



# ANALYSING INDIA'S SOFT POWER CAPABILITIES IN NORTH AMERICA

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## ABSTRACT

The research paper with the title “Analysing India’s soft power capabilities in North America helps to explore the evaluation of the influence of India’s soft power in North America and specifically through the comparative analysis between two major giants of the continent the United States and Canada. It explores various facts of India’s soft power showcasing cultural, diplomatic, and economic realms. It talks about that how the India diaspora has been helpful in North American countries. This analysis provides complete evaluation on the impact of Indian cultural exports, immigration, diplomatic relations and economic collaborations on shaping perceptions of the people and creating goodwill in the United States and Canada. The main aim is to provide insight into the complex dynamics of India’s soft power strategy in North America and its implications on the bilateral relationships with these significant nations by evaluating India’s cultural appeal diplomatic engagements and economic collaborations

**Keywords:** Soft Power, analysis, immigration, bilateral, economic, ethnicity, religious, culture, diplomatic, migration, geography, entrepreneurship and relations.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 WHAT IS SOFT POWER

From a long time, dominance and power has played vital role in influencing the decision of a state or a person it was mostly done through the economic and military power of a state, using means such military and economic power to influence the decision is called hard power which was very popular before the World War II. In modern times where all the countries focus more on maintaining diplomatic relations and usually try to avoid war. Although countries try to avoid war but still work on creating influence in other states through other means like promoting their culture, food ethnicity. This is called soft power. Soft power is term which was coined by Joseph Nye according to him a “it is a nation’s ability to influence others Through intangible resources like culture, values, and institutions. India, with its rich history, Diverse traditions, and vibrant democracy, seeks to leverage this soft power to bolster its Global standing”

### 1.2 SOFT POWER VS HARD POWER

Hard power evokes compelled action, whereas soft power induces voluntary action. Furthermore, Joseph Nye notes that compulsion leads to conflict and voluntariness to consent, which explains why soft power solutions tend to last longer than hard power solutions. For example, the repressive measures imposed on Germany after WWI were in part responsible for another World War, whereas the soft power used to construct the European Union has resulted in 70 years of Europe-wide peace. Borders between hard and soft power can blur. Armed forces may be pressed into service to participate in humanitarian assistance and community relations activities.

### 1.3 TYPES OF SOFT POWER

Soft power can be further classified into different types such as cultural, political values and foreign policy

**Cultural:** By the sharing of ideas, values, traditions, and objects of cultural significance, cultural soft power builds relationships, promotes socio-cultural cooperation, and advances a range of objectives, including national agendas. This approach is very flexible enough to work with a variety of organizations, including governmental agencies, commercial businesses, and civil society groups, and it transcends both national and local

boundaries. Its main goal is to use these cultural engagements and discourse to promote the understanding respect and cooperation across the nations and communities. Cultural soft power is essential in building of relationships and shaping international discourse through channels including artistic exchanges, educational initiatives, and intercultural projects

**Political values:** Encouraging the political values like democracy and human rights can be used as a soft power tactic to entice foreigners with a positive national image. Collaboration and imitation are encouraged when these ideals are consistently upheld. However, using soft power successfully requires both practicing what is recommended and communicating well.

**Foreign policy:** Using means such as diplomatic cultural, and ideological tools to influence other countries' opinions to promote goodwill, and change views without using force or coercion is known as soft power in foreign policy. In order to win the support, it focuses on highlighting on how appealing a nation's principles, laws, and culture are on a global scale. This approach can be used as persuasion rather than force to build long-lasting connections, promote cooperation, and advance national goals. Maintaining consistency, credibility, and a sincere commitment to shared ideals such as democracy, human rights, and economic development are essential for the effective application of soft power in foreign policy. Countries can exercise influence and strengthen their standing in the international arena by utilizing international partnerships, cultural exchanges, and strategic communication.

## 2. HISTORY AND CULTURAL

### 2.1 GEOGRAPHY OF NORTH AMERICA

North America, the third-largest continent, extends from the tiny Aleutian Islands in the northwest to the Isthmus of Panama in the south. The continent includes the enormous island of Greenland in the northeast and the small island countries and territories that dot the Caribbean Sea and western North Atlantic. In the far north, the continent stretches halfway around the world, from Greenland to the Aleutians. But at Panama's narrowest part, the continent is just 50 kilometres (31 miles) across. North America's physical geography, environment and resources, and human geography can be considered separately. North America can be divided into five physical regions: the mountainous west, the Great Plains, the Canadian Shield, the varied eastern region, and the Caribbean. Mexico and Central America's western coast are connected to the mountainous west, while its lowlands and coastal plains extend into the eastern region. Within these regions are all the major types of biomes in the world. A biome is a community of animals and plants spreading over an extensive area with a relatively uniform climate. Some diverse biomes represented in North America include desert, grassland, tundra, and coral reefs. The Great Plains of an enormous tract of level fertile territory that stretches out from Canada to Mexico while also dominating the central region of North America known as the "breadbasket" of North America, this area can be considered a key centre for agriculture producing commodities including soybeans, corn, and wheat. The majestic spine of the Rocky Mountains, which reaches from Alaska to New Mexico to the west also provides amazing scenery and outdoor activities. The Pacific Coastal region, which is located alongside the continent's western coast can be distinguished by its rocky beaches, mild rainforests and lush valleys. Due to its exceptional natural beauty and temperate climate this region also draws travellers and outdoor lovers from all over the world. On the other hand, the eastern coast features a more diverse terrain, which includes the Appalachian Mountains.

### 2.2 EUROPEAN MIGRATION

The migrations of the European settlers have shaped the history of North America which is a tale of discovery, conquest, colonization, and cultural interchange. The trip of Christopher Columbus in 1492 marked the beginning of European exploration and colonization which is when the story began in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. With expeditions commanded by Hernán Cortés in Mexico and Francisco Pizarro in Peru, Spain rapidly established authority in the area and built many colonial empires. At the same time adventurers from France and England also came to North America in search of riches; Jacques Cartier, for example, explored Canada, and John Cabot claimed portions of modern-day Newfoundland. The foundation for a centuries-long struggle for dominance and influence throughout the continent was laid by these early expeditions. European nations involved with a bloody struggle for economic domination and territory expansion in North America throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century. While the French made claims to Canada and the Mississippi Valley, the Spanish built permanent colonies in Florida, the Southwest, and California. But in the end, the English became the dominant force, founding Jamestown as the first prosperous permanent colony in 1607. The Mayflower Pilgrims' arrival in 1620 cemented the English presence in the area and cleared the way for the founding of the Plymouth Colony. European immigration to North America very rapidly increased in the 18<sup>th</sup> century due to a number of causes, including political unrest, economic opportunity, and religious persecution. The number of immigrants to the British colonies also increased dramatically as people from Germany, England, Scotland, and Ireland looked for fresh starts in the New World. As waves of settlers advanced west, they uprooted native populations and altered the topography. While Spanish dominance declined as their colonial possessions faced pressures from the outside world and indigenous opposition, the French also kept growing, especially in the fur trade North America was going through a major change by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, driven by the Industrial Revolution and waves of European immigration. In quest of economic opportunity and a better life, millions of Europeans—including Italians, Poles, Russians, and Scandinavians—came to the United States and Canada. The enormous wave of immigration accelerated the growth of agriculture, industry, and cities, creating the framework for the modern nation-states of North America. But as European invaders continued to encroach on indigenous peoples' traditional territories, this time also saw their marginalization and displacement. Though the lesser scale than in preceding centuries, more waves of the European migration had arrived in North America during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Significant migratory flows can be seen which were caused by World Wars I and II as the displaced people and refugees sought safety in North America. Following these wars, the US and Canada also rose to popularity as global superpowers with significant sway over international affairs. The America was gradually decolonized as a result of the European colonial powers' gradual surrendering of authority over their foreign territories. North America has a very diversified population which can be seen with a very rich cultural tapestry and complex social dynamics that are all direct results of European emigration. Centuries of interaction between European colonists, indigenous peoples, and following waves of immigrants from throughout the globe have left their mark on the continent. Despite these continuing impacts of colonization and conquest, North America is still developing, building on its multicultural past and working toward a more just and inclusive future.

### 2.3 CULTURE

The rich varying and complexity of North American culture is a reflection of the many different ethnic groups, customs, and histories that have helped shaped the continent over many centuries. North America's cultural landscape is a tapestry of influences from across the globe the indigenous peoples who have been inhabited to the region for centuries to the waves of immigrants who have arrived seeking for opportunity and freedom. The indigenous legacy of the North America forms one of its fundamental cultural pillars. The continent was home to a wide variety of indigenous nations with their own languages, customs, and belief systems before the European settlers arrived. Indigenous cultures have survived through centuries of invasion and forced assimilation, and recent years have seen a surge in efforts to maintain their languages, customs, and sovereignty. In the North America the flow of European settlers and especially those from England, France, and Spain caused some significant cultural changes. Along with the construction of colonies and the removal of native populations European colonization also brought new languages, religions, and political systems. These European influences eventually merged with the already present indigenous civilizations to produce some distinctive cultural expressions which also includes the Métis culture of Canada and the Cajun culture of Louisiana. The transatlantic slave trade had a significant effect on the North American culture as well especially in the US. Millions of Africans were forced to be transported to America where they carried with them a variety of cultural customs dialects, and faiths till this day it influences African American culture today. Global immigrant waves have influenced North American culture in addition to native and European influences. Immigrants have added to the cultural fabric of the continent by bringing their diverse value such as unique languages, cuisines, faiths, and customs, from the Irish and Italians of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the Latin Americans and Asians of more recent decades. Vibrant multicultural communities may be found throughout the North America today as individuals from all backgrounds come together to celebrate their common heritage while yet maintaining their own identities. We can distinguish the North American culture by its acceptance of pluralism and diversity in the culture. Although issues such as race, ethnicity, and identity-related conflicts can cause problems openness, tolerance, and inclusivity is a big thing for North America's cultural. The large number of cultural festivals, celebrations, and events that highlight the diverse range of cultures and traditions across the continent it is a proof of this. North American culture is very heavily influenced by religion, with Christianity dominant in countries like United States and Canada. But there are also many different religious traditions practiced in North America, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and several indigenous belief systems. The plurality of religions in North America has added to its diversity and richness. So, the cultural aspect of North America is a very dynamic and is constantly changing blend of native, European, African, and immigrant influences. North America's cultural environment can result in complicated interactions of history, diversity, and creativity that can be seen in the continent from its various roots to its dynamic multicultural presence. North America's culture will surely be going to continue to improve and will adapt as it continuously changes and evolves reflecting the continuous contributions of its different peoples.

### 2.4 ETHNICITY

In the region North America ethnicity is a very dynamic and complex tapestry together over centuries by migration, colonization, conquest, and interaction between cultures. Many different ethnic groups can be seen on the continent and each one of them has contributed to the rich tapestry of North American civilization with its own very diverse history, customs, and traditions. Ethnicity in North America also reflected a very complex tapestry of human experience from the different types of peoples who have lived here for thousands of years to the waves of immigrants who came seeking opportunity and refuge Firstly the North America's ethnic groups can be said to be Indigenous peoples who have inhabited the continent for many centuries. Despite such centuries of colonization Indigenous communities have continued to establish their identities, languages, and cultures, which have contributed to the vibrant tapestry of North American ethnicity. From the Inuit of the Arctic to the Navajo of the Southwest, Indigenous peoples have played a very important role in shaping the cultural landscape of the continent. European colonization has showed the waves of immigrants throughout the North America which shaped the ethnic composition of the continent in different ways. From the early Spanish and French explorers to the English and Dutch settlers of the seventeenth century European new people also brought their languages, religions, and customs, leaving a lasting mark on North American society. Today the descendants of these European immigrants form a very important part of the population with a very diverse ethnic identities ranging from Irish and Italian to German and Polish. The oceanic slave trade brought millions and millions of Africans to the North America, where they were forcibly made slaves and suffered operation through many centuries. Despite these horrors of slavery and segregation African Americans have formed a vibrant communities and cultures, contributing immensely to the cultural fabric of North America. From the rhythms of jazz and blues to the achievements of civil rights leaders, African American influence permeates every aspect of North American society. The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed a very massive spread of immigration to North America as people from around the world sought refuge from poverty, persecution, and war. Chinese immigrants also arrived on the West Coast in search of opportunities during the Gold Rush and later helped build the transcontinental railroad. Mexican immigrants have long played a very crucial role in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors of the economy, contributing to the rich cultural tapestry of the Southwest. In the recent times North America has seen increase in diversity as immigrants from Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa have made their homes in the United States and Canada. This diverse rise of the newcomers has blessed North American society with a kaleidoscope of languages, religions, cuisines, and traditions, transforming cities and towns into vibrant multicultural hubs. Despite the rich diversity of North American ethnicity there still remain many issues such as issues of race, ethnicity, and identity continue to shape social, political, and economic dynamics. Discrimination, prejudice, and systemic inequities persist, affecting marginalized communities disproportionately. Indigenous peoples still struggling for recognition of their sovereignty and rights, while immigrants face barriers to integration and inclusion. North America's ethnic diversity also includes opportunities dialogue, understanding, and solidarity across lines of difference. Celebrations of multi cultural society, diversity, and inclusivity abound, fostering a sense of belonging and pride among individuals and communities of diverse ethnic backgrounds. North Americans continue to strive towards a more equitable and inclusive society where every individual is valued and respected regardless of their ethnicity or background. Ethnicity in the North America can be as a complex and diverse phenomenon which helped shaped through centuries of migration, colonization, and cultural exchange. The Indigenous peoples who first came to the continent to the waves of immigrants still continue to arrive today North America's ethnic diversity is a source of strength resilience, and innovation. Embracing with such diversity, fostering inclusion, and addressing systemic inequities, North Americans can build a more just and equitable society for all of the people

### 3. IMMIGRATION IN NORTH AMERICA

#### 3.1 IMMIGRATION OF INDIANS INTO USA

From a long time, Indians have been moving to the United States for hundreds of years and for many reasons like jobs, education, and family. The numbers have really rapidly increased in the late 1900s and early 2000s This made Indian Americans a very big and accomplished immigrant group. The first ever Indian immigrants were mostly Sikhs and Punjabis which came in the late 1800s and early 1900s. They came looking for work in farming and building railroads. Even though they faced prejudice and laws limiting immigration, they built communities that paved the way for more Indians to come to the U.S. later. Furthermore, the Indian diaspora in the United States has been diverse in terms of geography, language, religion, and culture rather than being more rigid. Indians have brought a more diversity in terms cultures, languages, cuisines, and rituals with them from their various states and linguistic groupings. With such vast dynamics of Indian religious festivals, cultural festivals, and food offerings around the country is indicative of this diversity which helps in enhancing the cultural aspect of American society and promotes intercultural interactions.

Talking about the history there were not a significant rise in Indian immigration until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following the abolition of national origin quotas in 1965, the Immigration and Nationality Act made way for a fresh influx of Indian immigrants, many of them professionals and highly trained labourers. A spike of Indian professionals, engineers, doctors, and scientists immigrating to the United States in quest of greater prospects and improved standards of living resulted from this change in immigration policy as well as the need for qualified labour in the rising American economy. The number of Indian students enrolling in American institutions to pursue higher education increased throughout this time, adding to the country's Indian diaspora Because of the geopolitical factors like instability in India and economic liberalization we saw there was a notable growth in Indian immigration in the 1980s and 1990s. The Indian immigrant population has become increasingly diverse in terms of geography, language, religion, and socioeconomic position as a result of the large number of Indians who arrived in the United States in an attempt to leave political instability and chase economic success. What's more was the creation of family-supported immigration pathways enabled Indian families to be reunited, as immigrants sponsored their relatives to stay with them in the United States. With the development of the H-1B visa program and the rise in the development of the Indian IT sector helped to step foot in a new era in Indian immigration at the turn of the twenty-first century. For fulfilling growing demand for qualified labour in the computer sector, Indian IT experts, especially software engineers and technology specialists, poured into the United States. The H-1B visa performed a crucial role in drawing Indian talent to American businesses which helps in the rapid growth of Indian Americans in the finance, entrepreneurship, and information technology sectors. Indian immigrants have contributed significantly to the American culture, society, and politics in addition to being highly successful professionals

Globally, the United States is the second most popular destination for Indians living abroad, after the United Arab Emirates (3.5 million). Other top destinations include Saudi Arabia (2.5 million), Pakistan (1.6 million), Oman (1.4 million), and Kuwait (1.2 million), according to the most recent, mid-2020 United Nations Population Division estimates The U.S. cities with the largest number of Indian immigrants were the greater New York, Chicago, San Francisco, San Jose, and Dallas metropolitan areas. These five metro areas accounted for about 35 percent of Indians in the United States. On average, Indians have much higher incomes than the total foreign- and native-born populations. In 2021, households headed by an Indian immigrant had a median annual income of \$150,000, compared to \$70,000 for all immigrant- and native-led households. In 2021, Indian immigrants were less likely to be in poverty (5 percent) than immigrants overall (14 percent) or the U.S. born (13 percent).

Across the nation Indian immigrants have been creating vibrant neighbourhoods from suburban enclaves in Silicon Valley and New Jersey to busy urban hubs like New York, San Francisco, and Chicago. These communities have helped immigrants face the difficulties of transitioning to a new nation while maintaining their cultural heritage by fostering a sense of belonging and offering support networks. Indian Americans have also left their mark in a variety of industries, including commerce, academics, politics, and entertainment, adding to the diversity of American culture Despite their achievements and contribution Indian immigrants have encountered obstacles like bias, misunderstandings, and restrictions on their visas. With the Increased monitoring and security measures which followed after the 9/11 attacks which mostly impacted Indian Muslims and Sikhs who were the targets of hate crimes and ethnic profiling. More importantly Indian immigrants seeking citizenship and permanent residency have encountered difficulties due to the backlog of green card applications and the lack of clarity surrounding immigration policies. Indian immigrants have made an important contribution to American politics ethic which can be seen by their growing presence in local, state, and federal elected posts. Indian Americans are becoming powerful voices in public policy-making, immigrant rights advocacy, and community-focused problems, ranging from governors and members of Congress to mayors and municipal councillors

Even with so much accomplishments and contributions made by Indian immigrants there are still some issues which include discrimination, difficulties integrating, and obstacles to upward mobility. Many encounter challenges when attempting to negotiate the intricacies of the American immigration system and finding jobs that match their qualifications and skill set or overcoming prejudices and stereotypes in both their personal and professional life. In the future Indian immigration to the US is probably going to keep changing as a result of shifting social, political, and economic forces in both countries. The influx of such educated professionals, entrepreneurs, and students to the United States is expected to keep going as India is becoming a hub for innovation and a worldwide economic powerhouse. This is going to determine the future of the Indian diaspora and its influence on American society.

#### 3.2 IMMIGRATION OF INDIANS IN CANADA

Indian immigration to Canada began with Punjabi Sikh men who came to British Columbia in the late 1800s, mostly to labour on the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. They experienced prejudice despite their contributions to Canada's infrastructure, as evidenced by the notorious Komagata Maru incident in 1914, which brought attention to Canada's stringent immigration laws pertaining to non-white people. The majority of Indian immigration was essentially stopped until after World War II by the Immigration Act of 1910, which also imposed a head tax on them. But starting in the 1950s, immigration laws started to shift, which progressively increased the number of Indian immigrants coming to Canada. Many Indians came to Canada as professionals, especially in the medical and engineering sectors, and they helped the country's economy flourish after the war. Following the World War II Canada's immigration laws experienced a very dramatic change that eventually allowed for the entrance of

Indian immigrants. The Immigration Act of 1910 had placed a heavy restriction on Indian migrants which included a head tax but they were relaxed in the post-war period. Canada's rising demand for skilled workers and its aim to diversify the immigration population drove this move. As a Indian professionals started to immigrate to Canada in greater numbers especially in industries like technology, engineering, and medicine. This helped the country's economy recover and grow after World War II. Further facilitating Indian immigration to Canada was the 1967 points system, which gave precedence to criteria like education, skills, and job experience over nationality allowing the entry of people with certain qualifications into the nation. During this period, multiculturalism also gradually became an official Canadian policy, with the goal of recognizing and celebrating the diversity of cultures among the nation's population. These legislative changes opened the way for a new era of Indian immigration to Canada and established the groundwork for the thriving Indian diaspora that now lives there.

The number of Indians immigrating to Canada has more than tripled since 2013. The scale of the increase is what one would expect to witness in a refugee situation, not the result of a steady increase in international students and employment-based immigrants. The data show restrictive immigration policies in the United States, particularly during the Trump administration, have played a significant role in Indians choosing to immigrate to Canada. The number of Indians who became permanent residents in Canada rose from 32,828 in 2013 to 118,095 in 2022, an increase of 260%, according to a National Foundation for American Policy (NFAP) analysis of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada data. In 2022, at 118,095, Indian immigration to Canada dwarfed the next largest source countries for permanent residents: China (31,815), Afghanistan (23,735), Nigeria (22,085) and the Philippines (22,070). In 2014, Canada had more immigrants from the Philippines than from India. Canada is set to boost its annual immigrant intake, with plans to admit 500,000 newcomers by 2025, as announced by Marc Miller, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, during the unveiling of the immigration plans for 2024-26. While maintaining the current intake of 485,000 new immigrants for 2024, the country aims to raise this number to 500,000 by 2025, with this cap sustained from 2026 onwards. This expansion carries substantial implications for Indian immigrants, as India serves as Canada's primary source of immigration and students. Indians are poised to be the primary beneficiaries of this increase, with 281,135 individuals slated for admission under the economic category and an additional 114,000 under the family category.

The huge phenomenon of Indian immigration to Canada has influenced the economics, demography, and cultural landscapes of both nations. Indians have been immigrating to Canada over the years for a variety of reasons such as job possibilities, educational opportunities and the desire to be closer to family and refugee status. The official policy of the multiculturalism was adopted by Canada around the 1970s which made it easier for the Indian immigrants and other ethnic populations to integrate into the Canadian society. Increase in the Indian immigration became possible as a result of this policy change and changes to the immigration regulations. The points system of 1967 which gave education and talent more weight instead of nationality, encouraged more Indian immigration to Canada. Indian immigration to Canada has been mostly motivated by the need to be reunited with family. Through the family sponsorship program citizens and permanent residents of Canada may sponsor their spouses, parents, and dependant children to come to the country. Also, the skilled worker initiatives like the Provincial Nominee Program and the Federal Skilled Worker Program have drawn Indian experts looking for work in Canada as well as permanent residency. Indian immigration to Canada has mostly been motivated by the desire to be reunited with the family. Throughout the family sponsorship program citizens and permanent residents of Canada may sponsor their spouses, parents, and dependant children to come to the country. Skilled worker initiatives like the Provincial Nominee Program and the Federal Skilled Worker Program have drawn many Indian experts looking for work in Canada as well as permanent residency. Indian students are looking to pursue higher education abroad find Canada to be a desirable location due to its outstanding educational system. The option of obtaining permanent residency through the Canadian Experience Class program high-quality education and chances for employment upon graduation are all contributing to the recent surge in the number of Indian international students studying in Canada. Indian immigrants have experienced difficulties during the integration process despite the benefits Canada is providing. Among the challenges faced by many Indian immigrants include language hurdles, a failure to recognize their qualifications, cultural adjustment, and bias in the workplace. To help with the integration of Indian immigrants and address these issues, community organizations, government initiatives, and settlement services are essential. Several aspects of the Canadian society which includes industry, technology, healthcare, academics, the arts, and culture, have benefited significantly from the contributions of Indian immigrants. Cities such as Toronto and Vancouver have succeeded the centres of Indian-owned firms also contributing to the economic diversity of Canada. In addition, Indian traditions, food, music, and festivals have woven themselves into Canada's diverse fabric.

So, the Indian immigration to Canada is a very dynamic and complex phenomenon that has lasted thousands of years and consisting extensive variety of experiences. Indian immigrants have had humble origins as railroad labourers and have come a very long way of becoming wealthy communities that greatly add to the Canada's wealth and cultural variety. Indians have contributed really significantly to the many aspects of Canadian civilization since the first immigration waves including technology, entrepreneurship, academia, politics, and the arts. The Indian diaspora will surely be continuing to play a very crucial role in determining the Canada's future as it promotes its multicultural culture and accepts immigrants from all over the world. Indian immigrants will continue to contribute to Canada's growth, creativity, and prosperity with their many talents and experiences, ensuring that their legacy stays intact for future generations

## 4. INDIAN DISPORA IN USA AND CANADA

### 4.1 Role of Indians in IT sectors

Today, the Indian-American community is one of the fastest growing and most affluent ethnic groups in the US, with a strong presence in many major cities across the country. Indian-Americans have made significant contributions to American society in a variety of fields, including business, science, technology, and the arts. One of the most notable examples of this is Sundar Pichai, the CEO of Google, who emigrated to the US in 2004 to pursue a PhD in engineering. Pichai went on to become one of the most influential executives in the tech industry, helping to drive the growth and development of Google and many other technology companies. The origin of the Indian diaspora in the US is a story of hard work,

determination, and a commitment to creating a better life for themselves and their families. Despite facing many challenges along the way, Indian-Americans have persevered and have become a thriving and influential part of American society on the other hand. Though it may be an exaggeration to call Canada a land of immigrants, yet a sizeable section of the Canadian population comprises of immigrants including those from India.<sup>1</sup> The people of Indian origin in Canada today are the largest component of peoples of South Asian origin in Canada. Their population at present is about 700,000. About three-fourths of the recent Indian immigrants are educated, professionals, skilled workers, businessmen and entrepreneurs. They are economically well off and politically active. Most of them form informal communities, through links between relatives and friends who share common ethnic, linguistic and religious roots. The success story of the Indian diaspora in Canada has, however, not come so easily. Like other Asians, they had to face racial prejudices of the White Canadians and their immigration policy. It

We can see that the Indian diaspora is quite popular in the countries of USA and Canada which have been contributing significantly to several fields and strengthening the social bonds of both countries. Indian-Americans are well-known in the US for their very important contributions to invention and entrepreneurship having founded and run IT giants. We can see many Indians at the top positions of companies like Microsoft, Adobe, and Google. They also perform really well in academic areas and the medical industry, and finance which helps in contributing their expertise to the American labour market. Indian-Americans also foster an awareness and understanding of Indian customs, food, and festivals, which increases cultural diversity. They provide as a key bridge between the USA and India by supporting projects that help local populations in both countries through charitable endeavours and community service. If we compare the Indian diaspora in Canada, we can see it makes a substantial economic contribution to a variety of industries such as technology, healthcare and retail, through skilled labour and entrepreneurial achievements with their active participation in Canadian society they are able to promote cultural variety and interchange through the sharing of Indian traditions, artwork, and festivals. Indian-Canadians need to tackle social concerns and promote equality and inclusivity through their humanitarian assistance. With all things considered the Indian diaspora can be seen playing a very crucial role in forming the vibrant and diverse societies in both nations growing economic growth in technological advancement and cross-cultural enrichment.

By having such significant advancements in various areas Indian Americans have become one of the most rich and successful communities in the United States. They can be founded significant firms like Google, Microsoft, and Adobe in Silicon Valley or held powerful positions which makes a huge impact and contributions to the field of technology. Indian Americans can also be successful in the financial industry while holding very important positions on Wall Street and large financial firms. A large proportion of physicians, researchers, and other healthcare professionals are of Indian background showing that the large contribution that Indian Americans have made to the medical community. Their contributions have addressed public health issues in the USA which enhanced healthcare services and also helped in advanced medical research. Indian companies have been investing more in the USA which has promoted economic expansion and the creation of jobs. There are many Sectors such as information technology, pharmaceuticals, and manufacturing where we can say Indian companies have strong presence it also facilitates technology transfer and knowledge exchange between the two nations. Culturally we can say Indian Americans have got American society through very diverse contributions of art, cuisine, literature, and traditions. Many Indian festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Navratri are celebrated all over the nation which shows dominant Indian culture and promoting cross-cultural understanding. The influence of India on the wealth areas of the USA spans economic contributions, entrepreneurial achievements, cultural enrichment, and innovation. As the relationship between India and the USA continues is growing slowly, we can say that the role of Indian Americans and Indian businesses in the American economy is expected to expand further which will cement their position as integral contributors to the wealth landscape of the US. While India and USA relations are improving the other hand we can see India and Canada share a great economic relationship. Despite India ranking higher in total wealth held by its citizens in the world we can see a considerable portion of Indian wealth flows into Canada through student spending. The Indian students in Canada contribute billions and billions of dollars annually to the Canadian education system. Not only this Canada also benefits from Indian foreign direct investment and mainly through its pension funds investing in Indian companies and infrastructure projects. Bilateral trade between the two countries thrives with India exporting various goods to Canada. Despite few diplomatic tensions the economic ties between India and Canada have always remained strong which are mainly fuelled by student spending, investments, and trade, which are mutually benefited and likely to continue growing. But the problem arises in India where we can see that the wealth distribution is not equal distribution so the comparison of individual wealth between Canadians and Indians always differs. Overall, India and Canada are significant trading partners with deep economic interconnection.

#### 4.2 Role of Punjabis

Punjabis have played very important role in serving as a soft power for India in Canada. Punjabi Canadians number approximately 950,000 and account for roughly 2.6% of Canada's population. Brampton in Canada has a population of 6 lakh. People, majority being Punjabis. Brampton in Canada is also called mini-Punjab. Soft power of Punjabis in Canada helps in leveraging their cultural, economic, and social influence to strengthen bilateral ties between the two nations. One of the major ways by which Punjabis have contributed to India's soft power in Canada is through their very diverse cultural heritage. The Punjabi community in Canada has actively preserved and always promoted their rich traditions, including language, music, dance, and cuisine, which have captured the interest of Canadians which also made them have appreciation for Indian culture as a whole. Punjabi festivals such as Baisakhi is widely celebrated across Canada also drawing participation from people of diverse backgrounds and while also showcasing the cultural diversity of India such festivities events serve as platforms for cultural exchange and dialogue fostering understanding and mutual respect between Indian and Canadian communities. Economically Punjabi Canadians have made a very major contributions to both the Canadian and Indian economies through various sectors such as agriculture, entrepreneurship, and skilled labour. Punjabi entrepreneurs have established very successful businesses, creating high employment opportunities and also contributing to economic growth in both countries. In addition, the agricultural knowledge brought by Punjabi farmers has helped enhance agricultural productivity and innovation in Canada at the same time also maintaining strong ties with the agricultural sector in India. Punjabi Canadians have constantly been in contact and participating in social and political spheres also advocating for issues important to the Indian diaspora and fostering cross-cultural dialogue. Their participation in Canadian politics has led to the increased in the representation and influence while also allowing them to voice concerns and promote policies that benefit both the Indian community and Canada-India relations. Punjabis in Canada have always served as a very powerful ambassadors for India showcasing the country's cultural richness, economic potential, and commitment to diversity and inclusivity. Through their big contributions in various fields, Punjabi Canadians have played a crucial role in strengthening the bonds between India and Canada further also solidifying the foundation of their bilateral relationship.

### 4.3 Bilateral relations with USA and Canada

The role of India in the US politics can be noticed easily and it can be defined by its bilateral relations, economic connections, and diplomatic interactions. We can see how the influence of the Indian-American community has grown among numerous individuals assuming very important roles in both Congress and the administration. Different areas like trade, defence collaboration, and strategic alliances are very commonly addressed in discussions between these two countries. In recent times we have seen the Influence of global developments, domestic agendas, and leadership transitions in both countries. The position of India in US politics is continuously evolving which helps in maintaining a significant relationship between the two nations with cooperation spanning defence, counterterrorism, and trade. The political influence of the Indian-American community has been growing with several members taking up the important governmental roles and actively shaping policies concerning not only India but also the wider South Asian region. Trade relations between India and the US have can be said to have progressed smoothly while also opening up discussions on market access intellectual property rights, and tariffs. In 2023, the U.S. exports to India amounted to around 40.12 billion U.S. dollars India position on geopolitical matters like its relationships with China, Pakistan and its role in regional stability can be said to have impacted its position in US politics. Not only these the foreign policy priorities of the Biden administration who are mainly concerning with Indo-Pacific cooperation and climate change may also influence India-US relations and India's standing in US politics. India's role in US politics is still very dynamic and complex and the influence by diplomatic engagements, economic priorities, and strategic considerations. With so much improvement in us we can also see India's position in Canadian politics is very largely impacted by its sizable diaspora community and the bilateral ties between the two states. Canada has a very significant Indian population which actively engages in various aspects of Canadian life also including political participation. Indian-Canadians have got political representation at different levels which further adds to the diversity of Canadian leadership. Canada and India maintain very diplomatic relations while also collaborating on trade, security, and cultural initiatives. However, with this diplomatic relationship many challenges and differences may also arise impacting on the political dynamics between the two countries. With the recent developments and changes in diplomatic and political relations between India and Canada it is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of India's current standing in Canadian politics. In recent times the relationship between India and Canada has become more complicated particularly concerning trade disputes and human rights issues. The Trade tensions have come over agricultural tariffs and access to markets which promotes both nations to seek resolutions through talks and negotiations. Human rights concerns mainly regarding the treatment of minority groups in India and the situation in Kashmir have also been topics of conversation within Canadian political circles. The position of Canada on certain internal matters in India like the farmer protests and the revocation of Article 370 in Kashmir has gained attention and occasional criticism from Indian officials and citizens. However, it's important to see that despite these small occasional differences both countries maintain diplomatic dialogue and strong ties between their peoples and mainly through the Indian diaspora in Canada. Indian-Canadians have a big influence in Canadian politics with many members of parliament and provincial legislators representing diverse constituencies nationwide. Their presence shows the significance of the Indian community in Canadian society and also showcases the ongoing cultural and economic exchanges between the two nations. So, in the end while facing occasional hurdles India retains a very important role in Canadian politics always shaping conversations on issues ranging from trade and diplomacy to human rights and multiculturalism

### 4.4 Religion as soft power

The USA has been a host to a solid representation of diverse religious groups from India which includes Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians and Buddhists Indian communities in the USA are seen to be actively participating in these faiths with Hindus and Sikhs standing out for their lively cultural and religious gatherings. The commonness of different religions among Indian Americans varies depending on the region and the specific community under careful examination. The Indian diaspora in the USA contains a very wide range of religious beliefs also contributing to the nation's religious landscape. Hinduism which is known for its vibrant traditions and celebrations is very well-represented with Hindu temples present in various cities and states nationwide and recently the largest Hindu temple outside Asia was opened in new jersey. Sikhism is also very famous with gurdwaras serving as hubs for worship, community gatherings, and charitable attempts. A very significant portion of Indian Americans practices Islam also utilizing mosques for worship and cultural exchange. Christianity which was introduced to India during the colonial times is followed by many Indian Americans who gather at churches for spiritual and social activities and Buddhism which originates from ancient Indian teachings has followers among Indian Americans who use Buddhist temples for meditation and learning. This diverse religious diversity shows the pluralism of both Indian and American societies showing enriched cultural fabric of the USA. In Canada as well we can see the religious diversity of India well represented with followers of Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and other faiths present in Indian communities throughout the country. These communities actively show their religious customs and participate in the festivals enriching the multicultural landscape of the Canadian society. In Canada all the Indian immigrants have introduced a very diverse array of religious beliefs and practices mirroring the multifaceted nature of the India. The Indian diaspora in Canada consists of the followers of Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism. These communities often show the establishment of religious centres such as temples, gurdwaras, mosques, churches, and meditation facilities, which serve as hubs for spiritual, cultural, and social gatherings. For example, Hindu temples host rituals and festivals like Diwali and Navratri, while Sikh gurdwaras offer langar, a free communal meal, to all visitors irrespective of their faith. Likewise, mosques conduct daily prayers and special services during Ramadan, and churches arrange worship sessions and community engagement initiatives. The Indian religious of panorama in Canada showcases a very dynamic blend in the traditions and convictions while enriching the multicultural fabric of Canadian society

## CONCLUSION

India's soft power influence in the region of North America spans throughout cultural, economic, and diplomatic spheres showing a multifaceted event. Knowing Bollywood's global popularity and the increasing trend of yoga and Indian cuisine, and strategic economic partnerships India has shown a great presence in the hearts and minds of North Americans. This soft power projection not only elevates India's international standing but

also helps in stronger bonds with North American nations while also shaping the geopolitical landscape. Particularly India's cultural sway in North America is mainly demonstrated through the widespread love of Bollywood films. The graphical aesthetics and lively dance sequences mixed with emotionally compelling narratives have captivated audiences to go beyond cultural barriers. Serving as a potent cultural mode Bollywood contributes in shaping the perceptions of India as a vibrant and diverse nation. The achievements of Indian actors and filmmakers in North America further shows India's cultural influence while fostering a positive image that extends beyond traditional diplomatic channels. Further, the global love for yoga has become positive for India's soft power projection. This ancient discipline focuses on physical and mental well-being and has gained significant popularity in North America. Yoga studios can be seen in urban landscapes while attracting millions seeking a comprehensive approach to health. The association of yoga with India builds the country's reputation as a guider of ancient wisdom and spiritual guidance. This cultural export not only helps in enhancing India's positive image but also helps fostering a sense of connection between yoga practitioners and India's cultural heritage. Indian cuisine also plays a very important role in shaping perceptions and promoting cross-cultural understanding. The increase in Indian restaurants while offering a diverse array of flavours has emerged as a culinary trend in North America. Many Dishes like curry, biryani, and samosas have become favourites while contributing to a culinary diplomacy that transcends boundaries. Through the shared experience and savouring of Indian cuisine North Americans develop an appreciation for the rich and variety which the Indian culture offers

India's economic ties with countries have enhanced its soft power influence. Being a rising player India engages in trade, technology exchange and investment collaborations that benefit both regions. Joint ventures in sectors like IT, pharmaceuticals and renewable energy not boost growth but also pave the way for stronger diplomatic relations. The image of India as an innovative partner strengthens its soft power aligning it with ideas of progress and prosperity. From a perspective India's soft power is amplified through its diaspora in North America. The significant presence of expatriates across fields like science, business, academia and politics acts as a bridge between the two regions. Influential Indian Americans holding positions play a role in shaping policies and fostering understanding. This diasporic influence enhances India's reputation in North America by sharing success stories that create a narrative transcending border. Moreover, the Indian diaspora in North America serves as proof of the value of diversity and integration, on a level. Successful individuals of origin serve as ambassadors by showcasing the strength that comes from embracing diverse heritages. The spread of this influence helps break down stereotypes and encourages a better understanding of the interconnectedness, in our world today.

As discussed the relationship between India, Canada and USA and how the soft power has helped to bring these countries closer we can say that the India's soft power influence in North America represents a very dynamic and evolving events involving cultural, economic and diplomatic domains and many other factors such as the global appeal of Bollywood and the widespread adoption of yoga and of course the rising popularity of the Indian cuisine, economic partnerships, and the influential Indian diaspora collectively helps in shaping a favourable image of India in North America. This soft power projection not only helps in enhancing the India's global stature but also helps in fostering deeper understanding and connection between the people of India and North America. As the world is being interconnected the ongoing soft power dynamics between India and North America will continue to be great instrument in shaping global perceptions and relationships. In the complex field of international affairs India's soft power influence in North America helps cultivates bonds of connection and comprehension while laying the groundwork for cooperation and partnership across borders. Along with complex global challenges the soft power also enhances interactions between India and North America while underscoring the transformative potential of cultural exchange, economic collaboration, and diplomatic engagement. Through these channels India can continue to shape a positive narrative while making a lasting impression on the populace of North America and contributing to the advancement of a more interconnected and harmonious world.

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