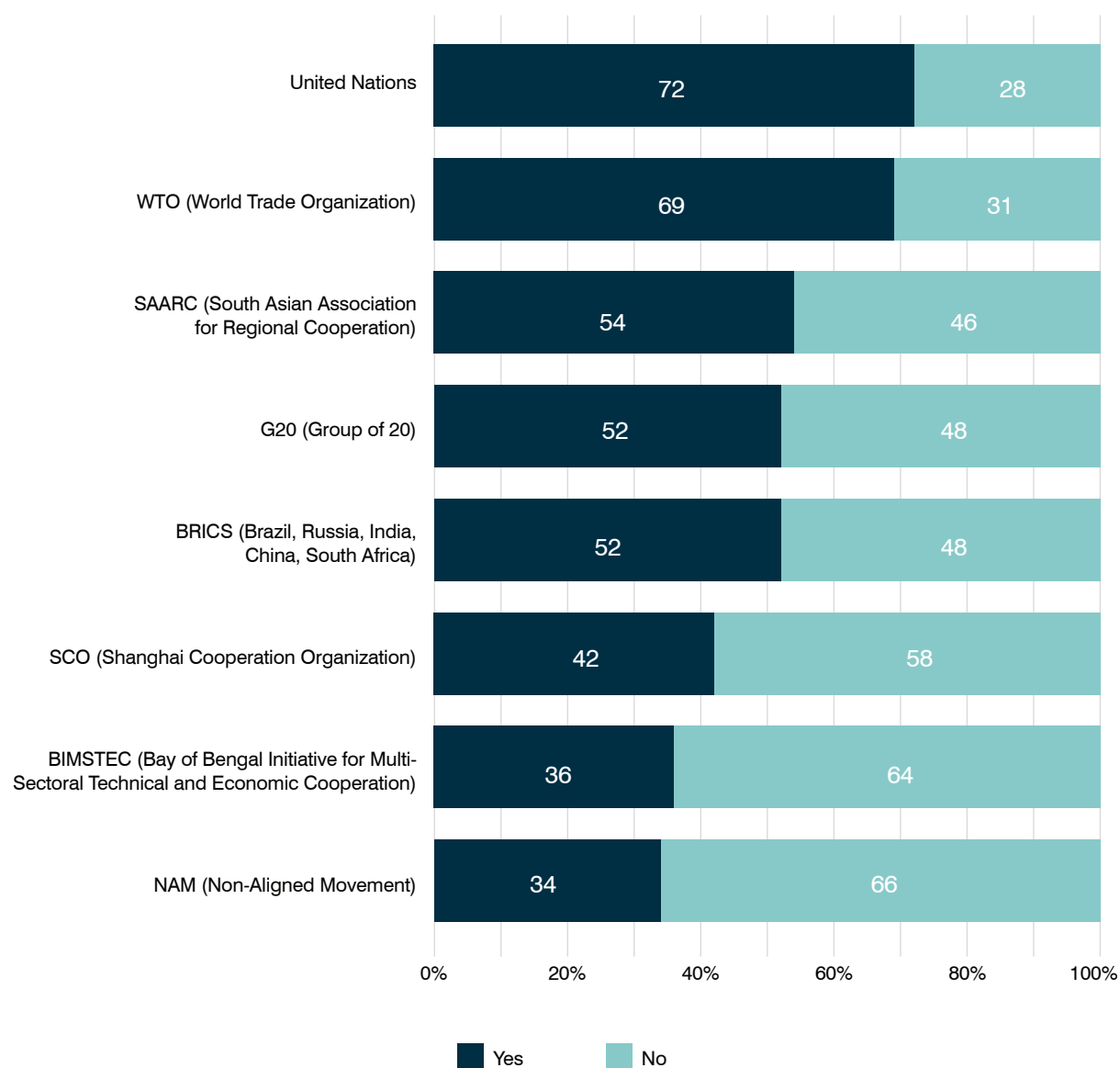
Figure 15: In fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, should India prioritise developing solutions at the global level or the national level?



In recent years, international and regional organisations have had to face allegations of politicisation and inefficiency. This has led to a rise in bilateral engagements as well as new frameworks for international cooperation. In order to understand the

awareness and gauge the relevance that multilateral organisations hold in the public mind, the survey asked respondents about their knowledge of some of the most relevant multilateral organisations and forums that India is a part of.

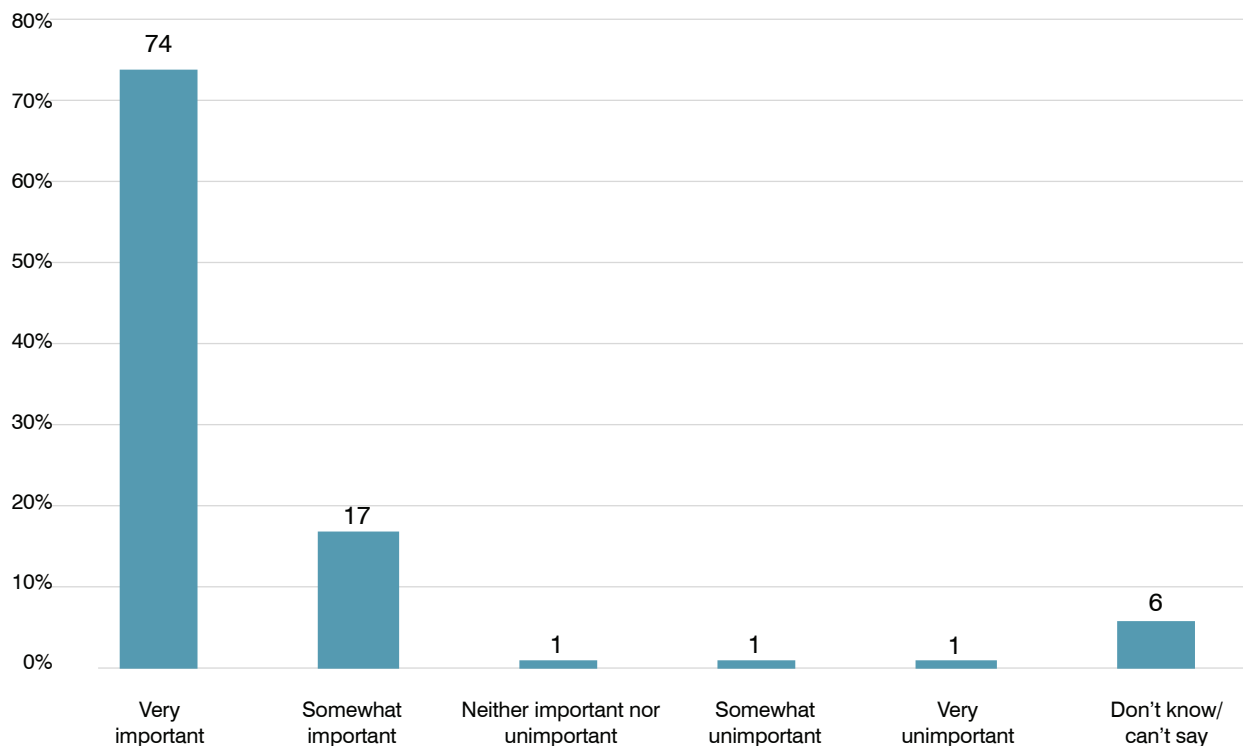
Figure 16: Have you personally heard of the following international and regional organisations and forums that India is a part of, before today?



Nearly seven of every ten respondents have heard of the largest and oldest multilateral organisations, namely the United Nations (UN) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) (72 percent and 69

percent, respectively). Moreover, three of every four respondents (74 percent) felt that India’s quest for a permanent seat at the UN Security Council was a *very important* goal for India.

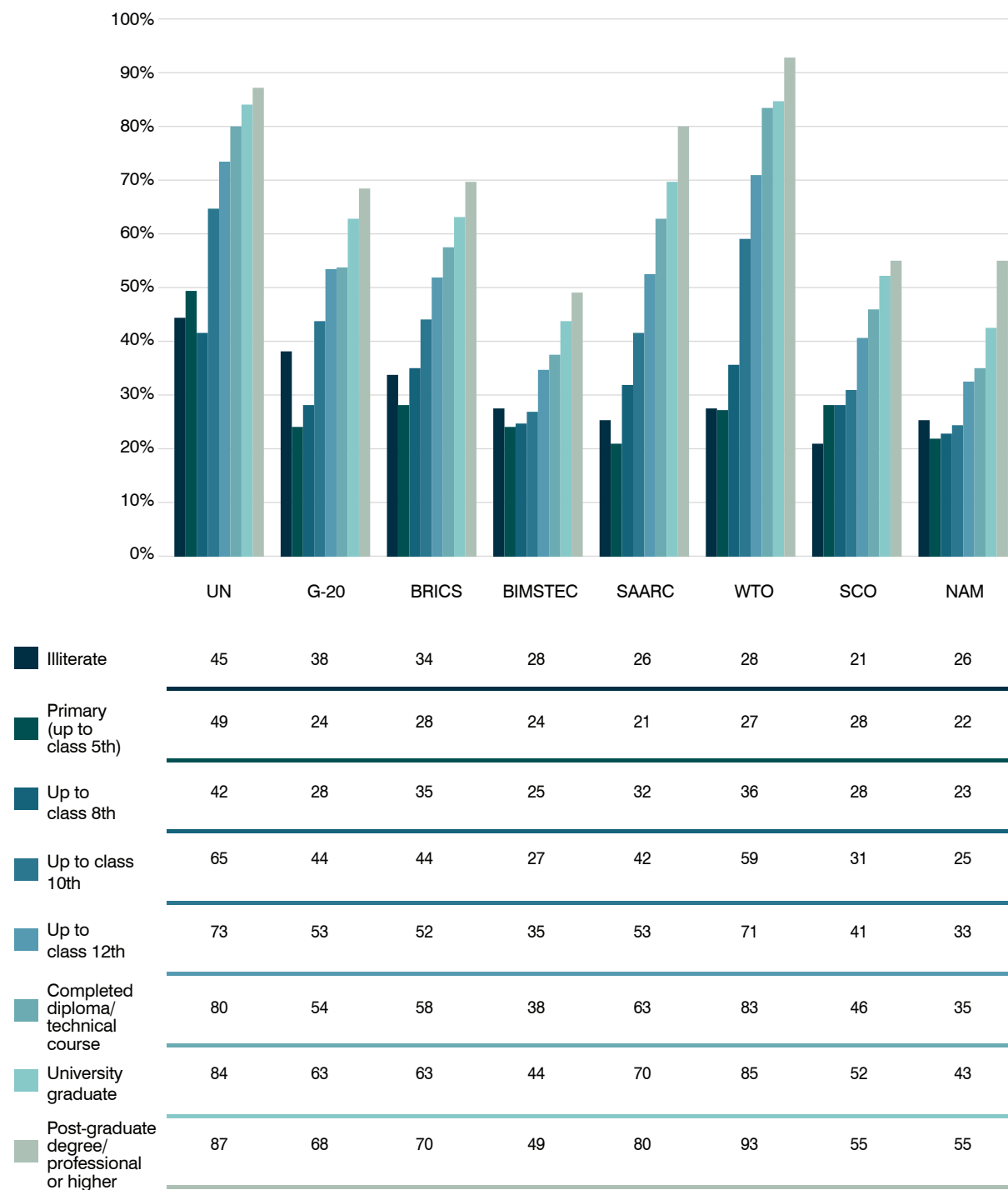
Figure 17: India seeks to secure a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. Do you personally think that this is an important goal for India?



Beyond the UN and the WTO, awareness of other organisations and groupings reduces sharply. Roughly one in every two respondents have heard of the G20 (Group of Twenty), the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) [52 percent, 52 percent, and 54 percent, respectively]. Public awareness and knowledge about the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and

Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) are at the lowest at 42 percent, 36 percent, and 34 percent, respectively. It is interesting to highlight that the urban youth reflected very low levels of awareness of platforms such as NAM and SAARC. This is surprising, given that the former is intrinsically connected to India's historical approach towards foreign policy, while the latter is an important pillar of neighbourhood engagement.

Figure 18: ‘Yes’ responses, by Education: Before today, have you personally heard of the following international and regional organisations that India is a part of?



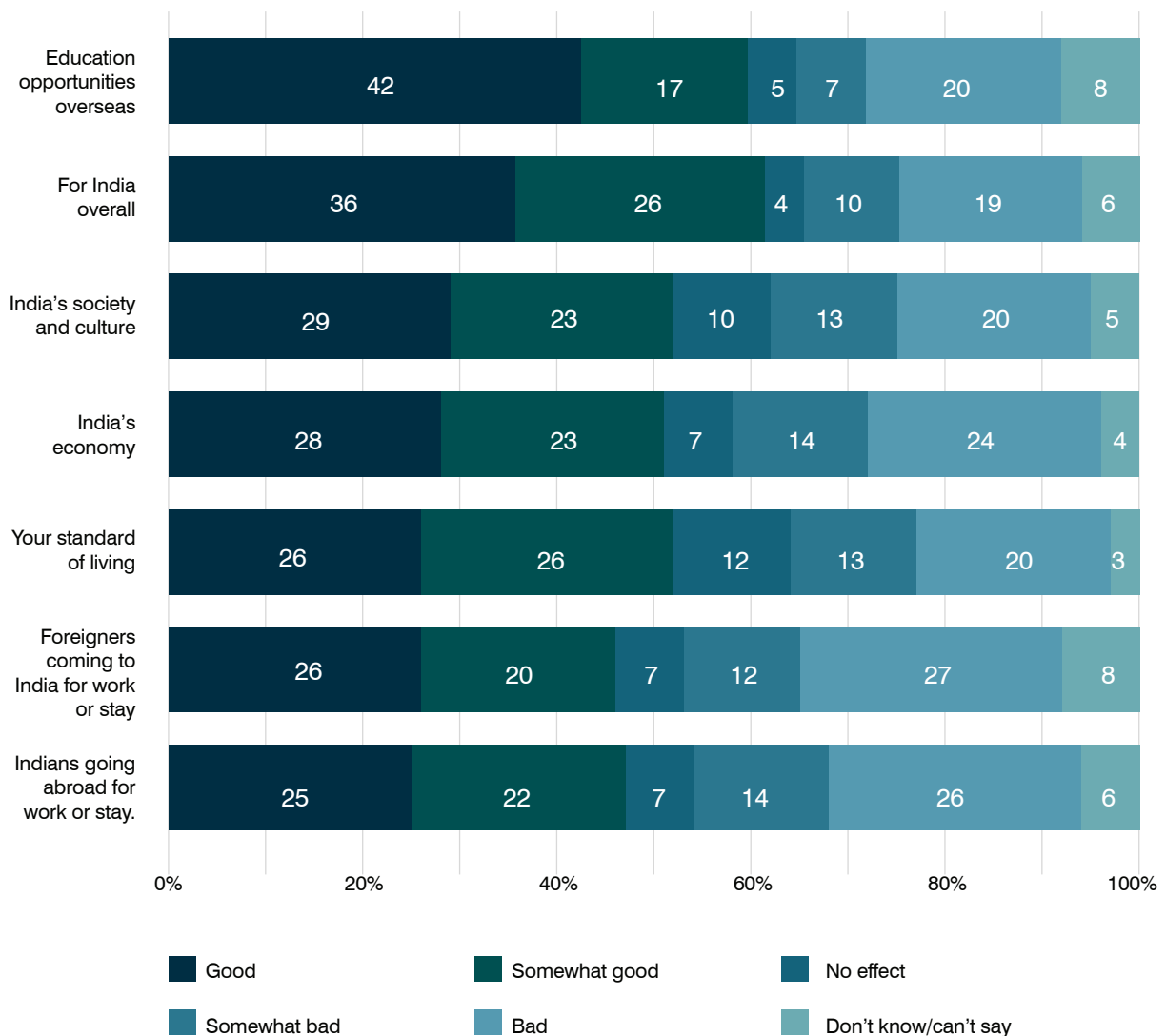
A closer look at the data reveals that the respondents' awareness of organisations varies widely across demographic groups. For instance, among the urban youth, those who have completed higher education and beyond have a greater awareness of organisations and forums (See Figure 18). Similarly, there is a much higher awareness of organisations among self-employed professionals, students, government employees, skilled workers, and private sector employees, as opposed to unskilled workers and housewives.

Alongside the world's withdrawal from multilateralism, there has been a growing discontent

with globalisation. When asked about the impact of globalisation across different parameters, the urban Indian youth response was almost evenly split between *mostly good* and *mostly bad*—this indicates a deep division of opinion on how globalisation has impacted India.

This was reflected across questions related to how globalisation has affected India, their own standard of living, India's economy, Indian society and culture, travel to and from other countries, and education opportunities overseas (See Figure 19).

Figure 19: In your opinion, how has globalisation affected your life, as well as India, in general? For each of the following, do you think globalisation has had a mostly good or mostly bad effect?



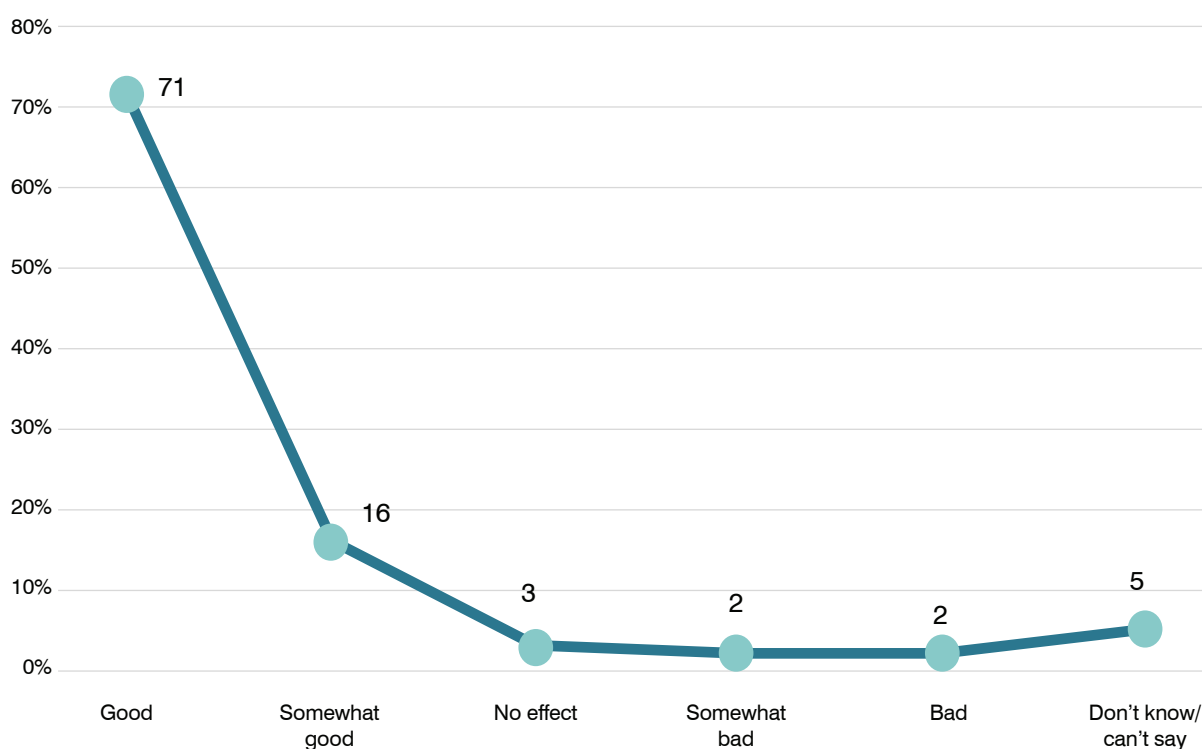
On the impacts of globalisation, 62 percent said globalisation has had a *mostly good effect* on 'India overall', and 59 percent said it has had a *mostly good effect* for 'education opportunities overseas.' However, they are markedly more pessimistic about how globalisation has affected India's economy; people's standard of living; India's society and culture; and emigration and immigration. For instance, 51 percent of respondents said that globalisation has had a *mostly good effect* on India's economy, while 38 percent feel that it has had a *mostly bad effect*. Similarly, while 47 percent of respondents feel that globalisation has had a *mostly good effect* on mobility of Indians to foreign countries; an almost equal number of respondents (40 percent) feel that it has had a *mostly bad effect*.

Responses of the urban youth to these questions also vary widely across demographic groups. Those with lower levels of education have reported a higher percentage of 'somewhat bad' and 'bad' responses.

This has been seen in the question related to the impact of globalisation on India's economy, people's standard of living, and education opportunities overseas. Similarly, the segment with a monthly salary below INR 10,000 responded more negatively regarding the effect on their standard of living, India's economy, and emigration. Interestingly, more women as compared to men have a negative perception of globalisation.

Globally, this discontent has manifested itself in a growing demand for a focus on domestic industries, local job creation, and national growth. In India, the move towards self-reliance has prompted the Indian government to announce a INR 20 lakh crore economic package under the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan'. This also seeks to address the economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. An overwhelming 71 percent of respondents felt this programme would be *good* for India, while only 2 percent felt that it would be *bad* (See Figure 20).

Figure 20: Do you think the 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' scheme is mostly good or mostly bad for India?



Scope for Future Research

This poll has given both predictable and unpredictable results, providing insights into the understanding of Indian youth on critical issues related to India's foreign policy. The positive assessment of growing ties with the US, increased wariness regarding China, and concern about issues like terrorism and climate change all reflect the prevailing policy discourse. However, there were also certain findings that could be seen as diverging from predominant opinion among the community of Indian foreign-policy strategists and experts.

For instance, the Indian public voted Sri Lanka as the most trusted (South Asian) nation and the (South Asian) nation with which India had most improved bilateral ties. This, despite the fact that the Indian strategic community seems to be concerned about Sri Lanka's leasing of the Hambantota port,¹⁸ and its growing relationship with China at the cost of ties with India and Japan.¹⁹ Similarly, Nepal seems to be trusted more than Bhutan and Bangladesh, despite recent troubles that erupted after the Lipulekh road controversy.²⁰

¹⁸ Umesh Moramudali, "The Hambantota Port Deal: Myths and Realities," *The Diplomat*, January 2020, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/01/the-hambantota-port-deal-myths-and-realities/>.

¹⁹ Munza Musthaq, "Sri Lanka's India Ties Strained as Rajapaksa Rethinks Port Deal," *Nikkei Asia*, July 10, 2020, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Sri-Lanka-s-India-ties-strained-as-Rajapaksa-rethinks-port-deal>.

²⁰ K V Rajan, "Recurrent Anti-Indianism in Nepal: Need to Restructure Bilateral Ties," *South Asia Monitor*, 2020, <https://www.southasiamonitor.org/spotlight/recurrent-anti-indianism-nepal-need-restructure-bilateral-ties>.

Further, despite an improvement in overall ties with Bangladesh from 2008, and its assistance to curb terrorism and insurgency in India, public opinion has little trust on improving bilateral ties with Bangladesh.²¹ Likewise, the trust ranking of Bhutan is surprising: Bhutan is ranked after Nepal and Sri Lanka, despite it being an all-weather friend to India and the improvement in bilateral ties under PM Modi.²² Another surprise was that Indian youth continue to believe in multilateralism when the world opinion seems to be turning against it.²³ The responses about NAM are also notable: although NAM defined the basics of

Indian foreign policy²⁴ for a long time, the surveyed population seems to be the least aware of it.

These revelations and other findings could serve as a springboard for future research amongst interested scholars. For the purpose of this poll, the focus was on gathering public opinion among urban youth about Indian foreign policy, rather than determining the 'whys' behind the respondents' choices. In this regard, the survey provides valuable insights into the prevalent opinion, amid an unpredictable international environment.

²¹ Shaswati Das and Elizabeth Roche, "How Sheikh Hasina's Win Will Affect India-Bangladesh Ties," *Mint*, January 2, 2019, <https://www.livemint.com/Politics/76eKYwkBHgQtuzV9HIDNQL/How-Hasinas-win-will-affect-India-Bangladesh-ties.html>.

²² Sumit Kumar, "India-Bhutan Ties Are Thriving," *The Diplomat*, August 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/08/india-bhutan-ties-are-thriving/>.

²³ Amrita Narlikar, "The Malaise of Multilateralism and How to Manage It," Observer Research Foundation, 2020, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/the-malaise-of-multilateralism-and-how-to-manage-it/>.

²⁴ Uzair Younus, "India's Foreign Policy Evolution," *The Diplomat*, March 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/03/indias-foreign-policy-evolution/>.

Annexure

ANNEX A. RESULTS IN DETAIL

1. INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Q1. How would you rate India for its foreign policy on an overall basis?

Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Neutral (%)	Poor (%)	Very Poor (%)	Do not know / Can't Say (%)
32%	40%	15%	4%	2%	7%

Q2. How concerned are you about the following major foreign policy challenges facing India?

	Very Concerned (%)	Somewhat concerned (%)	Neither concerned nor unconcerned (%)	Somewhat unconcerned (%)	Not concerned at all (%)	Do not know / Can't Say (%)
Global pandemics (like COVID-19)	74%	17%	2%	1%	5%	1%
Terrorism	64%	21%	3%	2%	6%	5%
Cyber Security	58%	24%	3%	1%	5%	9%
Border Conflicts with China	52%	31%	3%	2%	8%	4%
Climate Change	50%	33%	5%	3%	6%	3%
Border Conflicts with Pakistan	49%	26%	3%	3%	14%	5%

Q3. In your opinion, how much priority should be given by India on the following matters?

	Very-high priority (%)	Somewhat high priority (%)	Somewhat low priority (%)	Very low priority (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
Strengthening the Indian economy	80%	9%	3%	2%	6%
Combatting terrorism	73%	12%	3%	4%	7%
Improving relations with immediate neighbours (other than Pakistan and China)	57%	22%	6%	6%	9%
Improving ties with the United States	56%	26%	5%	3%	9%
Resolving bilateral differences with China	37%	25%	8%	20%	9%
Resolving bilateral differences with Pakistan	33%	21%	8%	28%	10%

Q4. To what extent do you agree with the Modi government's approach to China?

Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
53%	25%	7%	6%	6%	5%

Q5. Do you agree with the following major foreign policy decisions of the Modi government?

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
Banning Chinese mobile Apps	86%	12%	2%
Controlling illegal immigration	74%	18%	8%
Balakot Air strike	68%	17%	15%
Strengthening QUAD (an informal strategic forum between the United States, Japan, Australia and India)	64%	18%	18%
Withdrawing from RCEP (The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership)	42%	29%	29%

2. INDIA AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Q6. For each of the following neighbouring countries, please indicate how much you trust each of these nations to overall act responsibly in the world.

	Trust Completely (%)	Trust Somewhat (%)	Neither trust nor distrust (%)	Distrust Somewhat (%)	Distrust Completely (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
Sri Lanka	21%	47%	9%	4%	9%	10%
Maldives	18%	36%	7%	4%	9%	26%
Nepal	14%	41%	9%	7%	15%	14%
Bhutan	13%	42%	10%	5%	13%	18%
Afghanistan	10%	32%	9%	8%	23%	19%
Bangladesh	9%	41%	11%	7%	17%	14%
Pakistan	2%	8%	5%	7%	71%	6%

Q7. How do you assess the status of India's bilateral relationship with each of the following neighbouring countries?

	Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Neutral (%)	Poor (%)	Very Poor (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
Sri Lanka	14%	48%	21%	4%	3%	11%
Maldives	9%	37%	18%	4%	4%	29%
Bhutan	8%	36%	25%	6%	6%	19%
Afghanistan	6%	28%	22%	11%	12%	21%
Nepal	6%	39%	22%	11%	7%	15%
Bangladesh	5%	37%	26%	9%	8%	16%
Pakistan	1%	5%	8%	21%	59%	7%

Q8. What do you think about the levels of interaction between India and each of the following neighbouring countries in the last 5 years?

	Drastically Increased (%)	Partially Increased (%)	Remained unchanged (%)	Decreased Somewhat (%)	Drastically Decreased (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
Sri Lanka	12%	32%	25%	6%	3%	21%
Maldives	9%	23%	21%	6%	5%	37%
Afghanistan	7%	19%	25%	9%	9%	31%
Nepal	7%	26%	19%	18%	7%	23%
Bhutan	6%	24%	28%	8%	5%	29%
Pakistan	5%	8%	15%	14%	42%	16%
Bangladesh	5%	26%	28%	10%	6%	26%

3. INDIA AND THE P5+3

Q9. Evaluate the following powers on the basis of how much you trust them?

	Trust Completely (%)	Trust Somewhat (%)	Neither trust nor distrust (%)	Distrust Somewhat (%)	Distrust Completely (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
US	32%	45%	8%	2%	5%	7%
Australia	21%	46%	8%	3%	5%	16%
Russia	21%	43%	9%	5%	11%	12%
Japan	18%	42%	10%	5%	12%	13%
France	17%	41%	10%	5%	9%	18%
UK	17%	44%	9%	3%	7%	20%
European Union	11%	40%	11%	4%	9%	25%
China	1%	10%	7%	8%	69%	5%

Q10. In the next 10 years, how likely are each of the following powers, to become India's leading partners?

	Very Likely (%)	Somewhat likely (%)	Neither likely nor unlikely (%)	Somewhat Unlikely (%)	Very Unlikely (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
US	44%	34%	5%	3%	3%	11%
Australia	21%	41%	7%	5%	6%	20%
Japan	21%	36%	9%	8%	9%	18%
Russia	20%	37%	9%	8%	10%	16%
UK	18%	39%	9%	5%	7%	23%
France	18%	36%	9%	7%	9%	21%
European Union	13%	36%	9%	6%	9%	27%
China	2%	13%	8%	13%	54%	10%

Q11. What should be India's position if US-China tensions continue to rise?

	Single Choice (%)
Cooperate with the US	62%
Remain neutral	32%
Don't Know / Can't Say	5%
Cooperate with China	1%

Q12.a. Do you feel concerned about the rise of China as a global power?

	Single Choice (%)
Yes	70%
No	23%
Don't Know / Can't Say	7%

Q12.b. How concerned are you about China on the following issues?

	Very Concerned (%)	Somewhat concerned (%)	Neither concerned nor unconcerned (%)	Somewhat unconcerned (%)	Not concerned at all (%)	Don't know/can't say (%)
China is interfering in India's immediate neighbourhood	50%	30%	3%	2%	6%	8%
China is economically more powerful than India	48%	28%	5%	3%	11%	4%
The border clashes with China will lead to a war	47%	28%	4%	3%	10%	7%
China is militarily more powerful than India	40%	31%	6%	4%	15%	5%

4. MULTILATERALISM AND GLOBALISATION

Q13. International organisations bring together countries to achieve cooperation and coordination on global issues. Have you personally heard of the following international and regional organisations that India is a part of, before today?

	Yes (%)	No (%)
United Nations	72%	28%
WTO (World Trade Organization)	69%	31%
SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)	54%	46%
G20 (Group of 20)	52%	48%
BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)	52%	48%
SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization)	42%	58%
BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation)	36%	64%
NAM (Non-Aligned Movement)	34%	66%

Q14. India seeks to secure a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. Do you personally think that this is an important goal for India?

Very Important (%)	Somewhat Important (%)	Neither important nor unimportant (%)	Somewhat Unimportant (%)	Very Unimportant (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
74%	17%	1%	1%	1%	6%

Q15. In your opinion, what should be India's preferred mode of engagement with other countries?

Global cooperation through multilateral (%)	Bilateral cooperation (%)
76%	24%

Q16. In fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, should India prioritise developing solutions at the global level or the national level?

At a Global Level (%)	At a National Level (%)	Balance between National and Global Level (%)	Neither at Global level nor at National Level (%)	Don't know / can't say (%)
46%	34%	15%	1%	4%

Q17. In your opinion how has globalisation affected your life as well as India in general? For each of the following, do you think globalisation has had a mostly good or mostly bad effect?

	Good (%)	Somewhat good (%)	No effect(%)	Somewhat bad (%)	Bad (%)	Don't know/ can't say (%)
Education opportunities overseas	42%	17%	5%	7%	20%	8%
For India overall	36%	26%	4%	10%	19%	6%
India's society and culture	29%	23%	10%	13%	20%	5%
India's economy	28%	23%	7%	14%	24%	4%
Your standard of living	26%	26%	12%	13%	20%	3%
Foreigners coming to India for work or stay	26%	20%	7%	12%	27%	8%
Indians going abroad for work or stay.	25%	22%	7%	14%	26%	6%

Q18. The 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' aims to achieve economic self-reliance by promoting local products and enabling industries to face tough competition from abroad. Do you think that this scheme is mostly good or mostly bad for India?

Good (%)	Somewhat Good (%)	No Effect (%)	Somewhat Bad (%)	Bad (%)	Don't know/ Can't say (%)
71%	16%	3%	2%	2%	5%

ANNEX B. METHODOLOGY

The ORF Foreign Policy Survey 2021, in collaboration with Impetus Research, reports the results of a national foreign policy survey of India's urban youth that was conducted with a representative sample of 2,037 Indians aged 18-35. The fieldwork for this survey was conducted from 3rd to 21st December 2020 by research professionals at Impetus who used the Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing survey technique.

To test the efficacy of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted before administering the main survey.

This pilot survey was conducted with a sample of 30 respondents across 5 cities and in 4 languages. The goal of this pilot study was to understand any difficulties respondents may have in comprehending the questions, to suggest ways to simplify the questions and to test the precision of the translation of the survey from English to regional languages.

Based on insights gained from the pilot study and recommendations from field supervisors at Impetus, the survey questions were reworked and finalised for the main survey. The main survey was conducted across 14 cities, situated across six geographical zones in India. The details are shown below.

COVERAGE OF THE MAIN SURVEY

Cities	Eastern	North Central	North-eastern	Northern	Southern	Western	Total
Ahmedabad						145	145
Bengaluru					142		142
Bhopal		174					174
Bhubaneshwar	161						161
Chandigarh				110			110
Chennai					140		140
Delhi		176					176
Guwahati			86				86
Hyderabad					142		142
Jaipur				110			110
Kolkata	160						160
Lucknow		179					179
Mumbai						140	140
Patna		172					172
Grand Total	321	701	86	220	424	285	2037

By Education

Education	Number of respondents
Illiterate	47
Primary (up to class 5th)	95
Up to Class 8th	156
Up to Class 10th	420
Up to Class 12th	447
Completed diploma/technical course	156
University graduate	549
Post-graduate degree/Professional or higher	165
Refused	2

By Gender

Gender	Number of Respondents
Male	1097
Female	940

By Income

Income	Number of Respondents
Below Rs. 10000 per month	345
Rs.10001-20000	699
Rs.20001-40000	407
Rs.40001-60000	94
Rs.60001-80001	35
Above Rs 80,000 per month	24
Refused	194
Don't know/can't say	239

By Occupation

Occupation	Number of Respondents
Self Employed Professional	78
Businessman / trader	110
Government Sector Employee	39
Private Sector Employee	419
Skilled Worker	141
Unskilled worker	54
Housewife	534
Unemployed – seeking employment	144
Student	506
Refused	12

By Religion

Religion	Number of Respondents
Buddhist	22
Christian	47
Hindu	1801
Muslim	122
Jain	3
Sikh	15
A believer of another faith	1
Atheist	2
Refused	22
Don't know/can't say	2

By State

State	Number of Respondents
Odisha	161
West Bengal	160
Madhya Pradesh	174
Delhi	176
Uttar Pradesh	179
Bihar	172
Assam	86
Chandigarh	110
Rajasthan	110
Karnataka	142
Tamil Nadu	140
Telangana	142
Gujarat	145
Maharashtra	140

By Residence

Zone	Number of Respondents
Metro	616
Non_metro	1421

By Zone

Zone	Number of Respondents
Eastern	321
North Central	701
North Eastern	86
Northern	220
Southern	424
Western	285

In order to ensure that the poll reaches semi-urban pockets of the nation where respondents may not be fluent in English and to strengthen the representativeness of our sample, the survey was conducted in 8 regional languages - Hindi, Gujarati, Assamese, Bangla, Kannada, Telugu, Tamil and Odia - along with English.

Before administering the survey to respondents, a short three-day training session for the field workers was implemented. Field researchers were acquainted with the objectives of the study, interview ethics, process of the right-hand rule and random sampling of households. Moreover, information on quality control and question-wise briefing of the survey was provided to ensure the surveyors were intimately familiar with the meaning of the survey questions while also being privy to the procedure for sampling and interviewing respondents.

The final survey with the sample of 2,037 respondents was conducted via Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) using the Research Control Solutions (RCS) software. Impetus Research has found this method of administering, recording, and processing face-to-face interviews to be the most suitable and reliable, especially in comparison to telephonic or in-person written interviews. This is because the software allows the interviewer to work offline in low connectivity environments and synchronises results in real-time when cellular or Wi-Fi networks become available. This is particularly advantageous when surveying respondents from districts in India with low internet penetration. Using RCS in the field also improves data quality by automating the more difficult aspects of questionnaire administration (e.g., skip patterns) and eliminating errors that can occur during key punching of pen and paper questionnaires.

CONTACT PROCEDURES

The Interviewers were tasked to conduct 10 interviews from the given starting point (Polling Booth). These starting points were randomly selected by the Impetus Research Sampling team from a list of polling stations covered by that assembly constituency.

A random route procedure was used for sampling households. The random route started at the pre-selected starting point and a sampling interval was used to select houses located on the right-hand side of the starting address. A sampling interval of two households was used across all these cities.

After selecting a household, interviewers listed members of the household aged between 18-35 years, along with their age and gender information, in the RCS script. The RCS program then randomly selected a household member to be interviewed.

Under no circumstances were interviewers allowed to substitute an alternate member of a household for the selected respondent. If the respondent refused to participate or was not available, the interviewer then moved on to the next household according to the right-hand rule.

QUALITY CONTROL

Throughout the field work, multi-level back-checks were completed to ensure interview quality. The following types of field checks were completed:

- Spot checks and accompaniments by Field Supervisors
- Telephonic back-checks by Field Supervisors
- Telephonic and audio checks by an independent Quality Control (QC) team from the central office of Impetus Research.

The internal QC team performed back-checks primarily by phone and through personal visits in the field, whereas field supervisors and team leaders personally visited sampling points to conduct spot-checks and back-checks. The field operations teams also conducted telephonic back-checks.

The internal QC team was vigilant about reviewing records which were supposed to be back-checked by the supervisors and ensured the QC process was completed within 48 hours of the interview being completed. Impetus Research's internal QC team conducted preliminary Data QC to check for right respondent selection, length of interview, GPS coordinates, respondent selection, overlapping interviews, straight and flat liners, etc.

Whenever an abnormality was found, the entire data of all the interviews conducted by that interviewer was checked. The Impetus Research's QC team reviewed the interviewer-level outcomes of failed interviews and briefed the teams on the errors reported. In case of any consistent pattern of errors, interviewers were identified and re-trained to avoid such mistakes in the future.

BACK-CHECK DETAILS

Impetus Research conducted a total of 1,371 back-checks which is about 67.3 percent of the total valid Interviews. Impetus Research's QC Team conducted 845 back-checks, while Field Supervisors conducted 526. During back-checks, 101 interviews were cancelled and replaced while other interviews were found correct and accepted by the QC team.

LIMITATIONS

Overall, efforts were taken at the survey conceptualisation and implementation stages to ensure that the methodology guiding our poll survey is robust. However, such national-level surveys are never free from limitations, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A key limitation we faced in surveying respondents due to COVID-19 was that some households refused to take part and talk to surveyors at all.

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