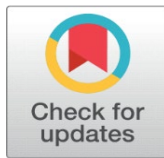


INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY UNDER MODI GOVERNMENT FROM 2014-2025: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This study offers an in-depth examination of India's foreign policy under the Modi administration from 2014 to 2025. It explores India's relationships with neighboring nations, regional entities such as SAARC and ASEAN, major global powers including the United States, Russia, and European countries, as well as its involvement in international organizations and forums. The research adopts a mixed-methods framework, blending qualitative evaluations of diplomatic endeavors with quantitative analyses of economic and strategic alliances. The key findings highlight a marked evolution in India's foreign policy approach, emphasizing proactive engagement, strategic independence, and a priority on economic collaborations. The paper concludes by discussing the implications for India's emerging role in the global landscape and providing recommendations for policymakers.

Keywords: Indian Foreign Policy, Modi Government, International Relations, Diplomacy, Strategic Partnerships

1. INTRODUCTION

The ascension of Narendra Modi to the position of Prime Minister in 2014 represented a pivotal turning point in India's foreign policy strategy. Modi's emphasis on a more assertive and internationally active India has profoundly influenced the country's diplomatic, economic, and strategic ties over the last decade [Pant \(2020\)](#). This research paper seeks to deliver a detailed analysis of Indian foreign policy under the Modi administration from 2014 to 2025, investigating India's interactions with diverse international entities and its changing position in the global arena. The study tackles key research questions, including: How has India's foreign policy evolved under the Modi government? What are the primary features of India's relationships with neighboring countries, regional organizations, and major global powers? How has India's participation in international organizations and forums evolved during this timeframe? What are

the potential ramifications of these foreign policy shifts for India's future influence in the global order? To address these inquiries, the paper utilizes a mixed-methods methodology, integrating qualitative reviews of diplomatic efforts and policy declarations with quantitative evaluations of economic and strategic alliances. The subsequent sections offer a thorough exploration of India's foreign policy across multiple domains and regions.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed methods design to examine India's foreign policy under the Modi administration. It combines qualitative analysis of official policy documents, speeches, and diplomatic initiatives with quantitative evaluation of economic indicators, trade statistics, and defense cooperation agreements. The paper also conducts a comparative analysis of India's foreign policy before and after 2014. Additionally, it includes case studies of significant diplomatic events and bilateral relationships. Data are drawn from government publications, reports by international organizations, academic research, and reputable media sources. The timeframe spans from 2014 to 2025, incorporating projections based on emerging trends and policy directions.

3. INDIA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES

The Modi government's foreign policy has navigated complex relationships with its neighbors. India's ties with Pakistan have been marked by initial overtures, like Prime Minister Modi's 2015 Lahore visit, followed by significant escalations due to terrorist attacks such as [Uri \(2016\)](#) and [Pulwama \(2019\)](#), prompting a more assertive Indian stance focused on counterterrorism and Pakistan's international isolation [Basrur \(2019\)](#). Relations with China have presented a dual dynamic of growing economic engagement alongside persistent border disputes, exemplified by the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, all while India pursues strategic autonomy and regional balance [Pant and Super \(2020\)](#). Conversely, India-Bangladesh relations have seen substantial improvement, highlighted by the resolution of border disputes and enhanced cooperation in connectivity, energy, and counterterrorism, though water sharing and migration remain areas for continued management [Chakma \(2019\)](#). India's relationship with Nepal has been more volatile, experiencing initial warmth from Modi's engagement and disaster relief, followed by friction over the 2015 Constitution and border blockade; recent efforts have aimed at restoring trust and cooperation [Jha \(2020\)](#). Under the Modi government, India's foreign policy towards its South Asian neighbors has emphasized economic cooperation, strategic partnerships, and managing regional influence. In Sri Lanka, India has prioritized economic assistance, particularly during the 2022 crisis, and aimed to counter China's growing presence [Wickremesekera \(2023\)](#). Bhutan has maintained its special relationship with India, with a focus on hydropower, economic aid, and a strategic alliance, all while India respects Bhutan's sovereignty [Stobdan \(2019\)](#). India-Maldives relations experienced a dip during President Yameen's term but have since rebounded significantly with enhanced defense, connectivity, and economic support [Xavier \(2021\)](#). The situation in Afghanistan has presented a challenge, requiring India to adapt its engagement strategy following the Taliban's 2021 takeover and reassess its interests amidst the evolving political landscape [Paliwal \(2022\)](#).

4. INDIA'S AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Modi government's engagement with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has been marked by a blend of initial optimism and subsequent challenges. Despite an early effort to revitalize SAARC, demonstrated by the invitation of SAARC leaders to his 2014 inauguration, India's progress within the bloc has been hampered by ongoing tensions with Pakistan [Bhattacharjee \(2021\)](#). Consequently, the Modi government has increasingly prioritized alternative sub-regional platforms like BIMSTEC. Simultaneously, India's relationship with ASEAN has been a cornerstone of its "Act East" policy, achieving the status of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with enhanced collaboration in connectivity, maritime security, and economic integration [Chaudhury \(2022\)](#).

5. INDIA AND MAJOR GLOBAL POWERS

Under the Modi government, India-US ties have grown substantially, marked by enhanced cooperation in defense, counterterrorism, and technology [Madan \(2020\)](#). The relationship has been defined by frequent high-level visits, strategic dialogues, and the creation of initiatives such as the Quad. India has preserved its traditional strategic partnership with Russia during Modi's tenure, even as it navigates the challenges posed by Russia's actions in Ukraine and the deepening Russia-China alignment [Kapoor \(2022\)](#). The partnership has focused on defense cooperation, energy links, and coordination within multilateral forums. The Modi government has also sought to deepen ties with the European Union and key European powers—France, Germany, and the United Kingdom—focusing on trade and investment, climate change cooperation, and strategic partnerships [Sachdeva \(2021\)](#). India-Japan relations have deepened considerably under Modi, with emphasis on strategic cooperation, infrastructure development, and economic partnership [Horimoto \(2020\)](#). The relationship has been elevated to a Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

6. INDIA'S AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND FORUMS

During the Modi administration, India has persistently advocated for reforms in the United Nations, with a strong emphasis on securing permanent membership in the UN Security Council. India has also embraced leadership roles in various UN organizations and initiatives, such as the International Solar Alliance [Kumar \(2021\)](#). India's participation in the G20 has intensified under the Modi government, highlighted by India's presidency of the G20 in 2023. The administration has utilized the G20 platform to champion its core priorities, including climate change, digital transformation, and inclusive growth [Saran \(2023\)](#). India has sustained its active involvement in BRICS during the Modi era, carefully balancing this engagement with its expanding relationships with Western powers. The primary areas of focus have included economic cooperation, counterterrorism, and the reform of global governance institutions [Pant and Saha \(2022\)](#). India became a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2017, exemplifying the Modi government's multi-aligned foreign policy strategy [Sachdeva \(2020\)](#). Since then, India's engagement with the SCO has primarily concentrated on regional security, counterterrorism efforts, and fostering economic cooperation. Under Modi's

leadership, this involvement has evolved to emphasize comprehensive collaboration across various sectors within the region. Concurrently, India's position in the World Trade Organization (WTO) during the Modi administration has been marked by assertiveness on key issues, including agricultural subsidies, e-commerce regulations, and the special and differential treatment provisions for developing countries [Chaisse and Chakraborty \(2019\)](#).

7. KEY THEMES IN MODI'S FOREIGN POLICY

The Neighborhood First doctrine has been a cornerstone of Modi's foreign policy, prioritizing closer engagement with neighboring states and the Indian Ocean region [Jaishankar \(2020\)](#). It aims to enhance regional connectivity, spur economic integration, and strengthen security cooperation. Building on Look East, Modi's Act East framework seeks to deepen India's engagement with Southeast and East Asian nations, focusing on expanding economic ties, strategic partnerships, and cultural linkages [Bajpai \(2019\)](#). The Modi government has pursued a strategy of strategic autonomy, balancing relations with major global powers while preserving decision-making independence. This stance is evident in India's positions on defense procurement, trade negotiations, and calls for reform of global governance [Hall \(2021\)](#). Economic considerations have played a prominent role in shaping India's foreign policy under Modi, with emphasis on attracting foreign investment, promoting Indian firms abroad, and leveraging economic partnerships for strategic gains [Chatterjee Miller and Sullivan de Estrada \(2020\)](#). The administration has also placed significant emphasis on engaging the Indian diaspora, viewing it as a source of soft power and economic opportunity, as reflected in Modi's high-profile diaspora events during foreign visits [Kapur \(2020\)](#). India has adopted a more proactive climate posture under Modi, launching initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance and setting ambitious renewable energy targets to balance development needs with environmental responsibilities [Dubash \(2019\)](#).

8. CHALLENGES AND CRITICISMS

The Modi government's foreign policy has encountered several obstacles and criticisms despite its successes. One significant challenge lies in its relationship with China, where balancing economic engagement with strategic competition has been difficult, especially given border tensions [Pant and Super \(2020\)](#). Furthermore, the absence of consistent dialogue with Pakistan has drawn criticism for potentially hindering regional cooperation [Basrur \(2019\)](#). India's pursuit of strategic autonomy, while simultaneously strengthening ties with various global powers, has occasionally presented policy quandaries [Hall \(2021\)](#). Additionally, some international observers have expressed concerns regarding the influence of India's domestic policies on its global standing [Ganguly \(2020\)](#). From an economic perspective, India's hesitation to participate in certain trade agreements, such as the RCEP, has been viewed by some as a barrier to its economic integration [Chaisse and Chakraborty \(2019\)](#).

9. FUTURE OUTLOOK AND IMPLICATIONS

India is expected to assume an increasingly significant position in global governance, advocating for reforms in international institutions and enhancing its contributions to global public goods [Kumar \(2021\)](#). Its strategic partnerships with nations such as the United States, Japan, and Australia are anticipated to strengthen,

possibly resulting in more structured security frameworks [Madan \(2020\)](#). In South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, India is likely to adopt a more assertive leadership stance, counterbalancing China's expanding influence [Jaishankar \(2020\)](#). Economic diplomacy will continue to be a central focus, aimed at drawing foreign investment, boosting exports, and ensuring stable energy access [Chatterjee Miller and Sullivan de Estrada \(2020\)](#). Additionally, India's involvement in multilateral forums is projected to grow, with an emphasis on influencing global norms and regulatory standards [Saran \(2023\)](#).

10. CONCLUSION

From 2014 to 2025, the Modi government has significantly reshaped India's global engagement through proactive diplomacy, a commitment to strategic autonomy, and a focus on economic partnerships, all geared towards positioning India as a major player in the evolving international landscape. This strategy has involved reinforcing relationships with crucial global partners, notably the United States, while simultaneously navigating complex regional dynamics, including those with neighbors like Pakistan and China. A cornerstone of Modi's approach has been the "neighborhood first" policy, aimed at fostering better relations across South Asia, evidenced by projects like the SAARC satellite and the promotion of state and city-level international collaborations (paradiplomacy)

India's foreign policy during this period demonstrates a distinct strategic foresight, striving to maintain its traditional strategic autonomy while simultaneously deepening economic and security ties worldwide. The administration's resolute stance on national security, marked by decisive actions against terrorism and internal extremism, clearly supports its overarching security objectives, which are intrinsically linked to its foreign policy endeavors [Chatterjee Miller and Sullivan de Estrada \(2020\)](#). Despite ongoing challenges, particularly in regional diplomacy, India's evolving global role underscores its ambition to make substantial contributions to global governance and uphold regional stability—factors that will be crucial in determining its future path. In essence, this era signifies India's transition from a more reserved international stance to one of assertive global engagement, utilizing both hard and soft power instruments to elevate its standing as a preeminent global actor.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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