

**INDIA, GLOBALIZATION AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: A STUDY
ABOUT INDIA'S RACE FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION IN THE
REALM OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE**

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ABSTRACT

Global Governance is a continuous process that transcend national boundaries to provide action for public good. This is done through a purposeful order of international organizations and mechanisms, policies and laws and strategies for global cooperation. India has been an important part of Rising Asia and has established itself as a competent authority to play in the big boys club of global governance. India after the end of World War II maintained itself as a part of Non-Aligned Movement and remained so during the Cold War. This greatly reduced the pace of India's engagement with the outer world. However, the end of Cold War era coincided with the Economic Liberalization in India and it helped India break free from the practice of Universalism of the Weak. In this paper we will revisit the multilateral strategies incorporated by India to embrace the new liberal global world order to voice itself not just as a rule taker but as global contributor. India has come a long way from being a mere dissident and its role in Climate Change Initiatives, Nuclear Non-Proliferation and International Trade manifest the fact that India has risen in the sphere of Global Governance. India with its principled past often finds itself in debate with its pragmatic present and such are the factors which will ultimately decide India's future in New World Order.

Keywords: Global Governance, Non-Alignment, Cold War, International Organizations, Global Cooperation, Economic Liberalization, Multilateral Strategies, Global Contributor.

I. INTRODUCTION

The new world order is in the making where developing countries are making their presence felt in the international arena. Global governance became an essential aspect of international dialogue in the aftermath of World War I and more so after the end of World War II. The end of World War II witnessed a substantive increase in international organizations and actors, whether they be governmental agencies or non-state actors like private firms, non-governmental organizations and epistemic communities.¹ However, Global Governance gained real momentum after the Cold War Era, which marked a geostrategic breakdown and a shift from the policy of “balance of powers”. Developing countries who have become a part of the global economy started questioning the power hold of industrialized nations about the international standards and policies, which only benefit their interests. At this time, like many other developing nations, India also began its journey in global politics.²

India was among the founding members of the United Nations that signed the Declaration by United Nations at Washington on 1st January 1942 and participated in the historic United Nations Conference on International Organizations at San Francisco from 25th April to 26th June 1945.³ India has strongly agreed with the principles and purposes of the UN. It has made significant contributions to implementing the goals of the Charter and the evolution of the UN's specialized programmes and agencies.

- **Historical Perspective**

India became part of the UN well before gaining independence and stood at the forefront during the United Nations tumultuous years of struggle against colonialism and apartheid. India co-sponsored the landmark 1960 Declaration of UN on Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which aimed at ending colonialism in all forms and manifestations and was elected as the first chair of the Decolonization Committee. India has thus led the concerns of developing countries in the global arena and cemented itself as an essential and integral part of the United Nations.

During the Cold War Era, India and other developing countries founded the Non-Aligned Movement. The goal was to stabilize the world order while maintaining peace and security by

¹ Bhagavan, Manu 2013, *India and the Quest for One World: The Peacemakers*, Palgrave MacMillan, New Delhi.

² Ikenberry, G. John 2005, ‘Power and Liberal Order: America’s Post-war World Order in Transition,’ *International Journal of the Asia-Pacific*, Vol. 5, pp. 133-152.

³ Mukherji, Rahul 2014, ‘India and Global Economic Governance: From Structural Conflict to Embedded Liberalism,’ *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 460-466.

peaceful political intervention.⁴ However, the creation of the USSR attracted India's interests and created confusion among smaller members, which ultimately drifted to either US or USSR. However, when the USSR collapsed, India's new Economic Policy inclined towards the United States and this created a grey area about India's stand on NAM. Nevertheless, if we analyze this change in inclination, we can observe that India avoided its association with the "Universalism of the Weak" policy.⁵ India understood that the policies of NAM would reduce it to a mere dissident and not a positive contributor. Therefore, while maintaining its neutrality, India made slight changes in its international policies to meet the nation's interests.

The fall of the USSR also marked a new beginning for India in the realm of global cooperation. The end of the Cold War coincided with India's Economic Liberalization, and it helped India set foot in the global economic market for a new journey in trade and commerce, which would become the second most crucial element of global governance after peace and security.⁶

II. INDIA'S POSITION IN CONTEMPORARY TURMOIL

Post Second World War, a new liberal Global World Order was made possible because of the United States dominant stance against fascists and communists. India benefitted greatly from this new liberal world order while maintaining its reservation against complete westernization.⁷

The decision-makers of that time understood that India had to maintain some distance from the NAM protocols to serve the nation's interest better. Further, during the 1962 war with china, nations like Ghana and Egypt took an anti-India stance, and during the wars of 1965 and 1971, nations like Indonesia and Egypt supported Pakistan. This made India lose even more trust in the NAM's objectives and forced it to tread the road to global governance alone. Nevertheless, although risky, the decision to proactively bring India's interest before the unipolar world was a blessing in disguise. The modernization of the Indian Armed Forces and Economic Reforms of 1991 was not viewed as "threatening in nature" unlike Russia and China.

However, the unipolar world order that the US created paved the way for new players to join the race for global dominance and thus began the rise of two new world powers: India and China.⁸ The powerhouse of economic growth has now shifted to Asia, and India and China are the biggest contenders. In theory, this sounds like an outstanding achievement. However, in reality,

⁴ Dash, Kishore C. 2012, 'The Dynamics of South Asian Regionalism,' in Mark Beeson and Richard Stubbs (eds.) Routledge Handbook of Asian Regionalism, Routledge, London, pp. 406-419.

⁵ Ikenberry, G. John 2005, 'Power and Liberal Order: America's Post-war World Order in Transition,' International Journal of the Asia-Pacific, Vol. 5, pp. 133-152.

⁶ Malone, D. M., & Chaturvedy, R. (2009), Impact of India's economy on its foreign policy since independence.

⁷ Pant, Harsh V. 2016. Indian Foreign Policy: An Overview. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

⁸ Posen, Barry R. 2009, 'Emerging Multi-polarity: Why should we care?', Current History, Vol. 108, No. 721, pp. 347-352.

the stakes are high as ever because the competition is now with a direct neighbour who has always been hostile towards India's growth.

The problem with China is twofold: firstly, if China ever becomes the centre for global order, given China's pompous attitude in the past years towards other nations, the sanctity of Global Governance would change from what it is now, and secondly, China's approach towards Global Governance would not be as generous as of the US, given its current trade and commerce practises.⁹ China would use such dominance to the detriment of other countries and, in this case, especially India. This detestation is conspicuous because China has time and again blocked India's entry into the "Nuclear Supply Group" and "United Nations Security Council". Also, there is a growing resistance towards the neo-liberal order of globalization, not just by developing nations but by the flag bearers of globalization themselves. United States' "neo-mercantilism" approach under President Donald Trump administration and the United Kingdom's decision to move out of the European Union are clear signs that the liberal order is at stake and its future is uncertain.¹⁰

This is the biggest problem for India as India has significantly benefitted from this liberal order while maintaining the stand that the current Global Governance arrangements are not sufficient for its interest and demands. Even before the Coronavirus Pandemic, India had been at crossroads with its projected Economic Growth. The 1991 Economic Reforms have slowed significantly in the past years. With all the path-breaking achievements in the economic sector, a large sum of India's population remains unaffected by such growth and development. The rise in Ultra-Nationalism and petty political disputes on religion and region continue to cast a shadow over India's support for liberal global order. The international liberal community stands to lose if India continues its material building capacity by sacrificing its liberal character or unrest within the nation fueled by contentious politics continues to interfere with India's growth. All such amendments would require more extensive commitments from New Delhi to boost the nation's interest rather than just being used as a source to balance power against China.

III. CHALLENGES FOR RISING INDIA

The success of any nation ultimately depends on the quality of its institutions. Like many smaller countries, India also achieved success in its initial phase of growth and development with the simplest of changes in its policies. However, due to its initial phase of development, scarce

⁹ Kliengibiel, Stephen, 2016, 'Global Problem-Solving Approaches: The Crucial Rise of China and the Group of Rising Powers,' *Rising Powers Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 33-41.

¹⁰Ruggie, John Gerard, 2004, 'American Exceptionalism, Exemptionalism and Global Governance,' in Michael Ignatieff (ed.) *American Exceptionalism and Human Rights*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, pp. 304-338.

resource and underdeveloped institutions did not affect the outcome of growth. However, after more than 25 years of the Indian Economic Reforms, it is time to analyze the inefficiencies within the nation. We can discuss how India should play a more prominent role in Global Governance, but ultimately it all depends on the nation's development at the domestic level.

The biggest problem that we face today is the Economic slowdown. Even if we acknowledge the fact that the coronavirus pandemic slowed down the international trade process all around the world, we cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that India's policies such as Higher Import Tariffs, Localisation Requirements, Poor Export and insufficient Domestic Trade Infrastructure continue to be a hindrance in India's growth. Another barrier for India to be a Global Power is its Defence Expenditure.¹¹ It continues to slow down due to a slow economy. Failing planned expenditures for modernization of the defence infrastructure due to insufficient funds interferes with India's reach and ability to control matters beyond its borders, which are a must for a nation to become a Global Power. The relentless obsession for indigenizing Defence Production is not the correct solution. The argument favouring reduced defence import is somewhat based on a sentimental value than calculated rationales. Defence production needs the scale and size of an excellent economy to produce defence goods that can compete in the modern era. Instead, India should import the modern military equipment as needed to better its defence structure and instead develop subsystems and technologies that can be integrated into the global supply chain.

Another issue for India is its recently declined relations with its neighbourhood. India has self-isolated itself from two of the super-regionalbodies, viz. **Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**.¹² However, for whatever strategic reasons may be, this isolation only weakens its dominance over the Asiatic region. India needs to engage more with its neighbours and their development to achieve the status of Global Power it aspires. China's chequebook diplomacy with Sri Lanka, border issues with Nepal and ideological strain with Bangladesh due to NRC continue to shift India's focus from becoming a Global Contributor to managing and settling petty scores with its neighbours.

Another issue that hinders India's path to Global influence is the rise of China. With growing military advancements, the One Belt One Road initiative, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and China's Global Trade contribution are some of the biggest challenges that India needs to address actively.¹³ The only counterpart of India in the South Asian region is China. The recent

¹¹ <https://theprint.in/opinion/if-india-keeps-diluting-its-liberal-character-the-west-will-be-a-less-eager-partner/506160/>

¹² Lall, M. (2008). India's new foreign policy. The journey from moral non-alignment to the nuclear deal. In M. Lall (Ed.), *The geopolitics of energy in South Asia*. Singapore: ISEAS.

¹³ Mohan, C. Raja, 2010, 'Rising India: Partner in Shaping the Global Commons,' *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 133-148.

interest of China in the Indo-Pacific region, which is controlled by India as a securities and strategic provider, also poses a direct threat for India.

Another issue India faces is the growing unemployment rate, which hampers India's growth potential at the global level. For a very long time, the private sector in India remained a neglected or, to be precise, unregulated sector. Very few initiatives were taken to attract the business of Multi-National Companies and foreign investments. This resulted in poor employment opportunities. India's ease of doing business may have improved over the past years but conducting the business remains a tough job despite such improvements. A good amount of MNC's has closed their businesses in India due to irregular and hasty policies, which the government keeps on changing irrationally from time to time. Also, a large part of the Indian population remains unaffected by the policies and initiatives that the government take for their upliftment. This is because India's "enforcement" has remained a grey area of its policy implementation. No amount of initiatives and policies could suffice the target audience if there is a lack of unawareness, implementation and enforcement. "Make in India", a scheme like many other catchy schemes, has failed to achieve the desired goal because of poor implementation and heavy reliance on foreign capital. Even the organizations that invested in India with the "Make in India" launch are now uncertain about their future.

The issue lies in the fact that India's approach towards development is primarily based on public appeasement rather than a rational, calculated and sector-specific approach. This approach dilutes the desired effect, and the overall growth varies marginally or remains entirely unaffected, if not deteriorated. The biggest problem is that these schemes try to cover many sectors, which only does more harm than good. Thus, India needs to develop better small-scale policies for more significant development with realistic projections rather than announcing schemes with catchy names and overestimated projections.

India has been a signatory of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as adopted by the United Nations in 1948, but unlike the USA, it is not in the business of promoting democracy and human rights. This lies in the fact that India believes heavily in state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal matters of a country. India, unlike the USA, advocates for UN-approved conflict resolution rather than using its military force. However, this record of not being a big promoter of democracy and human rights has often landed India in ideological conflict with its western allies.¹⁴

In the context of Global contribution, India's aspiration to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council is the significant change India needs to become a Global

¹⁴ Sidhu, WPS, Mehta, Pratap Bhanu and Jones Bruce, 2013, 'A Hesitant Rule Shaper' in (eds.) Shaping the Emerging World: India and the Multilateral Order, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC, pp. 1-19.

Contributor. However, India's demand for a permanent seat has always been vetoed by China. Also, India's demand to be part of the Nuclear Suppliers Group was blocked by China. Therefore, it is clear that to control China, India needs to strengthen its ties with its neighbours to reduce China's influence over them. India also needs to be a promoter and practitioner of the liberal order to have continued support from its western allies, which has lately declined due to recent actions from the government, which on a global scale are not viewed as “democratic in nature”.¹⁵

IV. BETWEEN A PRINCIPLED PAST AND PRAGMATIC FUTURE: A WAY FORWARD FOR INDIA

India has time and again proved its worth in Liberal Global Order with its Plural, Liberal and Democratic approach when dealing with global issues. India's Climate Change Initiatives, Demand for UNSC Permanent Seat and its power to be a part of the NSG are clear signs of a mighty nation. However, India sometimes contradicts its approach towards a pragmatic future when it upholds regional culturalism over international interests.¹⁶ Thus, it leads to a doubt in the Western allies about India's inclination. The West, which wants India to play a significant role in Global Politics, finds itself in doubt when it sees India's inclination towards a conservative approach while handling its domestic issues. New Delhi's policies with International Trade, Religious Freedom and Management of Data only reminds the world about India's minor regional challenges than its growing strengths.

The world is undoubtedly adrift today with the rise of a new Multipolar World Order, with Asia being the centre of changing dimensions in the new order. In India's context, the issues are different from that of the great powers of the past. Even with its remarkable economic growth, India continues to fight its age-old problem of rising poverty and unemployment. While India has maintained its reluctance to accept the liberal global order in its full embrace, it is open to strengthening global ties. Its recent partnership with Japan on Asia-Africa Growth Corridor is a clear example of such commitment. India is slowly adopting the policy of multilateralism. It is standing up for a change in the new world order and forming ties with like-minded countries for holistic development. However, multilateralism is a dying prospect, which was evident from the poor collaboration between the countries during the pandemic of Covid-19. Nevertheless, this could be an opportunity for India to resuscitate multilateralism and play a more significant role

¹⁵ Press Trust of India, 2016, 'India decries “undemocratic” Global Governance,' 26 April, The Economic Times, <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-decries-undemocratic-global-governance/articleshow/51986885.cms>.

¹⁶ Pant, Harsh V. 2016. Indian Foreign Policy: An Overview. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

by joining forces with its neighbouring countries and forming a powerhouse of production to counter China.¹⁷

The agendas for multilateralism are changing in the new world order. The pandemic has put “Health” followed by “Digitalization” as the primary agenda for almost all the nations across the globe.¹⁸ There is a new international agenda in the making that is much greener, more health-conscious and much more digital. There is a clear need to shift focus from old demands while forming ties that coordinate better and more efficiently in emergencies. The new global agendas also encompass the problems magnified during the Covid-19, like the food crisis and sustainable agriculture. Digitalization is another horizon of global governance which needs to be addressed with utmost caution. The pandemic has made digitalization the new medium of communication and a tool for conducting day to day business. However, when it comes to technological developments, the nations also have to ensure that there is no privacy violation of the users and also such advancements are not used as tools of destruction. All these issues require as much attention as Climate Change Initiatives or The UN Reforms. The current world order is based on the presumption that the US is the global power that affects changes all around the globe. However, this notion of power balance is changing with the rise of Germany, Japan, India and China.¹⁹

With the rise of new powers, India is willing to collaborate with other nations to change the dimensions of the frozen world order after World War II.

India's aspiration to play a meaningful role in Global Politics is not based on changing the world order but on the idea of accommodating the rising powers. India does not want to play on interventionism and unilateral aggression, unlike the United States. Instead, India wants to become a leading power in the global forum. India has acted with remarkable self-restraint when it comes to conflict with other nations, especially Pakistan. This methodology has been well-received globally, with everybody praising India for its limited use of hard power. However, with the new challenges in the international arena, a more power centric approach would be needed if India wants to move out from the cage of being a mere complainant. With India, in the process of readjusting its foreign policies, its relations with the NAM countries proved helpful rather than creating an obstacle. The apparatus of NAM with its ideology non-doctrinal, anti-hegemonic and ability to work multilaterally fits well with India's aspiration to become a balancer of power between the North and South. However, like any other international

¹⁷ <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/resuscitating-multilateralism-with-indias-help/article31521059.ece>

¹⁸ Jaishankar, S. India Global Forum, Republic TV. 2021, 30 June.

¹⁹ Xuotong, Yan 2011, ‘From a Unipolar to a Bipolar World System: The Future of the Global Power Dynamic,’ 30 December, The Global Times. <http://carnegietsinghua.org/2011/12/30/from-unipolar-to-bipolar-superpower-system-future-of-global-power-dynamic-pub-47688>.

organization, NAM also needs to reform to better address the new challenges in the international sphere.

India vision of global economic cooperation became a reality in the form of the G-20. India still maintains that multilateral institutions like the UN, World Bank and IMF are necessary to solve world problems more holistically, but these institutions need the long due overhauling to accommodate the new rising powers.²⁰ The legitimacy and authority of the United Nations Security Council have eroded since the Pax-Americana 1991, and for this very reason, India demands a permanent seat and reform of the UNSC so that the role and function of the UN can be strengthened. However, Russia and China, also a part of BRICS, are not keen on any further expansion of the Security Council, although they agree to bring the necessary reform. As a result, India has formed G4 along with Brazil, Germany and Japan to push the idea of expansion of the Security Council. Therefore, India has started to engage more in informal international organisations like G8+5 (Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa), ASEAN, SCO, IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) and G6 (Australia, Brazil, India, Japan, the USA and European Union) to leverage such a position to revamp the Security Council and increase its international profile.²¹

Thus, India is moving in the right direction of becoming a better Global power than its counterparts. However, India suffers from two significant constraints in its rise to great power. Firstly, India will have to look within its Domestic Infrastructure and improve Social and Economic Inequality, which projects India as a weak nation despite achieving significant economic and technological milestones. Recurring incidences of caste and religion-based violence puts India in polarity with its Western Allies, who uphold the Right of Freedom of Speech and Expression to its maximum limit. With an increasing population, India needs to address the lack of educational institutions and infrastructure to provide employment. The irregular hiring process at government offices, the neglected private sector, and complex and challenging business policies hamper India's growth and development. Building Educational Institutions, making flexible laws to attract Foreign Investments, improving trade relations is the key to India's locked future of becoming a global contributor.

Secondly, India's recognition as a great power and to play that role in the global arena depends largely on its capacity to secure "regional peace".²² Unfortunately, India has failed to achieve

²⁰ Shahi, D.S. (2014). India in the emerging world order: A status quo power or a revisionist force? Shifting power/critical perspective on emerging economics. Transnational Institute.

²¹ Mohan, C.R. (2009). The re-making of Indian foreign policy: Ending the marginalization of international relations Community. *International Studies*, 46(1-2), 147-163.

²² Mukherjee, B. (2015, 11 September). India's multilateral engagements in her quest to strengthen international peace and security.

this objective due to long history of resistance against Pakistan, border clashes with China and its distrust in the South Asian countries about their commitment to accept India as their representative. India needs to open bilateral talks with its neighbours regarding long-neglected issues and compromise on smaller issues for the greater good. India cannot succeed globally if it is in a constant altercation with its neighbours. Unlike other rising powers, India is not trying to become a “revisionist power” that wants to change the entire system; instead, it aims to become an “accommodationist power” which is open to sharing the platform with like-minded countries.²³

India has to operate sensibly from within and continue to strengthen rule-based multilateral organizations for global governance if it wants an equal share at the table. Also, India needs to continue integrating its NAM legacy and Nehruvian-Ghadian Moralism (despite its decline) in its foreign policy and restraint on a show of hard power, if it wants to remain as a “responsible power” in the eyes of its western allies. India should continue to be the bridge that balances the north with the south.²⁴With changing dimensions of international agendas, what the future holds for India in its race to become a global power hugely depends on whether India continues to override itself with its past principles or evolve with time and take steps towards building a more pragmatic future.

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²³ Woods, N., Betts, A., Prantl, J., & Devi, S. (2013) Transforming global governance for the 21st century New York, NY: UNDP Human Development Report Office.

²⁴ Wulf, H. (2014). Is India fit for a role in global governance? The predicament of fragile domestic structure and institutions, Germany: Centre for Global Cooperation Research.

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