

9 Key Trends Impacting India in Next 9 Years (2025)

1. Reducing patience with “status-quo”:

- a. While politicians, industrialists, and various commentators repeatedly talk about “young India”, they do not dwell enough on what the young (or relatively young) Indian’s want. This young India, better educated than the previous generation, and much more connected with rest of India and rest of the world through print, electronic, and social media, has increasingly lesser patience with status-quo and expects / demands quicker change. The desired / demanded changes are multi-dimensional that include political (better, more effective, cleaner governance), social (a more liberal, modern outlook in general), economical (jobs / vocations that not only give them money but social respect too), and environmental (personal security, clean air and water, delivery of justice etc.). Politicians who do not understand this fully / political parties who ignore this trend are being routinely voted and booed out, and therefore the so-called anti-incumbency factor will be even more visible in the coming years.

2. Happier / prouder being an Indian:

- a. While some (or their spouses) could be worried about staying on in India, and may find Indian a boiling cauldron of intolerance and mis-governance, it seems that an increasing number of Indians seem to be overtly or subliminally embracing some of their “Indian” roots with greater enthusiasm. The spectacular rise of products & services that have “India” at its core seems to demonstrate this. This includes companies / brands that include clothing (just about every wedding and festival celebration in India finds more Indians wearing very traditional clothes, jewelry, and accessories), skincare & body care, personal care, foods including health foods, health & wellbeing treatments, food services (across different formats ranging from fast food to casual dining to fine dining) etc. etc. In the next decade (and perhaps Prime Minister Modi should be credited with this), there would be stronger surge of pride in being an Indian, and therefore a bigger opportunity across board for companies offering products & services that are focusing on “Indian” as the “core” value proposition.

3. Increasing poverty of time:

- a. Due to multiple factors e.g. more women entering urban workforce, rise of nuclear families, the demographic hump that India is currently undergoing that has probably largest quantum of its population between 21 – 45 age group (and therefore highest ever number of households with young children), more active social lifestyle etc. etc., Indians have been steadily getting time-poorer over the last 2 decades.

However, in the next 10, this time poverty will further increase as even more women enter workforce leaving lesser time available to manage household chores and as urban traffic congestion leads to increase in commuting times for work purposes. The time poverty will lead to multiple fundamental changes in India over next 10 years that will be primarily driven by the needs of a very large mass of urban Indians to save / optimize their time. This will create more opportunities for businesses to deliver a wider range of goods and services “anytime/anywhere” to hundreds of millions of Indian customers on their “individual” demand. E-commerce (both services and goods) will therefore see a much more rapid adoption in India than it has seen anywhere else in the world.

4. Boom in entrepreneurial activity:

- a. A number of factors that include increased risk taking ability of a larger group of relatively young, higher educated individuals, more public celebration of successes of hundreds and thousands of new entrepreneurs that have come up in the last 10 years, higher tolerance of failures, and a steadily improving “seed and angel to private equity” funding ecosystem will all lead to an incredibly entrepreneurial India in the coming few years. Further, this entrepreneurial activity will further spread more visibly beyond the current top 10-12 cities and beyond the current focus on IT / telecom enabled products and services. Indeed, India could see a bigger success of MSME (Micro, Small, & Medium Enterprise) “Make-In-India / Made-for-India” entrepreneurial activity as the overall economy grows steadily, and domestic private consumption (along with public spending) the two most likely growth drivers for India in the coming decade.

5. Increased pressure on current “power” brands:

- a. The growth rate of e-commerce will significantly accelerate in the next few years, and in its wake, add hundreds of millions of new customers across a much wider spectrum of age, income, urban & rural, and lifestyles. As the old-adage – “location, location, location” – for success of retail gives way to a newer one – “choice, more choice, even more choice” – in the world of e-retail, Indian consumers will get even more promiscuous when it comes to their loyalty to brands. In the world of virtual retail, consumers can seamlessly flirt from one brand to another across different product categories (and indeed, different e-retail platforms), try unknown or lesser known brands at nearly no-risk to themselves on account of no-questions asked return / exchange policies of retailers such as Amazon, and in the process – severely dent the strength of current power brands across almost every product category. It would be interesting to see how companies such as HUL, Nestle, LG & Samsung, Raymond and many other such owners of power-brands handle this challenge thrown to them by the rise of e-commerce.

6. Outsourcing of “home kitchen / home cooking”:

- a. More education for women and more of them in workforce, coupled with higher time poverty, will manifest in the coming years by way of more and more of relatively young households not being in a position to “cook” or have the time to “cook” meals at home for most of the 365 days in a year. Eating out or ordering food in from a typical restaurant is going to increase further, but the biggest opportunity in the next 10 years would be offer “home-style” meals, at “home-cooked” price points (or close to them) to urban Indian families. This would be a fundamentally different model than the current so-called “food-tech” businesses.

7. More education & learning / re-learning going self-learning / assisted learning way:

- a. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and “learning / training / retraining” technologies and effectiveness are already at a tipping point now. In the next few years, more of young (and not so young India) would be getting educated / trained / retrained on individually-used digital platforms – perhaps with some online assistance from a physical “teacher”. Virtual Reality enabled digital learning platforms will further have a huge impact on how India will be educated in the next few years itself (provided the Central & State Governments make an effort to fully understand the incredible potential of digital learning platforms for the entire spectrum of education that can even include advanced professional programs such as engineering – Georgia Tech (USA) is already offering online education platform based engineering degrees <https://pe.gatech.edu/online-masters-degrees>)

8. More decentralization of healthcare from in-patient to outpatient, and more technology enabled delivery of healthcare:

- a. India is already unable to provide “accessible, affordable, and accountable” healthcare to its 1.27 billion citizens. The pressures on the already overburdened healthcare delivery infrastructure will force India to look at radically different alternative models that can provide high quality (and affordable) delivery of healthcare outside the expensive tertiary care / secondary care hospitals, and preferably delivered through technology rather than hard-to-find qualified medical professionals. There already several companies attempting to create a “health-tech” healthcare delivery business, and many more shall emerge (and succeed) in the next few years. Again, the role of Central & State Governments will be pivotal in a much faster creation and adoption of technology enabled / technology delivered healthcare for the masses.

9. Increased demands on Social Responsibility:

- a. With rising awareness of Indian citizens on issues relating to the larger social responsibility of businesses, public & private institutions, and the Gov’t (both at the Center & the states), and increased activism aided both by tools as RTI and by the

media at large especially the “social media” networks, there will be increased pressure from the citizens on various public & private entities to demonstrate higher quality of and more sustained “institutional social responsibility”. Businesses and entities that embrace CSR as an integral, seamless part of their business strategy are likely to achieve better financial and other outcomes for their stakeholders compared to those who merely pay “lip service” to CSR or see (for profit making companies), the 2% CSR cess on their profits as just another tax.

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