



Eden Centre
for Education
Enhancement



LIFE

**The following paper was researched and written
as part of LSE GROUPS 2024.**

LSE GROUPS takes place during the final fortnight of the LSE Spring Term. Undergraduate students are placed in small groups; these are cross-year, interdisciplinary, and group members do not know one another in advance. Each group must then devise its own research question and carry out every stage of a small-scale research project, in less than two weeks.

LSE GROUPS is part of the LSE commitment to students learning through enquiry and developing the skills needed for knowledge creation.

The overall theme of LSE GROUPS 2024 was *Power and Politics*.

This paper was submitted on the final Thursday afternoon of the project. Students then presented their work at a conference, on the closing Friday.

[More information on LSE GROUPS, and other papers.](#)

Papers are presented as submitted by the students, without corrections.

London School of Economics and Political Science

Eden.GROUPS@lse.ac.uk

**(Non)-Belonging to India:
Investigating the Impact of BJP's Populist
Discourse on Sense of National Identity in
Students at LSE**

Nandita Rohit Mulay, Joy Zihan, Derin Bohcaci, Mahira Haque, Myroslava Kondrashova

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank our supervisor Dr. Alexandre Dab, for his support on this research project.

Abstract

The 2024 Lok Sabha elections have amplified ‘nation-talk’ across India and its diaspora, with Bharatiya Janata Party’s right-wing populism taking the front stage of Indian media. This research paper investigates how the impact this political climate has had on Indian students at LSE, in particular on their sense of national identity and belonging to their national community. We seek to address the triangular relationship between populism, Indian LSE students, and social media thereby addressing the lack of literature on this topic. Through semi-structured interviews and the use of digital ethnography, we find that geographical distance from India has caused a disconnect in students regarding their sense of national belonging. By contrast, a sense of cosmopolitanism resonates better with Indian students at LSE. We believe that this research serves as an impetus for further work to be done on the relationship between international students and national belonging in other national contexts, as well as offering important implications for diaspora studies.

Keywords: populism, BJP, national identity, national belonging, Indian elections, online platforms

Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
Literature Review.....	4
Methodology.....	6
Data Analysis.....	12
Conclusion.....	16
References.....	17
Appendix 1.....	[]
Appendix 2.....	[]
Appendix 3.....	[]

Introduction

In attempting to uncover how populist discourses of the BJP influence the national identity of Indian students in LSE, first definitional frameworks must be drawn up to the heavily contested nature of 'populism' and 'national identity', while also providing justification for the sample chosen, and purpose of study. Populism in this study will be defined by Brubaker (2017)'s study which characterised it as 'a rhetorical and stylistic repertoire' from which leaders can draw as they wish in order to pursue specific political aims. This repertoire functions to position the utilizer as not only 'speaking for the people', but also aims to fashion and reshape what this 'people' is by producing vertical and horizontal cleavages. 'National identity', this 'object' that populism seems to be trying to shape, must also be understood. According to Anderson (1983), the nation is an 'imaginary community' where individuals feel and imagine a shared comradeship among each other. Hence, national identity in this study is understood as an individual's conception of the qualities and boundaries of this 'imagined community', defined by contested cultural narratives. This research will attempt to answer the question, "How does populist discourse by the BJP during the 2024 Lok Sabha election influence the sense of national identity and belonging of Indian international students in LSE?" We take this issue of national identity of Indian students to be important for study due to two factors. The first posits the exalted station of students within the socio-political life of a country, as both future leaders and current activists. The other recognizes the contested and unsettled nature of Indian nationhood, and finds these qualities as representative of postcolonial societies in general. Therefore, the focus on Indian students, especially at elite educational institutions like the LSE, is of high value to understand Indian politics. Hence, with the definitional work and rationale of the study laid out, an overview of the literature can be conducted below.

Literature Review

The heavily contested nature of identity and belonging in modern India provides us with a rich terrain of literature, rife with contradictory arguments and conclusions. Dutt (1998) instructively presents an overview of nationalisms in India, arguing for the existence of a perennial tension between national and sub-national identifications. These sub-national identities consist of ethnic, as well as caste and religious affiliations. When placed in the context of the diaspora, certain competing images emerge within the literature. While Pande (2013) discovered that the main trend within the Indian diaspora is an increase in the salience of regional and local belonging (such as Tamil, Punjabi, or Bengali), others argue for the opposite. Leidig (2020) contradictorily argues that the Indian diaspora in the UK and US instead share a heightened sense of 'nationhood' compared to that of 'regionalism'. Arguing that differences considered relevant in India take a back seat in the West, Leidig (2020) highlights that members of the Indian diaspora engage in a collective process of identification. He further emphasises that essentializing and homogenising understandings of the 'motherland' within this collective process increases vulnerability to Hindutva nationalism within these communities. While Pande (2013) makes a sweeping analysis of overseas Indians all over the world, Leidig (2020) investigates social media and conducts interviews with individuals from advantaged backgrounds in the US and UK. The discrepancy in the conclusions of the two projects makes our research valuable, as it could serve to reconcile, or further complicate this debate.

An additional aspect of the question calls for the exploration of social media. Distance in the contemporary digitised world no longer means isolation from one's motherland. The proliferation of social media translates into the ability to stretch across geography and immerse oneself in discourse across the world. Narasimhamurthy (2014) argues for the profound and growing importance of social media in India for socialisation and connection. However, social media is not only a platform for socialisation and entertainment, as Neog (2023) has done profound work that has demonstrated that social media in India has been a fertile ground for 'nation talk'. Hence, while specific areas of our question have been explored previously, all the moving parts have not been placed together. While conceptions of national identity of the diaspora have been investigated, the specific population of Indian international students in the UK have been forgotten. To investigate this gap within the

literature, this study aims to model itself on a similar investigation carried out by Mahmud (2019) which looked at Kurdish diaspora communities.

Methodology

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary mode of data collection. Having an interview guide (See Appendix 1) allowed each interview to be flexible (Pathak et al., 2013), giving the interviewer the opportunity to ask follow-up questions. Questions were intentionally phrased with neutral tones to avoid leading on the participants (See Appendix 1). Participants were also given the space to talk about an aspect of their experience that had not been covered by the interview guide; this autonomy yielded interesting results. Considering the short time-frame of the research, participants were selected through convenience sampling methods - the researchers contacted friends who fit the criteria. Ethics approval through the LSE Eden Centre was obtained before any research was carried out. After the consent form (See Appendix 2) had been signed, interviews were conducted in-person or over the phone.

Digital Ethnography

Due to the preeminence of digital media, conducting a digital ethnography allows us to explore the impacts of the presence of digital media in shaping processes and opinions globally (Pink et al., 2016). Employing this methodology alongside interviews provides an in-depth understanding of how students interacted with social media content. For this research, we conducted content analysis on posts from X and Facebook. This decision was due to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi posting actively on both these platforms, generating the most political discourse. In setting criteria for measuring the degree of populist discourse on social media, we employ Brubaker's (2017) 5 characteristics of populism: antagonistic repoliticisation and anti-elitism, majoritarianism, anti-institutionalism, protectionism, and the populist style itself. Posts were analysed from the 19th of April 2024 (start of the election period) to the 4th of June 2024 (election results day). Selected texts were then quantitatively analysed to find the mean level of engagement.

As qualitative research can change slightly depending on context, the steps of data collection and analysis often occur simultaneously (Busetto et al., 2020). Data was analysed through

coding (Noble & Smith, 2014) - repeated themes in the data were identified and a keyword was assigned to them, allowing the researchers to form linkages between concepts to support the research. To see deductive and inductive codes formed, see Appendix 3.

Challenges

Motivation bias (Stratton, 2021) and social desirability bias was mitigated by researchers presenting a non-judgemental front during the interviews, reiterating that participants could talk about whatever they wanted within the scope of the topic. In the digital ethnography, researchers only analysed media that was in English due to a lack of fluency in Indian regional language, which limited our sample. However, statistical analysis shows that English posts fare well in terms of engagement compared to its Hindi counterparts (See Table 1).

Data Analysis

All participants are new to London, with 4 out of 5 in their first with the other being in their second year of study at the LSE. However, they had varying experiences with the Indian community in London, with Participant 1, who speaks Tamil, noting the language barrier between themselves and others as an obstacle in their ability to connect with the community. Participants thus found it easier to connect to those who came from similar regions as them, “because I can communicate and relate better” (Participant 1). The move to London made participants more aware of “how different India is to the rest of the world” and helped put their national identity into perspective regarding how it was constructed and brought into populist discourse (Participant 4). Participant 2 mentioned ‘privilege’ as an obstacle in their ability to connect with the community, specifically the community’s unawareness of their own privilege. Participants were of the belief that coming to London to study meant that they would not return home immediately after graduation, to “make the most of this opportunity” as stated by Participant 2, and believed that “it is more liberating to be [in London]” (Participant 3). All participants mentioned that their connection to India was mainly cultural and believed it to be a place where long-term settlement is more comfortable. Participants connected more to their local regions than India as a whole, due to the vast cultural and linguistic differences between each state, and had a sense of pride attached to their heritage.

“After going abroad, I have noticed how much culture India has. It has so much history and it forms us as people because we have been brought up with those values.”

- Participant 5

Others went further to disavow their political belonging to India, such as Participant 4, who notes that ideas of nationalism and patriotism “have become meshed and lost meaning” to them. They go further to say that since starting LSE, they see India more for its cultural significance than as a state. Participant 3, on the other hand, who has spent the longest time (2 years) in London, said that they don’t feel any connection with India at all, and see themselves as a ‘global citizen’. This change to a cosmopolitan perception of their identity came about through “firstly recognising the different perspective from how things are in India, and secondly, making an active choice to broaden horizons and make friends from

other cultures”. Having participants that had spent more than 2 years in London would have offered interesting comparatives into whether time influenced their sense of belonging.

“When in doubt, go left. I’m definitely not into religion politics but I also disagree with the villainising of BJP supporters.”

- Participant 1

Almost all participants did not support the BJP. Participants 1 through 4 cited identity politics and religion as their reason for not supporting the BJP, while Participant 5 supported the BJP on the basis that they were the “best out of the other bad options”. Due to their geographical distance from India, all participants reported feeling removed from the context of the elections, and thus less involved. “When you are in India, you are constantly surrounded by it.” According to Participant 2, “Here I need to actively search for information”. Participants from other disciplines might not have had a similar level of interest and could have had negligible engagement. Their main source of information was through social media, complementing our digital ethnography analysis.

Statistical analysis on our data revealed that although there were fewer English posts on X in general, there was a higher level of engagement when compared to the most spoken language in India, Hindi (Rathore, 2023). The following table showcases the average varied level of engagement in posts made by Narendra Modi during the 2024 election period. Most notably, there was a 172.7% increase in engagement on English posts in the 5 days before the results were announced. Hence, looking at media in a single language still provides us with a rich understanding of public opinion during the election season.

Table 1: A statistical comparison of engagement with Modi’s posts on X on average.

Language	Comments	Shares	Likes	Views
English	1.2 thousand	7.7 thousand	44.3 thousand	2.5 million
Hindi	1 thousand	5.2 thousand	24.8 thousand	1.05 million

“Our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, serving the people of India by following the path of valiant monk Swami Vivekananda.”

- Facebook post by the BJP on 1st June, 2024

The invocation of national pride through the reference of Hindu historical figures like Swami Vivekananda - shows that the BJP party understands the importance of culture in Indian politics. This demonstrates ‘cultural nationalism’ which aims to create a new national identity based on ‘one nation, one people, one culture’ (Dutt, 1998). Indeed, as Dutt (1998) continues, this is manifested in the form of Hindutva ideology, which is one that exemplifies itself in the imagery behind the phrase ‘following the path’. Participant 3 stated how the BJP had been gradually evolving into a Hindu nationalist party since gaining power in 2014, with this rhetoric now coming into centre-stage in the 2024 election campaign. This inherently places spiritualism on a pedestal and establishes a religious boundary where other faiths, in contrast to the valiance of Hindu figures, may be juxtaposed as inferior. As participant 5 states, “People say that India is a secular state, but there is nothing secular about it”. The narrative that this Facebook post tells is one that champions majoritarianism - favouring the majority over the minority - and thereby is telling of the BJP’s populist attempts to pander to the Hindu majority while marginalising what they attempt to present as ‘others’. On an individual level, furthermore, this post frames Modi as somewhat an inheritor of Vivekananda’s legacy; this resonates with interviewees’ perceptions of the BJP’s Hindu nationalist rhetoric, with participant 2 stating that the BJP chooses to idolise Modi as a figurehead of the party.

“On one hand, they (Congress) try to divide the society on the basis of caste. On the other hand, they look for ways to keep a strong vote bank by uniting it.

- PM Narendra Modi”

- Facebook post by the BJP on 31st May 2024

Anti-elitism has centred itself in the BJP’s addressing of the Indian National Congress (INC) throughout the election period. Specifically, it supports Cas Mudde’s (2004) argument that populism defines society as a distinction between the ‘pure people’ and the ‘corrupt elite’. Modi juxtaposes the BJP with the INC as a defender of the people. This ‘us vs. them’ dichotomy is prevalent in the other quotes mentioned in the Facebook post, featuring quotes from Modi’s interview with the Hindustan Times:

“The Congress today is completely cut off from its roots. It is not able to understand what the culture of this country is. [...] it is not able to grasp the basic elements of Indian democracy. Congress are not able to come out of divisive rhetoric, personal attacks, and abusive language.”

By attempting to delegitimise the Congress’ moral authority through saying that they rely on ‘personal attacks’ and ‘abusive language’, the BJP’s electioneering on social media once again finds itself on the populist spectrum. This takes a juxtaposing effect, placing Modi in a comparatively positive light, pairing well with the framing of Modi as a spiritual leader. Anti-institutionalist and anti-elitist rhetoric is prevalent in the suggestion that Congress is not in touch with Indian culture and encourages the idea that they are only a party that works for themselves. This post weaponises what Brubaker (2017) calls ‘antagonistic repoliticisation’ - the claim that the BJP intends to protect democratic control over de-democratised parts of politics and Indian life. This is seen when Modi suggests that while Congress is not able to “grasp the basic elements of Indian democracy”. Participant 1 supports this narrative by stating that due to a lack of a strong opposition, the masses end up voting for the BJP. These findings support the work of McDonnell and Cabrera (2018) who, through interviews with BJP representatives, found that they see the INC as corrupt and elitist, and threaten the security of what they perceive to be ‘true Indian people’: a homogeneous and patriotic Hindu community.

“They [INC] want us to deny rights to SC, ST and OBC communities, preferring UNCONSTITUTIONAL Muslim reservation instead.

Modi will not let them trample over Pujya Babasaheb’s Constitution.”

- A post on X by Narendra Modi on 20th May 2024

The appeal to directly marginalised groups (Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes) demonstrates the BJP’s attempts to mobilise support by addressing the grievances and aspirations of the masses. This supports Participant 2’s perception of the BJP’s rhetoric being ‘hyper-nationalist’. Furthermore, directly referring to Dr. Ambedkar (‘Pujya Babasaheb’) again invokes cultural nationalism. The cultural basis of populism by the BJP is proved by interview findings - all participants stated that they felt connected to

India as a cultural identity, more than a national or political one. When the BJP invokes cultural nationalism, they reiterate ideas of a homogenous society. By calling the constitution 'Pujya Babasaheb's Constitution', it narrates a story of Modi, committed to the Constitution and aligned with Dr. Ambedkar's legacy, as a defender against the 'unconstitutional' others. This post brings with it marks of majoritarianism: "unconstitutional Muslim reservation" frames Muslims as inherently acting against Indian values and Indian law itself. Participant 4 feels distraught at such claims, "My family background makes it such that I have to live in communal disharmony". Modi here also conveys that the Congress works ultimately against the interests of the common people for the sake of the minority.

As such, we find that the BJP's Hindu nationalism lends itself to right-wing populism. Through projecting the idea that India's culture should mirror the beliefs of the Hindu majority in spite of its marginalised communities, the BJP uses social media to present Modi as a spiritual, morally legitimate leader for the nation. This thread of majoritarianism arguably is a watermark of BJP populism which continues to prey on the idea of the 'other' - often being the INC and marginalised communities such as Muslims.

Conclusion

The research revealed that unlike the previous literature which saw either an increase in regional or national belonging in diasporic communities, within the LSE's Indian students, a new form of identification emerges. In the face of growing Hindutva nationalist discourse during the election season, cosmopolitan identification took centre stage as individuals described themselves as 'global citizens'. While it is possible that the cosmopolitanism observed in the student is a reflection of LSE's idiosyncratic nature, it is still relevant for thought. Diasporic communities do not have to identify with their new locations or their areas of origin, and instead may adopt a cosmopolitan identification due to their internationalisation. Further to this research, expanding our scope to include a wider sample on Indian international students beyond students at the LSE, while allowing a comparative perspective on other universities in the UK.

References

- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.
- Brubaker, R. (2017). Why populism? *Theory and Society*, 46(5), 357–385. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-017-9301-7>
- Busetto, L., Wick, W., & Gumbinger, C. (2020). How to use and assess qualitative research methods. *Neurological Research and Practice*, 2(1), 14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s42466-020-00059-z>
- Dutt, S. (1998). Identities and the Indian state: An overview. *Third World Quarterly*, 19(3), 411-434. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436599814325>
- Leidig, E. (2020). *Reconfiguring nationalism: Transnational entanglements of Hindutva and radical right ideology*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Oslo]. DUO Research Archive. <https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/77740>
- Mahmod, J. (2019). New Online Communities and New Identity Making: The Curious Case of the Kurdish Diaspora. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 34–43. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48710218>
- McDonnell, D., & Cabrera, L. (2018). The right-wing populism of India's Bharatiya Janata Party (and why comparativists should care). *Democratization*, 26(3), 484–501. <https://doi-org.gate3.library.lse.ac.uk/10.1080/13510347.2018.1551885>
- Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition (London)*, 39(4), 541–563. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-7053.2004.00135.x>
- Narasimhamurthy, N. (2014). Cultural Impact and Gender on Indian Young Adults in Using Social Networking Sites. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies*, 1(4), 113-125.

- Neog, K. B. (2023). Memes, National Identity and National Belonging: Visual “Nation-Talk” on Indian Social Media Pages. *Television & New Media*, 25(2), 150-167. <https://doi-org.gate3.library.lse.ac.uk/10.1177/15274764231180496>
- Noble, H., & Smith, J. (2014). Qualitative data analysis: A practical example. *Evidence-Based Nursing*, 17(1), 2–3. <https://doi.org/10.1136/eb-2013-101603>
- Pande, A. (2013). Conceptualising Indian Diaspora: Diversities within a Common Identity. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48(49), 59–65. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24478375>
- Pathak, V., Jena, B., & Kalra, S. (2013). Qualitative research. *Perspectives in Clinical Research*, 4(3), 192. <https://doi.org/10.4103/2229-3485.115389>
- Pink, S., Horst, H., Postill, J., Hjorth, L., Lewis, T., & Tacchi, J. (2016). *Digital Ethnography: Principles and Practice*. SAGE Publications.
- Rathore, M. (2023, July 10). *India - most common languages 2011*. Statista. Retrieved June 12, 2024, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/616508/most-common-languages-india/>
- Stratton, S. J. (2021). Population Research: Convenience Sampling Strategies. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, 36(4), 373–374. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049023X21000649>
- Taggart, P. (2000). *Populism*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Appendix 1

Interview Guide

Before I start this interview, I wanted to preface this and say that if there are any questions that make you feel uncomfortable or you would rather not answer, please feel free to let me know.

Question 1: Can you tell me a bit about your background? Where did you grow up in India, what language/s did you speak at home, what kind of school did you attend? How long have you been living abroad?

Question 2: Are you thinking of returning to India after graduating? Why or why not?

Question 3: What does 'being Indian' mean to you? Do you identify more with your region/city or more with the greater country? Has your relationship with your national identity changed since you left India? How so? Do you feel connected with the Indian community here in London? Has distance affected your sense of belonging to India?

Question 4: Have you followed the Indian Lok Sabha elections this year? To what extent?

Question 5: What was your main source of information this election season?

Question 6: How would you describe your political leanings this election season? Who did you support and why?

Question 7: How would you characterise the BJP's rhetoric this past election season? Was there any theme in particular that caught your attention either positively or negatively?

Question 8: How have you reacted to the kind of media coming out of this election cycle? Have you had heated discussions in your family? How have you reacted to the tone/nature of the political rhetoric during the past election?

Question 9: As an Indian living abroad, how did the political climate surrounding the elections affect your perception of belonging to India?

Appendix 2

Participant Consent Form

Research Question: How does populist discourse by the BJP during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections influence the sense of national identity and belonging of Indian international students in central London?

Name of Interviewer:

Department of [...], LSE

Contact of Interviewer:

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study. This information sheet outlines the purpose of the study and provides a description of participant involvement.

1. What is the research about?

The research being conducted in the form of a semi-structured interview is to learn more about digital consumption in the context of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and how students perceive national identity and a sense of belonging in accordance with the posts they interact with.

2. Voluntary Participation

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. You do not have to take part if you do not want to. If you agree, please sign below.

3. What will your involvement be?

You will be asked to take part in an interview which will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

4. Withdrawing from the study

You can withdraw from the study at any point of data collection. Although care has been taken to mitigate any potential risks, participants have the right to stop the interview at any time, and all recorded data up to that point will be deleted and not used in the study.

5. What will your information be used for?

The researcher will use the gathered data only for their LSE Groups research project. The interview will be audio-recorded and a transcript will be produced. If desired, a copy of the transcript can be sent to the participant with the opportunity to correct any errors. Errors might occur due to translation issues if the interview is not predominantly conducted in English. The transcript will not be seen by anyone other than the researcher (named above). Once the data analysis has been completed, all data will be deleted.

6. Data confidentiality

The records from this study will be kept as confidential as possible. Participants will remain anonymous and any identifiable details will not be mentioned in the study. All digital files, transcripts, and summaries will be given codes and stored separately from any names or other direct identification of participants. Any hard copies of research information will be kept in locked files at all times.

7. Ethical Review

The study has undergone ethical review in accordance with the LSE Eden Centre, and this consent form is necessary to ensure that participants understand the purpose of their involvement and agree to the terms of the interview. In the case of any complaints, please contact research.ethics@lse.ac.uk.

By signing below, the participant agrees that:

I have read and understood the study information, or it has been read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.	YES/NO
I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason.	YES/NO
I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	YES/NO

I understand that the information I provide will be used for the researcher dissertation and that the information will be anonymised.	YES/NO
If quotations are used in the research, I agree that my anonymised information can be used.	YES/NO
I understand that any personal information that can identify me will be kept confidential and not shared with anyone.	YES/NO

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher for any clarifications.

Participant Name:

Preferred Pseudonym (if any):

Participant Signature:

Researcher Signature:

Date:

Appendix 3

Interview analysis	1	2	3	4	5
Being Indian	cultural habits, sense of family, national connection, easier to connect with people of similar regions	don't identify with Indian as all, think of myself as a global citizen, some attachment to immediate local area	don't identify with Indian as all, think of myself as a global citizen, some attachment to immediate local area	more of a cultural link than a national one, I've never been the most nationalist person, growing up I was a bit of a patriot but ever since the ideas of nationalist and patriot has become meshed its lost meaning to me, ever since starting lse I start thinking more of the cultural significance than the state	culture, pride in ones heritage, after going abroad I have noticed how much culture India has, so much history and it forms us as people because we've been brought up with those values, being up children in India is better, proud of where you come from, connect more with being from Delhi because cultures in every place in India is different
Indian community in UK	not a lot similar to me, haven't participated in societies, not really special friends, cannot understand Hindi so shared language is still going to be English, better to have friends with same languages as it is more comfortable and can make jokes etc- reliability is important	not at all, they come from a very privileged part of India, even though I'm a part of that, they are not aware of their privilege and that bothers me sometimes		definitely, I'm part of societies, I don't think my involvement in the community here is particularly linked to my identity it is more about finding similar people	very well connected
Distance from India	more removed from the context and became less involved in Indian politics, involvement has diminished, studies at London has made me more intrigued but I am not personally affected by it, used to be surrounded by it in India	im able to appreciate more things about India now, like things that would otherwise be taken for granted, if I didn't have my background of growing up in India I would take so many things for granted, im more appreciative of things		not really, people like me who grew up in modern cities have a more western upbringing so its not too different	hasnt affected identity in any way
Following elections	only saw results, if I was at home I would be more connected to it, family members are pro-BJP so have their own opinions, they help with campaigns, their involvement has made me dislike BJP more but I also understand the workings of it now, media always portrays in a particular light	not as much as I would have in India, unless I actively take a step to look into it, in India you are surrounded by it, you cant avoid it	followed on results been because I study politics	general ideas, dont know specifics	yes through news
Election outcomes	think it is better than it could have been because the BJP didnt get the majority but the congress isnt good enough to rule yet because of fragmentation				
Political leaning	when in doubt go left, definitely not into religion politics but also disagree with the villainising of the BJP supporters	centre left, my family is really pro BJP but ever since I started studying political science I disagree with them on many fronts, have more antipathy towards conservative ideals and traditions and are valued so much in the BJP and I have a big problem with that, I have a more liberal stance	im not registered to vote but if I had I would choose none of the above because they dont represent my perspective, im not a huge supporter of BJP, hindu nationalist politics, im not religious myself, but other parties also play identity politics or have strong socialist policies	anti-BJP in general, not a fan of their ideologies, centre leftist, if I had been in India I would have voted for congress, most people went into the election hoping that they secure enough seats to remain standing even though it was pretty guaranteed that BJP would win but now theres more constituents, they performed better than I expected even though I had very grim expectations	Indian politics has no good options but there is the best out of bad options which is BJP, even though its said to be multi party its mainly BJP vs congress, I have a bad personal experience with congress but otherwise I feel BJP has helped India and Modi has made India's name known in many countries but theres also so much corruption and population that its hard to create an actual change
BJP rhetoric		hyper masculine, hyper nationalist, trying to build Hindutva	since 2014 it is evolving and becoming the Hindu nationalist that we now know, it used to be about economic growth and development then in 2019 it shifted towards the Hindu rhetoric	communal rhetoric, familial background makes me against such claims, talk about how BJP fostered India's international relations and standing in the global sphere but it wasnt stressed upon before the elections, into politics as a family but not like the Indian identity politics	purely hinduism, we say that India is a secular state but there is nothing secular about it, focusing on hinduism garners positive attention in India but negative attention globally