

## Research Design

### Title:

Transnational Indians: A Comparative Discourse on Indians in Two Global Cities: Dubai & London ✓

### Research Statement:

The research will focus on the Indian diaspora in Dubai and London and will be a comparative analysis on how these communities ~~might~~ assimilate and create their distinct identities. Moreover, it will identify and analyse migration and naturalisation policies of both countries and how it can facilitate in becoming a citizen. The study will mainly revolve around two areas: identity and citizenship. ]

### Statement of Purpose:

The aim of this research is to primarily provide an insight into the ways in which Indian diasporas are formed in cities like Dubai and London. The research will try to understand what factors are at play in shaping the identities of Indians living away from their homeland. Moreover, it will look into the underlying reasons of migrations of Indians and the processes of naturalisation and how it can impact their relationship with their host country and how this can in the future impact their relationship with India as a whole. *of study* *Tool long sentence!*

### Justification for qualitative research:

Majority of the research will require qualitative data. Therefore, I will be conducting qualitative research in order to answer my research questions. Nevertheless, for certain questions, I will be interpreting statistics and graphs, therefore it will <sup>be</sup> quantitative. Qualitative data methods like, interviews, surveys and social and participant observations will be highly beneficial for the extraction of data. The most significant primary data collection will come from interviews in my opinion, as they will provide me with in-depth answers to questions pertaining to naturalisation, citizenship policies and the Indian cultural identity, and how the former might alter the latter. Moreover, through interviewing individuals between the age group of 18-45, I will be able to get different perspectives on the issue, since my key informants will be academics, lawyers, and also the young expat community in Dubai. In order to gather data for the Indian diaspora in London, I will also conduct interviews with academics, lawyers (immigration), as well as young British Indians in order to gauge how their identity is shaped. The data will be extracted from both secondary and primary sources, the one's that I have listed above are part of the primary data. On the other hand, secondary data will be derived from governmental reports, official legal documents from the Indian consulate on the aspect of naturalisation and citizenship, of which some are available online, whilst for others I would have to go to the consulate and collect information for my study, in addition to academic sources. Overall, in regards to this research, it is essential to have qualitative data in order to gain complete knowledge about the topic. ✓

**Research Questions:**

1. How and to what extent do the Indian diasporas in each city reproduce their cultural identities (in particular: religion; gender relations and marriage patterns)?

Types of Data	Sources of Secondary Data	Methods to Collect Primary Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic sources relating to the 'Indian identity' perceived by the Indian diaspora by Sahoo Ajaya Kumar, Bhiku Parekh, Gurharpal Singh and Steven Vertovec</li> <li>• Interview data that is found in one of the academic sources by Judith Frübing, provides an insight into the types of question I could potentially ask my key informants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with academics and people of the Indian diaspora (between the age of 18-45)</li> <li>• Surveys that will address various cultural aspects like language, religion, gender relations (in order to gauge how culture is reproduced in the diaspora)</li> <li>• Participant observation (attending meetings and visiting Indian diaspora neighbourhoods in Dubai), as well as attending weddings in London</li> </ul>

The table above briefly illustrates the types of data alongside the methods that will be used to collect the data, in the aim of answering the question. To begin with, this question addresses the Indian cultural identity, particularly, gender relations and marriage patterns, owing to the complexity of the Indian culture. In regards to source of secondary data, I will be using academic sources that are related to identity and how it is perceived by the Indian diaspora. The answer can be found in the works of scholars like Sahoo Ajaya Kumar and Bhiku Parekh who have works relating to the Indian diaspora identity. Moreover, a master's level thesis by Judith Frübing, will provide me with a framework and guidelines to design my very own questions for future interviews. Next, in terms of primary data collection, interviews will be conducted, mainly focusing on a specific social class: middle and upper-middle class. This is due to the fact that academics, officials like lawyers will most probably come from this particular socio-economic background. Moreover, the individuals who will be interviewed will be more aware about abstract concepts like identity and diaspora formation. On the other hand, the Indian youth from the expat community in Dubai and the British Indian youth will provide me with personal insights and experiences in what makes them who they are, an individual of Indian origin, living outside their country of origin. My aim is to get a clear picture about what constitutes as an Indian diaspora identity, particularly through understanding religion, gender relations and marriage and how they contribute to the creation of the identity. In terms of survey, it will be designed as a simple questionnaire, addressing identity questions like: which part of India are you from? Were you born outside India? Finally, participant observation will provide me with a first-hand experience with the diaspora. It will be an opportunity for me, as the researcher to observe unusual aspects that I might have not been exposed to.

2. How can the acquirement of a foreign citizenship and/or possession of Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card impact the perception of an Indian identity?

Types of Data	Sources of Secondary Data	Methods to Collect Primary Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative and Quantitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official documents, reports from the Indian consulate, as well as information that is provided on <a href="http://www.mea.gov.in/">www.mea.gov.in/</a> (Ministry of External Affairs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with academics and people of the Indian diaspora (between the age of 18-45)</li> <li>Interviews with officials (immigration lawyers) and academics who are specialised in the area of immigration and citizenship studies</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic sources relating to the 'Indian identity', naturalisation and citizenship processes, along with globalisation as a factor that ties the three aspects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Surveys that will address the question of identity, for instance, do you possess a citizenship other than the one from your home country? If so, how do you think this impacts your identity and also mobility?</li> </ul>

In essence, this question is interrelated to question one and the composition of the Indian identity. However, this question explores two aspects that can potentially impact the identity, these being, the acquirement of foreign citizenship or OCI card and how this can affect the relationship between India and its host nation. I will be using official documents, the source of origin will be from the Indian consulate in Dubai and London (one or the other, depending on the accessibility). As these documents will be coming from verified sources, the validity of the data will be accurate. Moreover, the consulate will know the actors and their interests, hence making it feasible for me, as the researcher. Nevertheless, there might be limitations as some documents could possibly be protected and unavailable to the public, on the other hand academic sources might be more accessible. The sources of secondary data will come from official documents and reports located in the official Indian government agency website: [www.mea.gov.in](http://www.mea.gov.in) (Ministry of External Affairs) that has official documents on the topic of 'Overseas Citizenship of India Scheme'. Moreover, the website also has a relevant document that ties citizenship and identity together, 'Vice President's speech at the Oxford centre for Islamic Studies on "Identity and Citizenship: An Indian Perspective"'. My presumption is that majority of the data will be qualitative, however there might statistics available in the consulate, hence it will be quantitative. Academic works by prominent scholars like Neha Vora and J.Sater address issues of citizenship and perception of identity, they also provide statistics that will be interpreted and analysed qualitatively. In regards to primary data collection, interviews and surveys (with slightly different questions like: do you possess a foreign citizenship and if so how does that alter your identity?) will be conducted in a similar light as the previous question.

### 3. What is the process of naturalisation in both, the UAE and the UK?

Types of Data	Sources of Secondary Data	Methods to Collect Primary Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official documents, reports from the Indian consulate ✓</li> <li>Official publications from governmental websites (both the UAE and the UK: <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>), ✓</li> <li>Legal documents from consulates that delineates the process ✓</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with academics and people of the Indian diaspora (between the age of 18-45), the former will enhance my understanding, whilst the latter will provide me with personal rhetoric ✓</li> <li>Interviews with immigration lawyers in order to understand the procedures ✓</li> <li>Site visit to General Directorate of Residency and Foreign Affairs, Dubai ✓</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative and Quantitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic sources relating to the 'naturalisation' and 'citizenship' processes ✓</li> <li>Academic working papers and briefings on the topic of naturalisation and citizenship ✓</li> </ul>	

This question specifically revolves around processes of naturalisation in respective countries. The secondary data that will be derived from the government, like naturalisation and citizenship policies which will provide me with an insight into the procedures behind naturalisation. In terms of academic sources, Neha Vora's work will be used extensively as it addresses the issue. Moreover, working papers by 'The Migration Observatory' at the University of Oxford and briefing by the 'Middle East Centre' at the LSE, will provide me with answers in regards to the process of naturalisation in respective nations. Next, primary data will be collected from interviews that will be conducted with immigration lawyers, as well as individuals who have been naturalised (in the case of UK, as it is not possible in the UAE for Indians; I will talk to lawyers and ask them why it is not possible for them to do so). Nevertheless, there might be some discrepancies between officials and official documents and reality, as individuals who will be recounting their experiences might possibly convey a different story. I also intend to visit the General Directorate of Residency and Foreign Affairs, hoping to find more information on the process of naturalisation (so far, the UAE governmental websites have limited information on the topic). Overall, this question addresses the issues associated with the process of naturalisation and how in one nation, the UK, it is possible for an Indian to be naturalised, as opposed to the case in the UAE.

4. How can the presence of an Indian diaspora in the UAE and UK transform the bilateral relations in respective host nations?

Types of Data	Sources of Secondary Data	Methods to Collect Primary Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official reports from governments and consulate, <a href="http://www.mea.gov.in">www.mea.gov.in</a>, <a href="http://www.mofa.gov.ae">www.mofa.gov.ae</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interviews with officials, academics and business executives (to explain bi-lateral relations pertaining to economic and political)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative and quantitative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic sources that provide an insight into the bi-lateral relations between the UAE and India; UK and India</li> </ul>	

Without a doubt, the presence of an Indian diaspora in both nations will account to some form of bi-lateral relations. The relationship between India and the UAE is more economical, rather than political, owing to the fact that there is no room for political activism in the nation. On the other hand, in the UK, the Indian diaspora account to both political and economic relations with their host nation. Through official reports derived from the Ministry of External Affairs, I will be able to understand the contemporary bi-lateral between India and the two host nations, the UAE and the UK. Moreover, the Indian Embassy in the UAE website contains a brief section on bi-lateral relations. There are also academic sources that address bilateral relations between nations. M.J.H Javed's article on "British Interests in a 'Regionalised' South Asia", will shed light on the existing programmes between both nations and provides innovative strategies in order to sustain the ties. Conversely, in regards to UAE-India relations, a scholarly source, "Persian Gulf 2014: India's Relations with the Region", edited by P.R. Kumaraswamy, will be analysed. The secondary academic sources have numerical data and I will analyse them qualitatively, interpreting the findings. Next, in terms of primary data, I will be conducting interviews with academics, business executives as well as officials in order to comprehend the relations between India and the host nations of the Indian diaspora. Hopefully, through these interviews I can understand how successful these relations are and whether they are sustainable.

#### Preliminary Research:

In terms of preliminary research for my topic, I have spoken to an academic from AUD, Professor. Jigar Jogia, who is of British Indian descent. I had a brief informal interview with him and asked him questions pertaining to the Indian identity. I believe that he will be one of my key informants, given the fact that he is an academic who is well-versed. Moreover, he provided me with details to Professor. Sunil Khilnani, who is also the Director of the India Institute at the King's College London, who will possibly help me with understanding the concept of the Indian identity and diaspora. I have also located [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk) website that addresses the process of naturalisation in the UK. On the other hand, I have been looking for information on UAE governmental websites, however, there is little or no information on the issue of naturalisation, hence I will have to make site visits and contact immigration lawyers.

Excellent!

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