

Acknowledgement

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“THE BENGAL NARRATIVE”

The Voices from the Ground: Public Sentiment, Governance Challenges, and the Demand for Political Change in West Bengal.

Abstract

This study presents findings from a large-scale perception survey conducted to examine public views on governance, democratic functioning, internal security, social cohesion, women’s safety, economic development, nationalism, and electoral preferences in West Bengal. Using a structured questionnaire, responses were collected from 5,013 participants, the majority of whom are permanent residents of the state, thereby ensuring strong regional grounding and contextual relevance. Descriptive statistical techniques were employed to analyze response patterns and identify dominant trends in public perception.

The results reveal widespread dissatisfaction with state governance, leadership performance, and the functioning of democratic institutions, alongside concerns regarding restricted space for dissent and declining institutional trust. Respondents express strong anxiety over issues related to illegal migration, internal security, and their perceived implications for national unity and social harmony. Public perceptions also indicate significant concerns about women’s safety, limited awareness and mixed confidence in related legislation, and the negative impact of high-profile incidents on the state’s national image. Additionally, a majority view state policies and administrative practices as obstacles to industrial development and economic growth.

Despite these governance and security concerns, the survey highlights a strong perception of nationalist sentiment at the societal level, particularly among the youth, even as respondents perceive political polarization and regionalism as undermining nationalism within the political sphere. Notably, an overwhelming majority of participants express willingness to consider alternative political options in forthcoming assembly elections, reflecting a broader demand for effective governance, security, and inclusive development.

Overall, the study provides empirically grounded insights into citizen sentiment in West Bengal, highlighting critical areas of public concern and offering valuable implications for policymakers, scholars, and stakeholders engaged in democratic governance and state-level development.

Executive Summary

This report presents a comprehensive analysis of a large-scale public perception survey conducted to assess citizens' views on key dimensions shaping the socio-political and economic landscape of West Bengal. The survey systematically examines public opinion on governance quality, democratic functioning, internal security, social harmony, women's safety, industrial and economic development, the role of nationalism, and the openness toward political alternatives. The findings reveal a pervasive sense of dissatisfaction with the functioning and working style of the state government, accompanied by serious concerns regarding the shrinking democratic space, law-and-order challenges, declining perceptions of women's safety, and impediments to industrial and economic growth.

At the same time, the data highlights a strong and resilient sense of nationalism among the people of Bengal, particularly at the societal level, even as respondents express anxiety over increasing political polarization and regionalism. The survey also underscores deep public apprehension regarding issues of security, social cohesion, and governance credibility, which respondents believe have broader implications for national unity and the state's image across the country. Notably, a significant majority of participants indicate a willingness to consider alternative political options in the forthcoming assembly elections, reflecting an emerging demand for governance reforms, inclusive development, enhanced security, and restored public trust in democratic institutions.

Background of the Study

West Bengal occupies a historically significant and strategically important position in India's political, cultural, and economic landscape. With a legacy of intellectual movements, political activism, and social reform, the state has long played a formative role in shaping democratic discourse and public life in the country. In recent years, however, West Bengal has been the subject of heightened public debate and national attention concerning issues of governance quality, democratic functioning, internal security, social cohesion, women's safety, economic development, and political polarization.

The evolving socio-political environment of the state has been marked by recurring concerns related to law and order, allegations of institutional bias, shrinking democratic space, and challenges in balancing secular governance with social harmony. At the same time, debates surrounding illegal migration, border management, and national security have gained prominence, particularly given West Bengal's geographical location and its implications for demographic change and internal stability. These issues have increasingly shaped public discourse and citizen perceptions of both state and national governance.

Parallel to governance and security concerns, the state's economic trajectory—especially in relation to industrial development, investment climate, and employment generation—has emerged as a critical area of public interest. Persistent questions regarding policy consistency, administrative efficiency, and investor confidence have raised broader anxieties about long-term economic growth and opportunities for the youth. Women's safety and the effectiveness of legal and institutional mechanisms designed to protect women have further intensified public scrutiny, particularly in the aftermath of high-profile incidents that have drawn national attention.

Amid these challenges, public sentiment in West Bengal presents a complex and nuanced picture. While dissatisfaction with governance and political institutions appears widespread, societal attachment to national identity and nationalist sentiment remains strong. This coexistence of governance discontent and enduring nationalism highlights an important paradox in public consciousness—one that underscores the distinction citizens make between the performance of political leadership and their broader sense of national belonging and civic identity.

In this context, understanding citizen perceptions becomes essential for informed policymaking and democratic accountability. Perception-based surveys provide valuable insights into how people interpret governance outcomes, institutional performance, and socio-political developments, even when these perceptions may not always align directly with administrative data. Such insights are particularly important in pluralistic and democratic societies, where public trust, legitimacy, and participation are closely linked to how institutions are perceived to function.

The present study was undertaken against this backdrop to systematically capture and analyze public perceptions across key thematic domains—governance, democracy, security, social cohesion, women’s safety, economic development, nationalism, youth orientation, and electoral preferences. By documenting grassroots sentiment across West Bengal, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges and expectations shaping the state’s present and future trajectory. The findings aim to inform policymakers, scholars, civil society, and political stakeholders, offering empirically grounded insights into citizen priorities, anxieties, and aspirations at a critical juncture in the state’s democratic and developmental journey.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to systematically examine public perceptions of governance, democratic functioning, security, social cohesion, women’s safety, economic development, nationalism, and electoral preferences in West Bengal. The study seeks to generate empirical insights into citizen attitudes, identify areas of public concern, and understand the relationship between governance performance and political behavior.

By documenting perception-based evidence, the study aims to inform policymakers, scholars, and stakeholders about evolving public expectations and the factors influencing institutional trust, social stability, and democratic engagement in the state.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To assess public satisfaction with the functioning of the state government and political leadership in West Bengal.
2. To examine public perceptions of democratic functioning, institutional neutrality, and space for dissent.
3. To analyze public views on internal security, illegal migration, and their perceived implications for national unity and social cohesion.
4. To evaluate perceptions related to religious harmony, social polarization, and governance practices.
5. To assess public perceptions of women's safety and awareness of women-centric legislative measures.
6. To examine public opinion on industrial development and the role of government policies in economic growth.
7. To understand the strength of nationalist sentiment among the people of Bengal and its perceived role in youth development.
8. To examine public openness toward political alternatives in upcoming assembly elections.

Based on Survey Findings the hypotheses are Proved

H1: A majority of residents of West Bengal are dissatisfied with the functioning of the state government and its leadership.

The survey data strongly supports this hypothesis. Regarding satisfaction with the functioning of the state government, 1,389 respondents reported being “dissatisfied” and 3,104 reported being “completely dissatisfied,” together accounting for an overwhelming majority.

Similarly, in the evaluation of the Chief Minister's performance, **1,705 respondents stated they were "not satisfied at all" and 2,706 rated the performance as "extremely poor,"** while positive responses remained marginal. **Hence,** Hypothesis H1 is **supported.**

H2: Public perception of democratic functioning and the availability of space for dissent in West Bengal is predominantly negative.

On democratic functioning, **3,943 respondents perceived the government as "completely undemocratic and communal,"** and an additional **745 viewed it as "less democratic and secular,"** with only a small minority perceiving it as fully democratic. Regarding space for dissent, **3,656 respondents stated that the environment is "not favorable at all"** for citizens or opposition to raise their voices. **Hence,** Hypothesis H2 is **supported,** indicating widespread concern over democratic space and institutional neutrality.

H3: A significant proportion of respondents perceive illegal migration as a threat to state security and national integrity.

The survey shows exceptionally strong support for this hypothesis. **4,626 respondents answered "Yes"** when asked whether illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya Muslim infiltration poses a threat to the state's security. Furthermore, a large majority also believed that the state government's attitude toward institutional reforms addressing this issue affects **national unity and integrity either "significantly" (3,300 respondents) or "to some extent" (1,092 respondents).**

Hence, Hypothesis H3 is **strongly supported.**

H4: Respondents perceive governance practices, including religious appeasement and symbolic political actions, as contributing to social polarization.

The data provides consistent evidence in support of this hypothesis. **3,792 respondents believed that the state government follows a policy of extreme religious appeasement**, while a majority also perceived symbolic political-religious actions as promoting fanaticism and polarization either “significantly” (2,613 respondents) or “to some extent” (1,246 respondents). Additionally, concerns about possible separatist tendencies were expressed by **4,012 respondents**, reflecting deep anxieties about social cohesion.

Hence, Hypothesis H4 is supported.

H5: Despite dissatisfaction with governance, nationalist sentiment among the people of West Bengal is perceived to be strong, alongside openness to political alternatives.

All five hypotheses formulated for the study are **empirically supported by the survey data**. The findings collectively demonstrate a pattern of **governance dissatisfaction, democratic concern, security anxiety, perceived social polarization, and strong societal nationalism**, culminating in a pronounced openness to political alternatives. These results affirm the internal consistency between the study’s objectives, hypotheses, and empirical outcomes.

Methodological Note

The study adopts a **descriptive research design** using a **structured questionnaire** to collect perception-based data. The questionnaire covered key thematic domains including governance, democracy, security, social cohesion, women's safety, economic development, nationalism, youth orientation, and electoral preferences.

Data were analyzed using **descriptive statistical techniques**, including frequency distributions and visual representations (bar graphs), to identify dominant trends and patterns in public perception. The analysis focuses on capturing the intensity and distribution of opinions rather than establishing causal relationships. The instrument was developed to capture public perceptions across multiple interrelated dimensions, including governance performance, democratic functioning, internal security, socio-political environment, women's safety, economic and industrial development, nationalism, and electoral preferences. The questionnaire consisted primarily of close-ended questions, enabling standardized responses and facilitating quantitative analysis of public opinion.

Sample Size and Coverage

1- Sample Size

The total **sample size of the survey is 5,013 respondents.**

This sample size is statistically robust for a state-level perception study and allows for meaningful descriptive analysis across multiple thematic dimensions. The large number of responses enhances the reliability of observed trends and reduces sampling error.

2- Sample Size Determination Formula

The sample size for the survey aligns with standard statistical principles used for large populations. For large populations, the following formula is commonly applied:

$$n = Z^2 \times p \times (1-p) / e^2$$

Where:

- n = required sample size
- Z = Z-value corresponding to the desired confidence level (1.96 for 95% confidence)
- p = estimated proportion of the population (0.5 used for maximum variability)
- e = margin of error (commonly set at 0.05)

Substituting standard values:

$$n = (1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5 / (0.05)^2 = 384$$

While a minimum sample size of approximately **384 respondents** is statistically sufficient for large populations, the present study's **actual sample size of 5,013 respondents far exceeds this threshold**, significantly enhancing statistical confidence, reducing sampling error, and strengthening the robustness of findings.

3- Sample Coverage

- **Geographical Coverage:** Respondents were drawn from across West Bengal, ensuring representation of diverse regional contexts.
- **Residency Status:** A substantial majority of respondents identified themselves as permanent residents of West Bengal, lending strong regional authenticity and contextual relevance to the findings.
- **Population Frame:** The target population comprised adult residents of West Bengal eligible to express informed opinions on governance, security, and socio-political issues.

The dominance of permanent residents ensures that the perceptions captured are informed by **long-term lived experience**, sustained interaction with state institutions, and continuous exposure to governance outcomes, rather than transient or external viewpoints.

Data analysis was carried out using descriptive statistical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and variations in respondents' perceptions. Frequency distributions were computed for each survey item to assess the relative weight of different response categories. To enhance interpretability and ensure clarity in presentation, the findings were visually represented through bar graphs, which effectively highlight dominant responses and comparative differences across themes. This approach allows for a clear and accessible depiction of public sentiment while maintaining analytical rigor, making the findings suitable for academic, policy-oriented, and public discourse.

Limitations of the Study

While the survey covers a large and diverse sample across West Bengal, it primarily captures perceptions at a specific point in time. As with all perception-based surveys, responses may be influenced by recent events, media narratives, and prevailing political discourse. The findings should therefore be interpreted as indicators of public sentiment rather than definitive assessments of institutional performance.

Demographic Context

A key demographic characteristic of the respondent pool is the predominance of permanent residents of West Bengal. A substantial majority of participants identified themselves as long-term residents of the state, thereby providing the survey with strong regional grounding and contextual relevance. This demographic composition lends credibility and authenticity to the findings, as the opinions captured largely reflect the lived experiences, everyday realities, and sustained interactions of residents with the state's governance structures, social environment, and economic conditions.

Permanent Residents: 3,890 respondents (77.6%)
Non-Permanent Residents: 1,123 respondents (22.4%)

Demographic Profile of Respondents: Residency Status in West Bengal

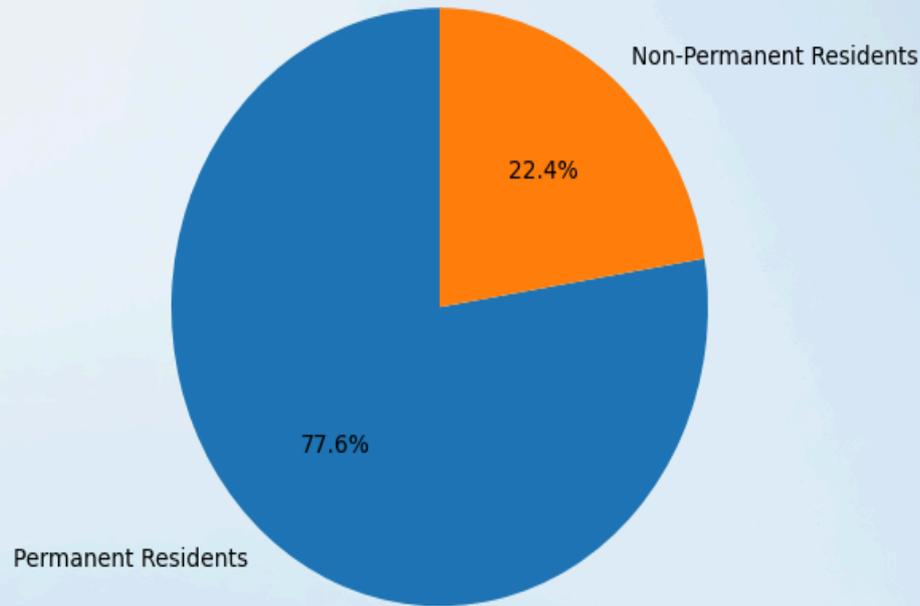


Figure 1

The dominance of permanent residents among respondents ensures that perceptions related to governance performance, law and order, social cohesion, women’s safety, and development are informed by continuous exposure rather than transient or external viewpoints. Consequently, the survey outcomes may be interpreted as a reliable reflection of grassroots public sentiment within West Bengal, strengthening the validity of conclusions drawn regarding policy effectiveness, institutional trust, and future political preferences.(Figure 1)

Governance and Democratic Functioning

1. Satisfaction with the State Government

The survey findings reveal a pronounced level of public dissatisfaction with the functioning of the state government in West Bengal. An overwhelming majority of respondents reported being either dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied with the government's overall performance, indicating a deep and widespread sense of discontent. The concentration of responses within these two categories suggests that dissatisfaction is not marginal or isolated, but rather systemic in nature.

This pattern of responses reflects public concerns regarding the effectiveness, transparency, and responsiveness of governance mechanisms in the state. The high levels of dissatisfaction may be interpreted as a perceived gap between public expectations and governmental delivery in key areas such as administration, law and order, public services, economic management, and institutional accountability. The limited proportion of respondents expressing satisfaction further underscores the erosion of public confidence in the state's governing institutions.

- The **bar chart clearly highlights the dominance of dissatisfaction**, making the systemic nature of public discontent immediately visible.
- The sharp contrast between **positive responses (very satisfied + satisfied)** and **negative responses (dissatisfied + completely dissatisfied)** visually reinforces your analytical narrative.
- It strengthens the argument that dissatisfaction is **not marginal but structural**, supporting conclusions about governance stress, trust erosion, and electoral volatility.

This pattern of responses reflects public concerns regarding the effectiveness, transparency, and responsiveness of governance mechanisms in the state. The high levels of dissatisfaction may be interpreted as a perceived gap between public expectations and governmental delivery in key areas such as administration, law and order, public services, economic management, and institutional accountability. The limited proportion of respondents expressing satisfaction further underscores the erosion of public confidence in the state's governing institutions.(Figure 2)

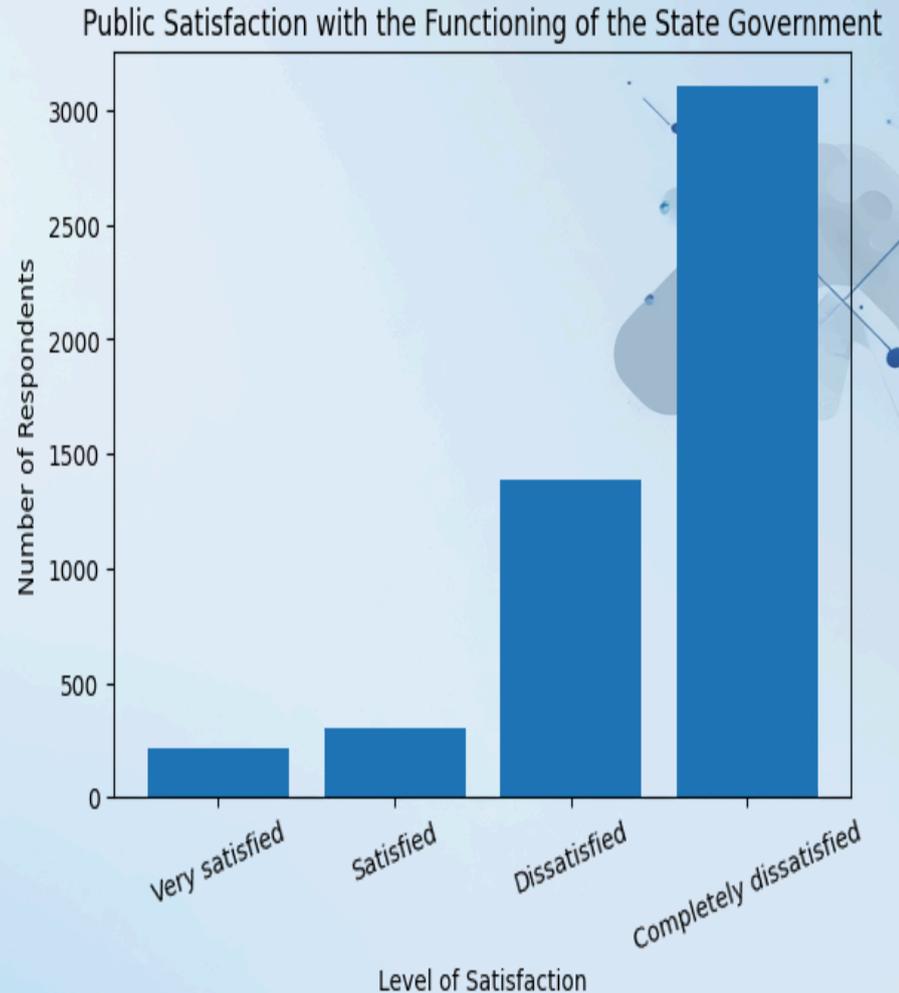


Figure 2

2. Democracy and Secularism

The survey results indicate a strong and concerning perception among respondents that the state government in West Bengal is functioning in a manner that is undemocratic and communal. A clear majority of participants categorized the government as either completely undemocratic or less democratic and secular, while only a small minority perceived it as fully democratic and secular. This imbalance in responses reflects a pronounced public skepticism regarding the state's adherence to core democratic principles and secular governance.

*The graph **visually highlights the overwhelming skew toward negative perceptions**, with the “completely undemocratic and communal” category dominating the response distribution. The **sharp imbalance** between negative perceptions and the very small proportion viewing the government as fully democratic and secular clearly reinforces your argument about a **deep trust deficit in institutional neutrality**. The minimal “no opinion” category indicates that respondents largely hold **firm and formed views**, lending further credibility to concerns about democratic erosion.*

Such perceptions point toward a significant trust deficit in the institutional neutrality of the government. Respondents appear to question whether governance decisions are being guided by constitutional values such as equality before the law, political pluralism, and secularism, or whether they are influenced by partisan, ideological, or communal considerations. The limited confidence expressed in democratic and secular functioning suggests that citizens may feel marginalized or inadequately represented within existing institutional frameworks.(Figure 3)

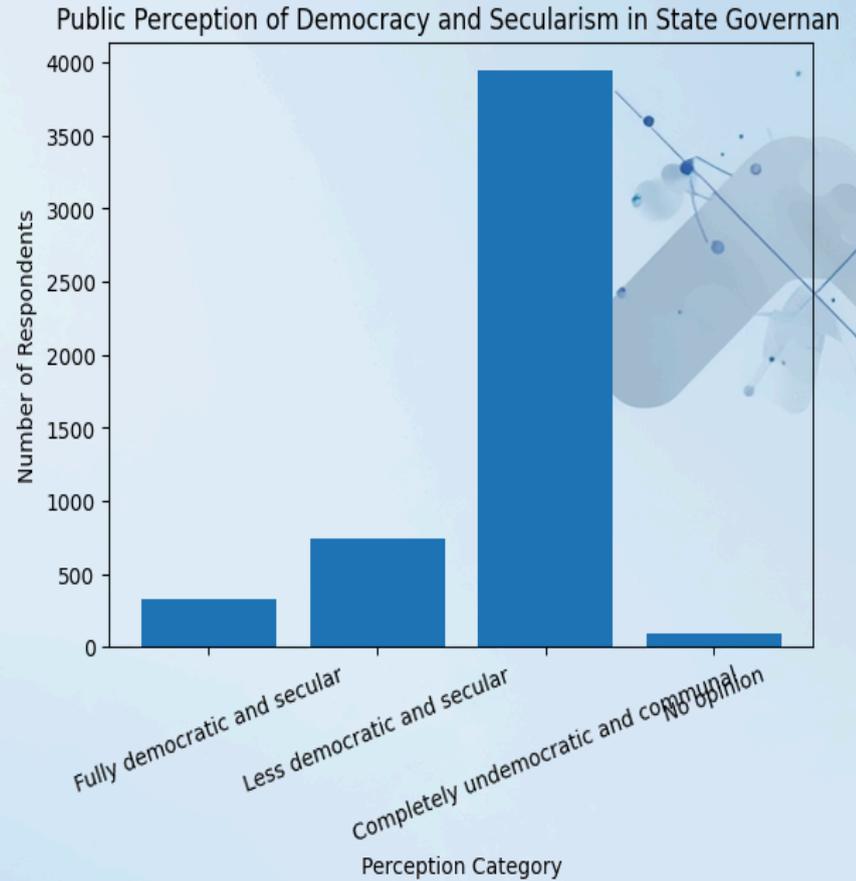


Figure 3

From a broader perspective, these findings raise important concerns about the health of democratic culture in the state. Perceived erosion of secularism and democratic norms can weaken social cohesion, deepen political polarization, and undermine public faith in constitutional governance. If left unaddressed, such perceptions may contribute to long-term disengagement from democratic processes or heightened political volatility, thereby affecting both governance stability and social harmony.

3. Space for Dissent

The survey findings reveal widespread concern regarding the availability of democratic space for dissent in West Bengal. A dominant share of respondents perceive the state environment as not favorable at all for ordinary citizens, opposition political parties, or civil society organizations to raise their voices against government policies. This perception indicates a profound sense of constraint on participatory democracy and public expression.

Such responses suggest that respondents may view institutional and informal mechanisms for criticism, protest, and policy debate as increasingly restricted or ineffective. The perceived absence of a supportive environment for dissent raises questions about the openness of political discourse, tolerance of opposition, and the functioning of democratic checks and balances within the state. When avenues for peaceful disagreement and civic engagement are seen as limited, it can foster fear, self-censorship, and political disengagement among citizens.

From a democratic governance perspective, the shrinking space for dissent has serious implications. Freedom of expression and the right to question authority are foundational to democratic accountability and policy responsiveness. The perception that these freedoms are under strain may contribute to declining institutional trust, heightened polarization, and the weakening of democratic legitimacy. Over time, such conditions can adversely affect social cohesion and undermine the inclusive character of democratic governance.

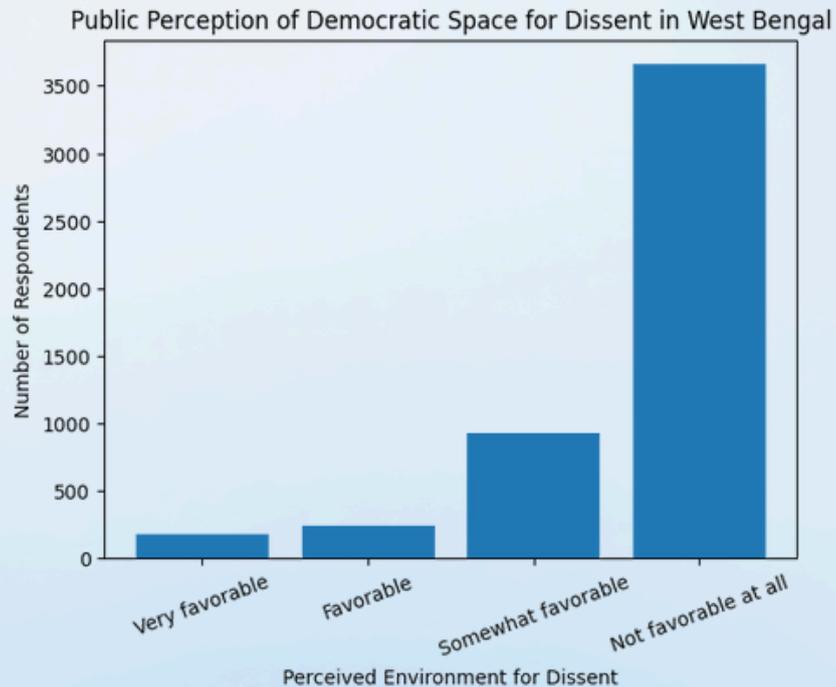


Figure 4

The bar chart **clearly visualizes the dominance of the “not favorable at all” category**, making the constraint on democratic space immediately evident.

The steep drop from “not favorable at all” to even “somewhat favorable” reinforces your argument that dissatisfaction is **structural rather than marginal**.

The very small bars for “favorable” and “very favorable” indicate **limited confidence in institutional openness**, strengthening the interpretation around shrinking democratic space and weakened participatory democracy.

Leadership Evaluation

Performance of the Chief Minister

The survey data reveals a predominantly negative public evaluation of the Chief Minister's performance, reinforcing the broader dissatisfaction observed with state governance. A substantial majority of respondents rated the performance unfavorably, with 1,705 respondents stating that they were "not satisfied at all" and an even larger segment of 2,706 respondents describing the performance as "extremely poor." Together, these two categories account for an overwhelming proportion of responses, indicating deep-seated public discontent with the leadership.

In contrast, positive assessments were limited. Only 304 respondents reported being "fully satisfied," while 298 respondents indicated that they were "merely satisfied." The relatively small size of these categories highlights the marginal level of approval enjoyed by the Chief Minister among the surveyed population. The sharp disparity between negative and positive evaluations suggests a significant erosion of public confidence in executive leadership.

This pattern of responses points toward a perceived leadership deficit, where citizens may feel that governance priorities, administrative effectiveness, and public accountability have not met expectations. The strong negative sentiment toward the Chief Minister's performance appears to mirror concerns raised in earlier sections regarding democratic functioning, law and order, and policy outcomes. From an electoral and governance perspective, such widespread dissatisfaction with leadership can have far-reaching implications, including increased political volatility, declining trust in institutions, and a heightened willingness among voters to explore alternative political leadership in future elections.

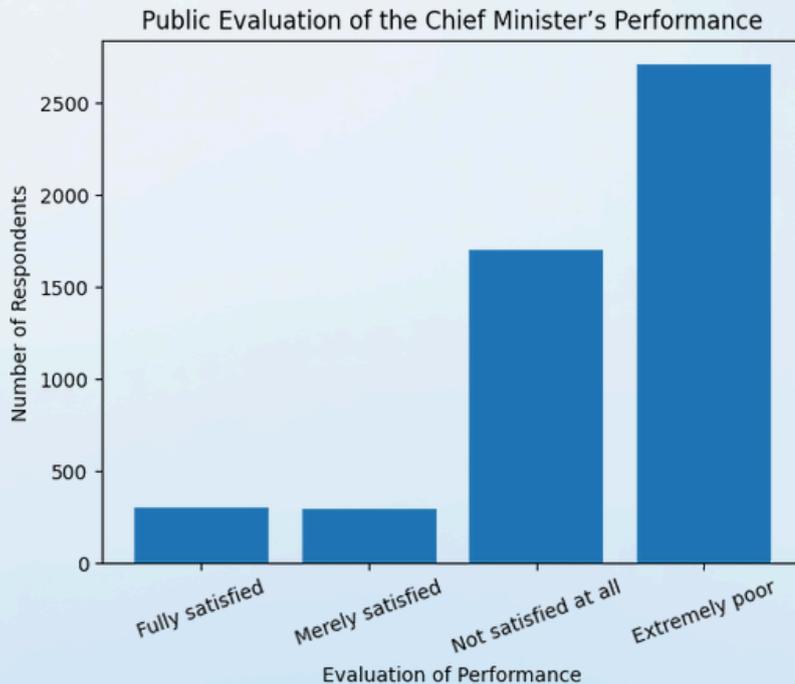


Figure 5

The bar chart **visually captures the overwhelming dominance of negative evaluations**, with the “extremely poor” and “not satisfied at all” categories far exceeding positive responses.

The **sharp contrast** between dissatisfaction and satisfaction makes the erosion of public confidence in executive leadership immediately apparent.

The near-equal and very small size of the two positive categories reinforces your point that approval of leadership is **marginal rather than divided**.

The near-equal and very small size of the two positive categories reinforces your point that approval of leadership is **marginal rather than divided**.

Security, Migration, and National Integrity

1. Perceived Security Threats

The survey data indicates an overwhelmingly strong perception among respondents that illegal Bangladeshi immigrants and infiltrating Rohingya Muslims constitute a serious threat to the security of West Bengal. An exceptionally large majority of respondents—4,626 individuals—answered “Yes” when asked whether they consider illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingya Muslims a threat to the state’s security. In contrast, only 342 respondents disagreed with this view, while a negligible 45 respondents indicated that they were uncertain.

The stark imbalance in these responses highlights the intensity and clarity of public concern on this issue. The extremely small proportion of respondents expressing uncertainty suggests that opinions on this matter are firmly held rather than ambiguous. Such perceptions likely stem from broader anxieties related to border management, demographic change, law and order, resource allocation, and internal security, as well as the perceived effectiveness of state institutions in addressing these challenges.

From a governance and policy perspective, the findings underscore the salience of security and migration as dominant public issues within the state. The widespread belief that illegal immigration poses a security risk may significantly influence public attitudes toward law enforcement agencies, electoral processes, and institutional reforms. Moreover, these perceptions appear closely linked to broader concerns regarding **national** integrity, social cohesion, and the role of the state government in safeguarding constitutional and territorial stability. Addressing these concerns transparently and effectively may therefore be central to restoring public confidence and ensuring long-term internal security.

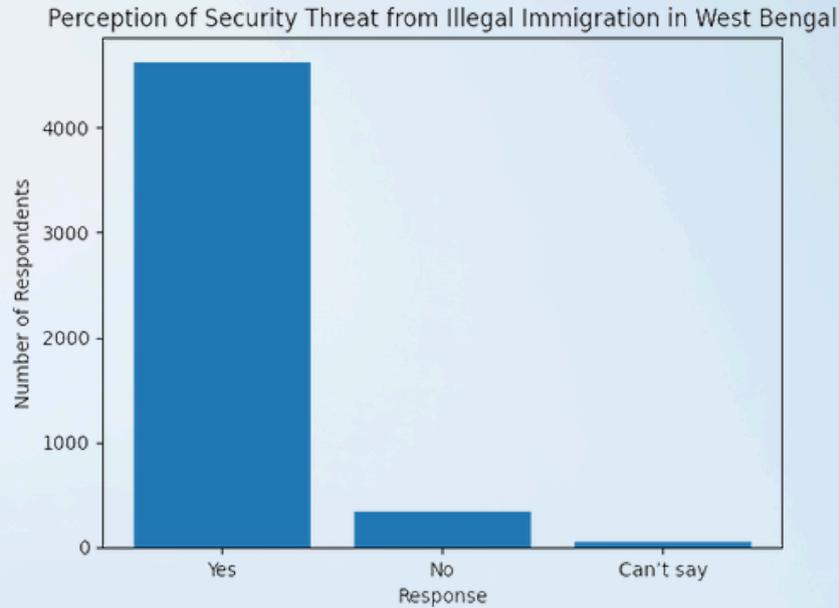


Figure 6

2. Effectiveness of Institutional Reforms (SIR)

The survey findings reflect strong public confidence in the Special Institutional Reforms (SIR) being conducted by the Election Commission as a mechanism to address concerns related to illegal migration in West Bengal. A substantial majority of respondents expressed faith in the effectiveness of these reforms. Specifically, 3,489 respondents stated that SIR would “absolutely” help in addressing the issue, while an additional 1,101 respondents believed that the reforms would have a “partial impact.” Together, these responses constitute an overwhelming endorsement of the reform process.

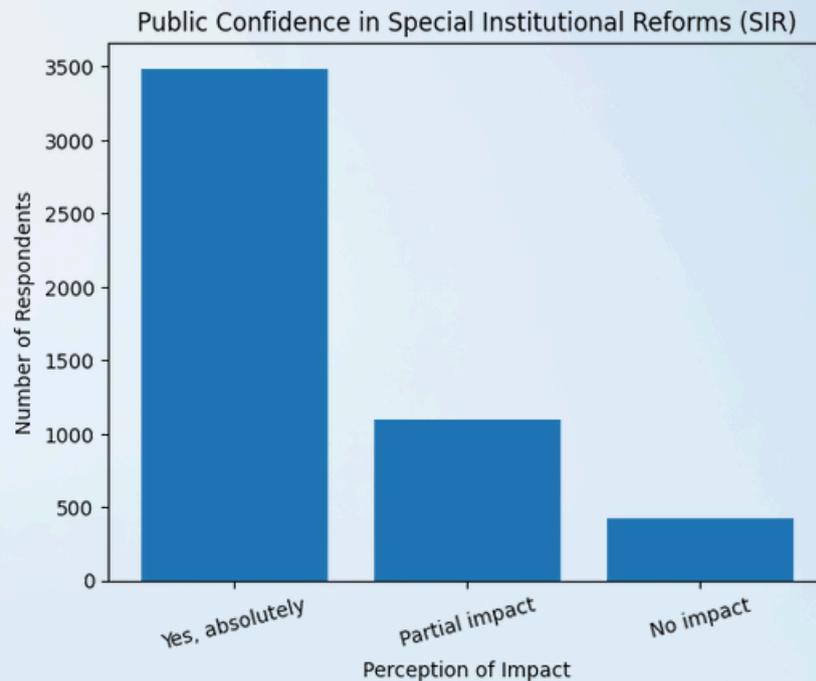


Figure 7

In contrast, skepticism toward SIR remains limited. Only 423 respondents indicated that the reforms would not have any impact, suggesting that outright rejection of the initiative is relatively marginal. The distribution of responses demonstrates not only broad support for institutional intervention but also a pragmatic recognition among some respondents that structural challenges may require sustained and multi-layered efforts beyond a single reform measure.

From a governance perspective, this strong public backing highlights the credibility and legitimacy associated with constitutional and independent institutions such as the Election Commission. The findings suggest that citizens view institutional reform—particularly when undertaken by autonomous bodies—as a viable pathway to restoring administrative integrity, addressing demographic and security concerns, and strengthening democratic processes.

This confidence in SIR also aligns with broader public expectations for transparency, accountability, and rule-based governance in resolving complex and politically sensitive issues.

3. National Unity and Integrity

The survey data indicates that respondents overwhelmingly believe the state government's attitude toward the Special Institutional Reforms (SIR) has significant implications for national unity and integrity. A large majority of participants perceive a direct linkage between state-level responses to institutional reforms and broader national interests. Specifically, 3,300 respondents stated that the government's stance affects national unity and integrity "significantly," while an additional 1,092 respondents believed that it has an impact "to some extent." Together, these responses constitute a decisive majority, underscoring widespread public concern regarding the national ramifications of the state government's approach.

Perceived Impact of State Government's Attitude Toward SIR on National Unity & Integrity

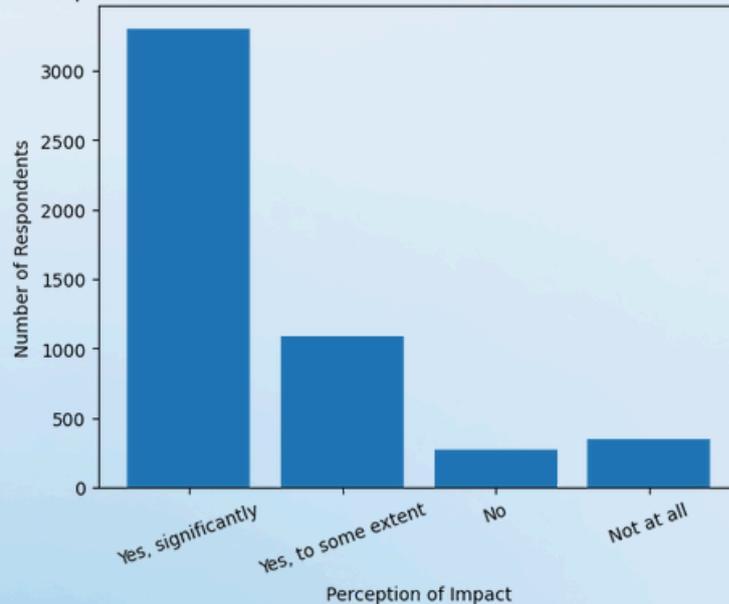


Figure 8

In contrast, relatively few respondents dismissed such concerns. Only 273 respondents believed that the government's attitude does not affect national unity, and 348 respondents felt it does not have any impact at all. The comparatively small size of these categories suggests that skepticism toward the national significance of the issue is limited.

These findings highlight a strong public perception that issues surrounding SIR extend beyond state boundaries and touch upon the core principles of national cohesion, constitutional authority, and institutional credibility. Respondents appear to interpret resistance or ambivalence toward reforms initiated by constitutional bodies as potentially undermining the collective national framework. From a policy perspective, this underscores the importance of constructive state-centre engagement and transparent communication to maintain public confidence in both democratic institutions and national unity.

4 Risk of Separatism

The survey data reveals a pronounced sense of apprehension among respondents regarding the potential emergence of separatist tendencies in West Bengal. A strong majority believe that the combination of governmental appeasement policies and perceived demographic changes could create conditions conducive to separatism within the state. Specifically, 4,012 respondents answered "Yes", indicating a firm belief that such a situation could arise. In addition, 531 respondents stated that separatism is "possible," reflecting cautious concern even among those who are not fully certain.

In contrast, opposition to this view is relatively limited. Only 470 respondents answered "No," suggesting that a small minority do not perceive any separatist risk arising from current policies and demographic dynamics. The overall distribution of responses highlights that concerns over separatism are not marginal but widely shared across the respondent pool.

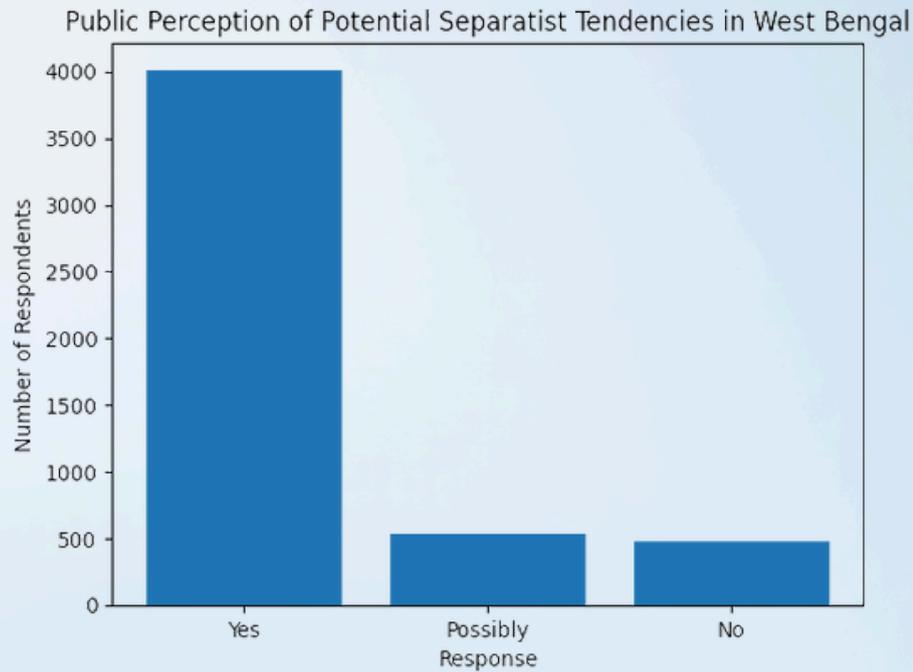


Figure 9

These findings suggest that a significant segment of the population perceives a link between governance choices, identity-based politics, and threats to territorial and political cohesion. From a broader perspective, such perceptions point to deep anxieties about national integration, internal security, and the long-term socio-political stability of the state. Whether or not these fears translate into actual separatist movements, their prevalence in public opinion signals the need for inclusive governance, transparent demographic management, and policies that reinforce constitutional unity and social cohesion.

Religion, Polarization, and Social Harmony

1. Religious Appeasement

The survey data indicates a strong public perception that the state government in West Bengal is pursuing a policy of extreme appeasement toward a specific religion, which respondents believe is contributing to increasing social polarization. A substantial majority of participants expressed this view, with 3,792 respondents clearly answering “Yes” when asked whether the government is functioning with an appeasement-oriented approach. This dominant response reflects a widespread belief that governance decisions are perceived to be influenced by religious considerations rather than neutral, constitutional principles.

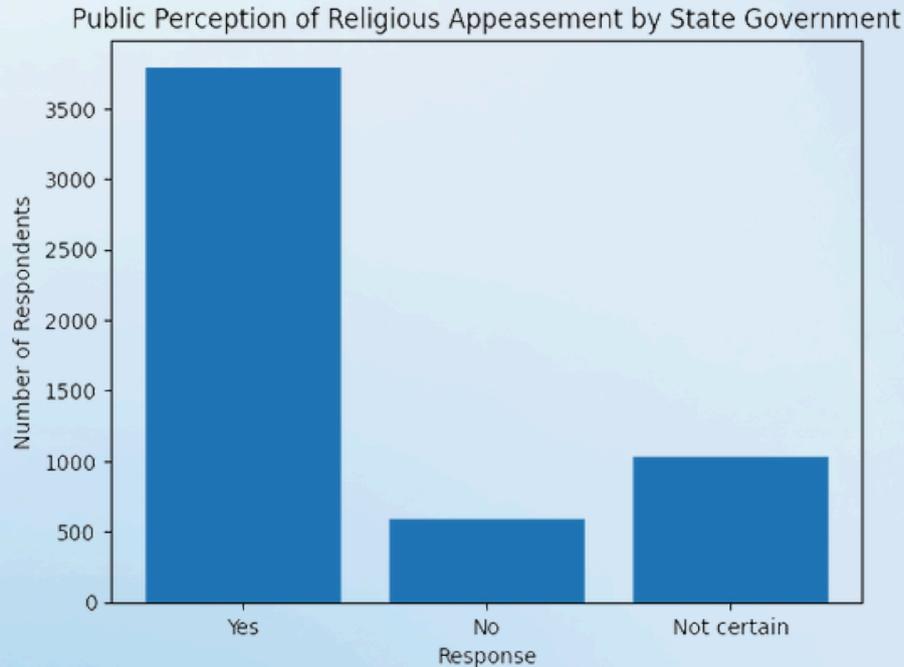


Figure 10

In contrast, only 587 respondents stated “No,” rejecting the notion of religious appeasement, while 1,034 respondents indicated that they were “not certain.” Although the latter group reflects some degree of ambiguity or lack of definitive judgment, the overall pattern strongly favors the perception of appeasement-driven governance. The numerical gap between affirmative and negative responses underscores the intensity of this sentiment among the surveyed population.

From a socio-political perspective, these findings suggest that a significant section of the public associates current governance practices with identity-based favoritism, which may deepen communal divisions and weaken social cohesion. The perception of religious appeasement is particularly consequential in a pluralistic society, as it can erode trust in the state’s impartiality and undermine the secular foundations of democratic governance. If such perceptions persist, they may contribute to heightened polarization, reduced inter-community trust, and increased political volatility, thereby posing challenges to long-term social harmony and inclusive development.

2. Religious Animosity

The survey findings indicate that a clear majority of respondents either directly believe or strongly suspect that illegal migration has contributed to the rise of religious animosity against Sanatan Dharma in West Bengal. When asked about this linkage, 2,474 respondents answered “Yes,” expressing a firm belief that the high number of illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya Muslim migrants is a contributing factor. Additionally, a substantial group of 2,063 respondents selected “Possibly,” reflecting cautious agreement or suspicion regarding the association.

Perception of Link Between Illegal Migration and Religious Animosity Against Sanatan Dharma

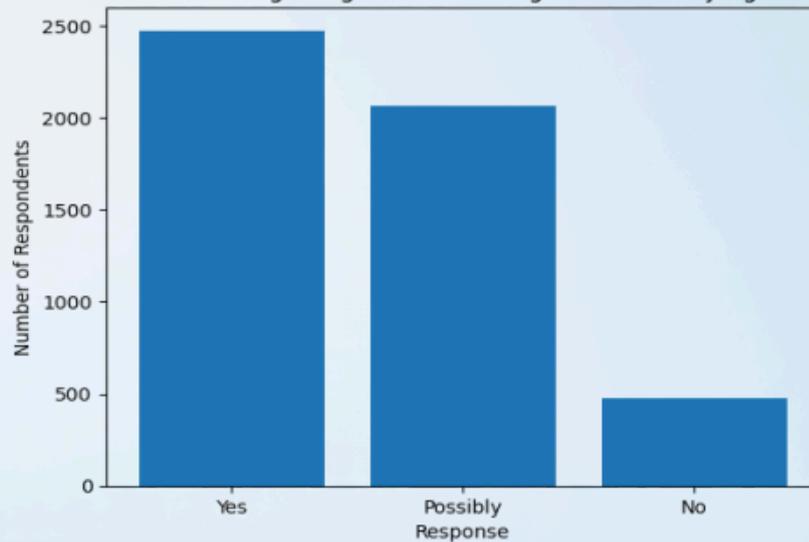


Figure 11

In contrast, a relatively small segment of the respondent pool—476 individuals—rejected this linkage outright by answering “No.” The combined total of affirmative and tentative responses far outweighs the dissenting view, demonstrating that perceptions connecting demographic change with religious tension are widespread rather than peripheral.

These findings suggest that concerns over illegal migration extend beyond security and governance and are deeply intertwined with issues of cultural identity, religious coexistence, and social harmony. The prevalence of such perceptions may indicate a growing sense of cultural insecurity among sections of the population, as well as apprehension about the state’s ability to preserve religious balance and constitutional equality. From a policy and social cohesion perspective, the data underscores the importance of transparent demographic management, effective communication, and inclusive governance to prevent the escalation of mistrust and inter-religious tension.

3. Symbolic Political–Religious Events

The survey data reveals a strong public perception that symbolic political–religious actions, such as the laying of foundation stones for controversial religious structures, contribute to religious fanaticism and social polarization in West Bengal. A substantial majority of respondents believe that such events have a tangible impact on communal relations and the socio-political climate of the state. Specifically, 2,613 respondents stated that these events promote fanaticism and polarization “significantly,” while an additional 1,246 respondents believed that they would have “some impact.” Together, these responses constitute a clear majority, indicating widespread concern regarding the consequences of symbolic religious interventions in the political sphere.

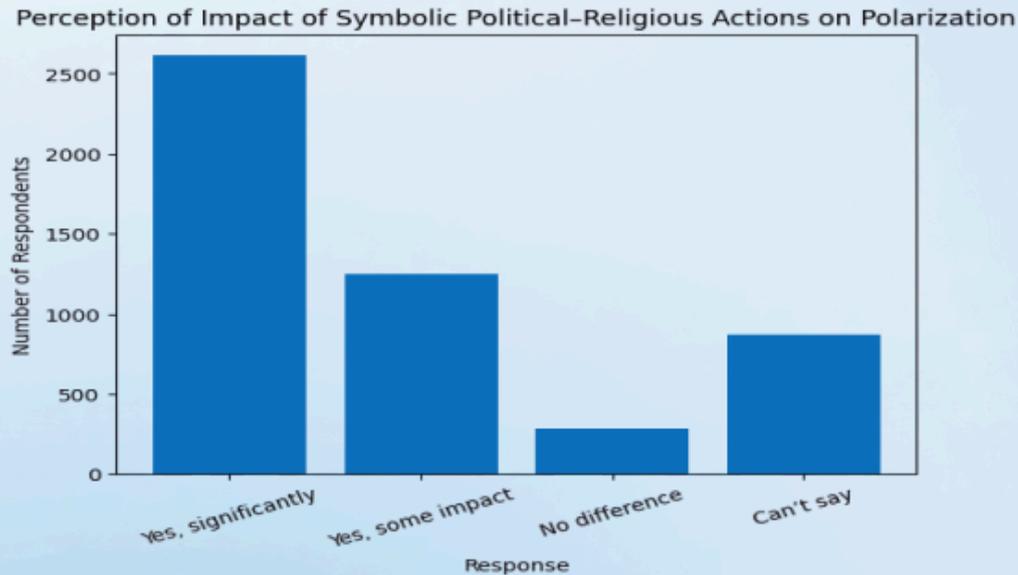


Figure 12

In contrast, relatively few respondents dismissed the significance of such actions. Only 285 respondents felt that these events would not make any difference, suggesting limited confidence in the neutrality or harmlessness of symbolic religious gestures by political actors. Meanwhile, 869 respondents selected “can’t say,” reflecting either uncertainty, lack of sufficient information, or hesitation to express a definitive opinion on a sensitive issue.

These findings underscore a broader perception that the politicization of religious symbols can intensify communal divisions and exacerbate existing fault lines within society. When political authority is seen as endorsing or promoting contentious religious symbolism, it may undermine social cohesion and weaken public trust in the state’s commitment to secular governance. From a policy and governance perspective, the data suggests the need for caution, restraint, and constitutional sensitivity in political conduct to prevent the escalation of religious polarization and to preserve communal harmony in a pluralistic society.

Women’s Safety and Social Security

1. Safety of Working Women

The survey findings reveal a predominantly negative public perception regarding the safety of working women in West Bengal. A clear majority of respondents expressed serious concerns, indicating that they do not consider the state to be a safe environment for women engaged in professional or occupational activities. Specifically, 1,932 respondents stated “No,” while an additional 1,797 respondents answered “Not at all,” together forming an overwhelming segment of the respondent pool. These figures reflect deep-seated anxiety regarding women’s personal security, workplace safety, and the broader law-and-order situation in the state.

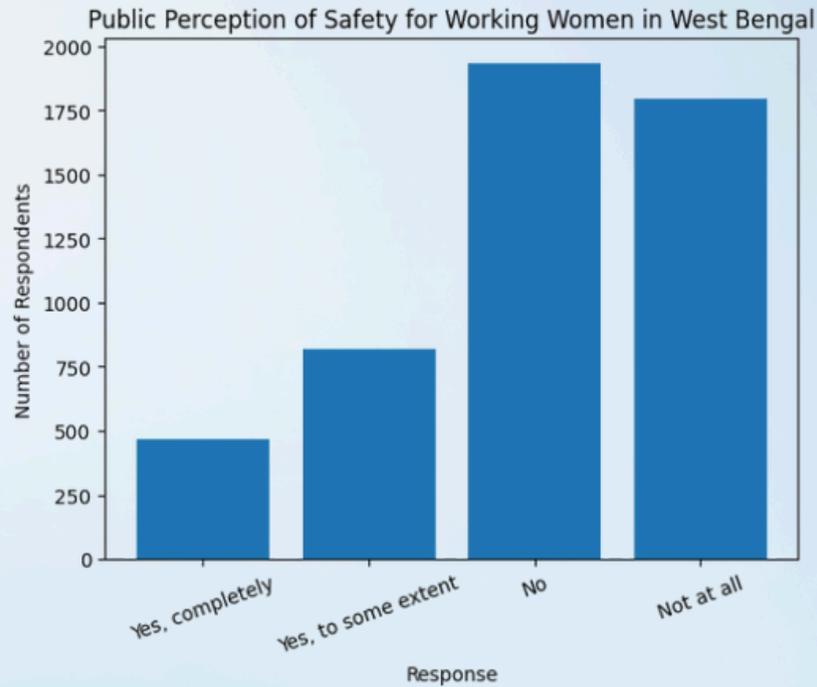


Figure 13

In contrast, relatively fewer respondents expressed confidence in women’s safety. Only 468 respondents felt that West Bengal is “completely safe” for working women, while 816 respondents believed it is safe “to some extent.” The stark numerical disparity between negative and positive responses highlights a significant gap between public expectations and perceived realities concerning women’s safety. These findings suggest that concerns about women’s security are not isolated incidents but represent a broader societal issue with implications for workforce participation, economic independence, and gender equity. Persistent perceptions of insecurity can discourage women from pursuing employment opportunities, restrict mobility, and undermine efforts toward inclusive economic growth.

From a governance and policy perspective, the data underscores the urgent need for effective law enforcement, robust institutional safeguards, and sustained public confidence-building measures to ensure a safe and enabling environment for working women across the state.

2. Women's Safety Legislation

A critical finding of the survey is the remarkably low level of public awareness regarding the new women's safety bill introduced by the state government. A very large segment of respondents—2,743 individuals—reported that they were not aware of the bill at all. This constitutes the single largest response category, clearly indicating a substantial communication and outreach gap in the dissemination of legislative initiatives related to women's safety.

Among respondents who were aware of the bill, perceptions were notably mixed. While 1,047 respondents expressed complete satisfaction with the legislation, suggesting approval of its intent or provisions, a comparable proportion conveyed reservations. 832 respondents stated that they were not satisfied, reflecting doubts about the bill's adequacy, implementation potential, or practical effectiveness. An additional 391 respondents indicated that they were satisfied only "to some extent," pointing toward cautious or conditional approval rather than strong confidence.

These findings suggest that the effectiveness of women's safety legislation is constrained not merely by its legal framework but by limited public awareness, uneven confidence, and concerns regarding enforcement. Legislation, in the absence of widespread communication, institutional preparedness, and visible implementation outcomes, may fail to translate into enhanced public trust or improved perceptions of safety. From a policy perspective, the data underscores the necessity of complementing legal reforms with sustained public engagement, awareness campaigns, institutional capacity-building, and transparent enforcement mechanisms to ensure that legislative intent is meaningfully realized on the ground.

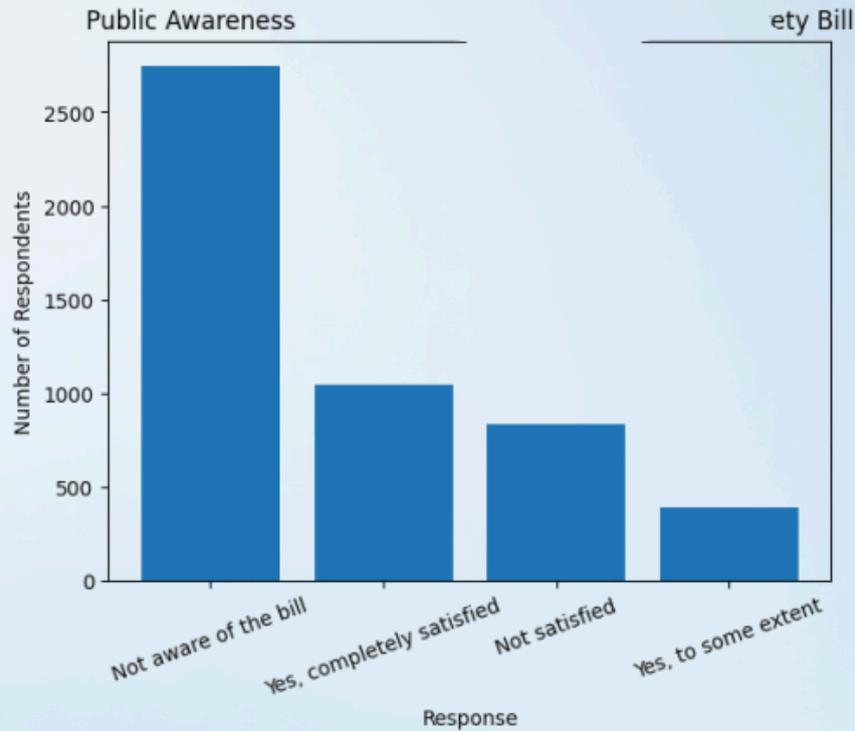


Figure 14

3. Impact of High-Profile Incidents

The survey data demonstrates a strong public perception that high-profile incidents such as those at Sandeshkhali and RG Kar College have significantly tarnished the national image of West Bengal, particularly with respect to law and order and women's safety. A substantial majority of respondents believe that these incidents have had adverse repercussions beyond the state, influencing how West Bengal is viewed across the country.

Specifically, 2,915 respondents stated that the state’s image has been “completely” tarnished, while an additional 987 respondents believed that it has been affected “to some extent.” Together, these responses form an overwhelming majority, indicating widespread concern over reputational damage.

In contrast, only 290 respondents felt that these incidents have not affected the state’s image, suggesting that dismissal of their broader impact is relatively rare. A further 821 respondents selected “not certain,” reflecting either limited information, hesitation to draw definitive conclusions, or uncertainty about national perceptions. Nevertheless, even with this segment considered, the dominant trend clearly points toward a belief that such incidents have undermined public confidence in the state’s governance, particularly in areas related to women’s safety and the maintenance of public order.

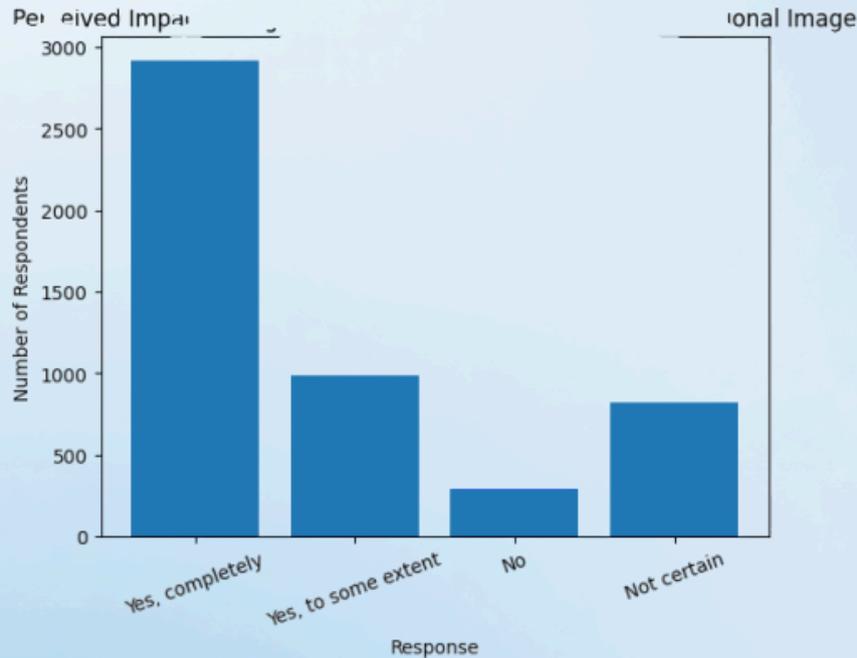


Figure15

These findings underscore the powerful role that high-profile incidents play in shaping public perception and institutional credibility. Incidents involving allegations of violence, administrative failure, or inadequate response are seen not merely as isolated events but as indicators of systemic weaknesses in governance and enforcement. From a policy and governance standpoint, the data highlights the importance of swift, transparent, and accountable responses to such incidents, as failure to do so may have lasting consequences for public trust, investment climate, social cohesion, and the state's standing at the national level.

Economic and Industrial Development

The survey findings indicate a strong public perception that the policies and working style of the state government are hindering industrial development in West Bengal. A substantial majority of respondents believe that governance-related factors are acting as obstacles to industrial growth, either decisively or to a significant extent. Specifically, 2,674 respondents stated that government policies obstruct industrial development “to some extent,” while 1,282 respondents believed that these policies are an obstacle “completely.” Together, these responses constitute a clear majority, highlighting widespread concern regarding the state's industrial and economic direction.

In contrast, very few respondents dismissed this concern. Only 120 respondents felt that government policies are “not at all” an obstacle, indicating minimal confidence in the current policy environment. Additionally, 937 respondents selected “can't say,” which may reflect limited direct exposure to industrial policy outcomes, uncertainty due to mixed signals, or a lack of accessible information on economic governance. These findings have important implications for the state's investment climate, employment generation, and long-term economic growth. Public perception of policy-induced barriers can discourage private investment, weaken investor confidence, and slow industrial expansion.

Perception of State Government Policies as Obstacles to Industrial Development

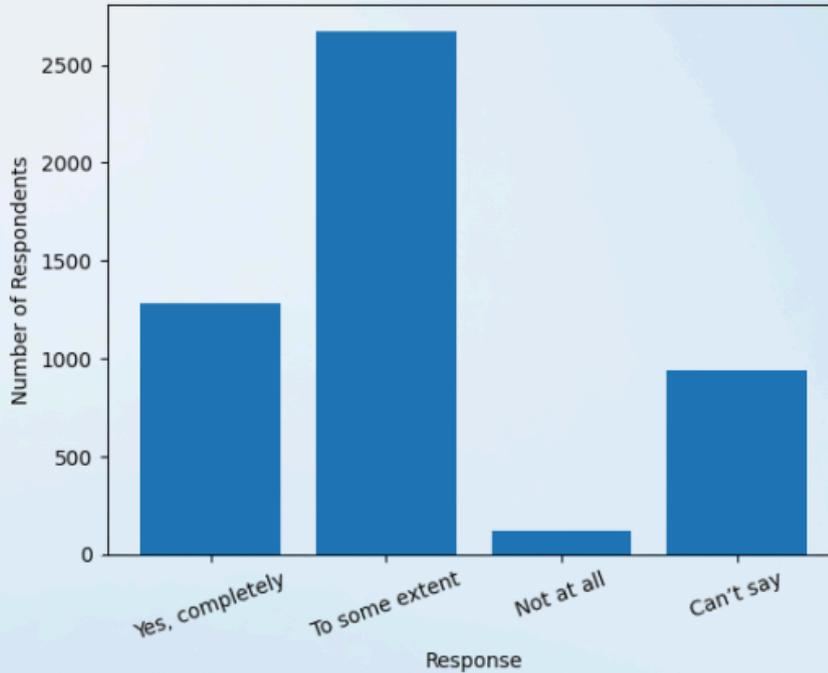


Figure 16

Persistent doubts about administrative efficiency, regulatory stability, and governance predictability may also contribute to job stagnation and out-migration of skilled youth. From a policy perspective, the data underscores the need for transparent, investor-friendly, and consistent industrial policies, along with efficient administrative processes, to rebuild confidence and foster sustainable economic development in the state.

Nationalism, Youth, and Political Identity

1 Nationalist Sentiment

Despite widespread dissatisfaction with governance and state-level administration, the survey findings reveal an overwhelming perception of strong nationalist sentiment among the people of Bengal. Respondents largely distinguish between their evaluation of governmental performance and their assessment of the people's sense of national identity. The data shows that 3,194 respondents described nationalist sentiment as “very strong,” while an additional 1,687 respondents rated it as “strong.” Together, these categories account for an overwhelming majority of responses, underscoring a deeply rooted sense of national belonging and collective identity among the populace.

In contrast, perceptions of weak nationalist sentiment are minimal. Only 115 respondents characterized nationalism as “weak,” and a mere 17 respondents viewed it as “very weak.” The negligible size of these categories highlights the near-consensus among respondents that nationalist भावना (sentiment) remains robust at the societal level, irrespective of political dissatisfaction or governance challenges.

These findings suggest an important analytical distinction: while respondents may express frustration with political leadership, administrative practices, or policy outcomes, they continue to perceive nationalism as a unifying force among the people of Bengal. This resilience of national identity may serve as a stabilizing social factor amid political polarization and governance-related discontent. From a broader perspective, the data indicates that popular nationalism operates independently of state performance and may play a critical role in shaping civic values, social cohesion, and long-term national integration, particularly among the youth.

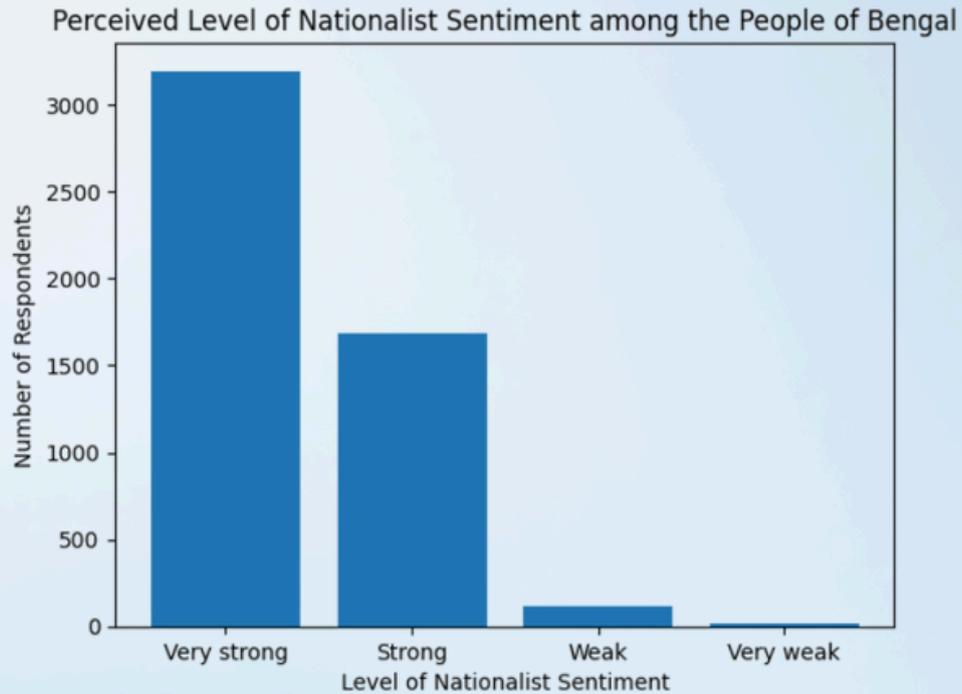


Figure 17

2. Polarization vs Nationalism

While nationalist sentiment is perceived as strong at the societal level, the survey data reveals a contrasting and concerning perception within the political sphere. A substantial majority of respondents believe that political polarization and regionalism are overpowering nationalism in Bengal's political discourse and practice. Specifically, 2,789 respondents stated that polarization and regionalism are overpowering nationalism "to some extent," while 1,678 respondents believed this is happening "completely." Together, these responses represent an overwhelming majority, indicating that concerns about political fragmentation are both widespread and deeply felt.

Perception of Political Polarization and Regionalism Overpowering Nationalism

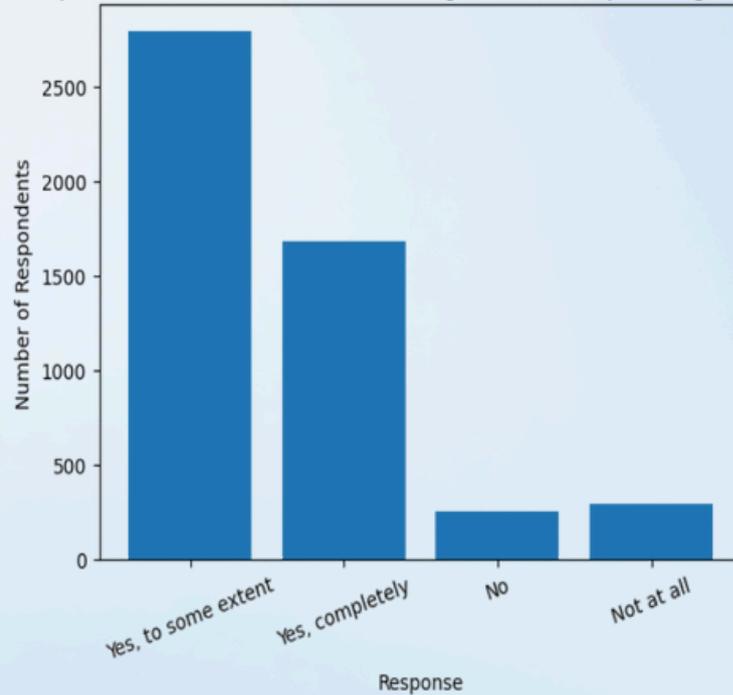


Figure 18

In contrast, relatively few respondents rejected this view. Only 250 respondents answered “No,” and 296 respondents felt that polarization is “not at all” overpowering nationalism. The small size of these categories suggests limited confidence in the idea that political processes and narratives are currently reinforcing national unity.

This divergence between strong societal nationalism and weakened political nationalism is analytically significant. It suggests that while people may continue to identify strongly with the nation at a cultural and emotional level, political actors and institutions are perceived as emphasizing regional identity, partisan divisions, and polarizing narratives over inclusive national values. Such a disconnect can weaken democratic cohesion, intensify identity-based politics, and reduce the integrative capacity of political institutions.

From a governance and policy perspective, these findings highlight the challenge of aligning political leadership and discourse with the broader nationalist sentiment present among the populace. Addressing political polarization and regionalism may therefore be critical not only for democratic stability but also for harnessing existing nationalist sentiment as a constructive force for social cohesion, development, and national integration.

3. Youth and Nationalist Ideology

The survey findings indicate that a clear majority of respondents believe the development of nationalist ideology among the youth of Bengal is important for their social and economic growth. Public opinion strongly favors the view that nationalism plays a constructive role in shaping values such as social responsibility, collective identity, discipline, and developmental motivation among young people. Specifically, 1,903 respondents stated that nationalist ideology is “very necessary,” while an even larger group of 1,983 respondents felt it is necessary “to some extent.” Together, these responses form a decisive majority, reflecting broad agreement on the positive developmental role of nationalist orientation among youth.

In contrast, a smaller segment of respondents expressed disagreement. **663 respondents answered “No,”** indicating that they do not perceive nationalist ideology as necessary for youth development, while **464 respondents selected “Not at all,”** reflecting a more categorical rejection of this idea. Although these dissenting views are not insignificant, they are clearly outweighed by those supporting at least a partial role for nationalism in youth development.

Perception of Need for Nationalist Ideology among Youth for Social and Economic Growth

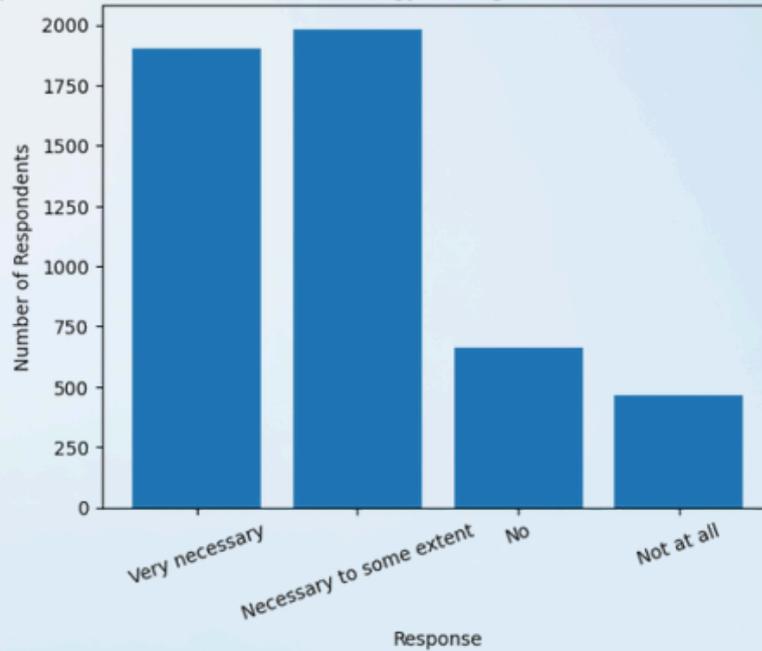


Figure 19

These findings suggest that respondents view nationalism not merely as a political ideology, but as a social and developmental framework that can contribute to personal growth, civic engagement, and economic participation among young people. The emphasis on youth is particularly significant in the context of earlier findings that highlight governance dissatisfaction and political polarization. Strengthening positive, inclusive nationalist values among youth may therefore be perceived as a means of fostering social cohesion, enhancing employability and productivity, and aligning individual aspirations with broader national development goals. From a policy perspective, the data points to the importance of educational, cultural, and civic initiatives that channel nationalist sentiment in a constructive and development-oriented manner.

Electoral Outlook and Political Alternatives

The survey findings reveal a pronounced inclination among respondents to consider alternative political options in the upcoming assembly elections, reflecting a strong appetite for political change in West Bengal. An overwhelming majority of respondents—4,430 individuals—answered “Yes” when asked whether they would consider other political alternatives for ensuring all-round development and enhanced security in the state. This dominant response underscores a widespread desire for new governance approaches, leadership, and policy direction.

In contrast, resistance to political change appears limited. Only 342 respondents stated “No,” indicating satisfaction with existing political arrangements or reluctance to explore alternatives. A further 241 respondents selected “Can’t say,” suggesting uncertainty or a wait-and-watch approach rather than firm endorsement of the status quo. The relatively small size of these groups highlights the extent to which openness to political alternatives has become a mainstream sentiment rather than a marginal one.

These findings carry significant electoral and governance implications. The strong willingness to consider alternative political forces appears closely linked to the cumulative dissatisfaction expressed across earlier sections of the survey—particularly regarding governance performance, democratic functioning, law and order, women’s safety, economic development, and social cohesion. From an electoral perspective, this data suggests a fluid political landscape in which voter loyalties may be shifting, and where performance, credibility, and governance outcomes are likely to play a decisive role in shaping electoral choices.

Willingness to Consider Political Alternatives in Upcoming Assembly Elections

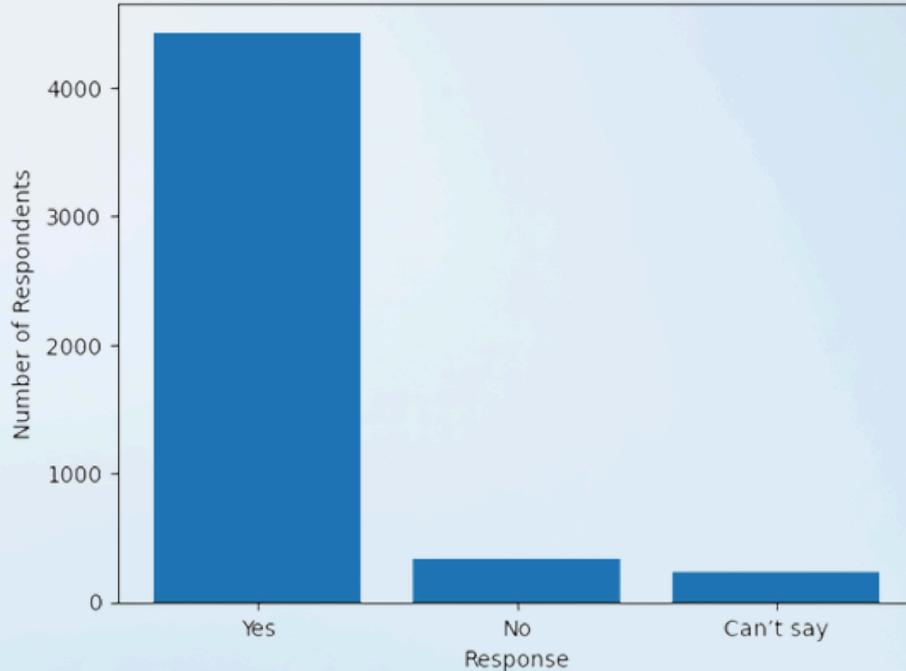


Figure 20

Overall, the survey indicates that public opinion in West Bengal is at a critical juncture, marked by heightened expectations for effective governance, security, inclusive development, and institutional trust. The readiness to consider political alternatives signals not merely discontent, but an active search for solutions and leadership capable of addressing the state's multifaceted challenges in the coming years.

Key Thematic Conclusions

1 Governance Crisis

The survey consistently reflects a deep governance crisis, marked by overwhelming dissatisfaction with the functioning of the state government, leadership performance, democratic norms, and space for dissent. Very high negative ratings of the Chief Minister's performance and widespread perceptions of undemocratic and communal governance underscore a serious erosion of public trust in institutions. This theme emerges as one of the strongest across the dataset, indicating systemic rather than episodic dissatisfaction.

2. Security Anxiety

Security-related concerns constitute one of the most intense public anxieties. A very large majority perceive illegal Bangladeshi and Rohingya migration as a serious threat to state security and national integrity. Strong public confidence in SIR reforms further suggests that respondents view institutional intervention as necessary to address perceived vulnerabilities. This theme's high intensity reflects how security concerns dominate public consciousness and shape attitudes toward governance and national unity.

3. Social Polarization

Perceptions of religious appeasement, controversial symbolic political-religious events, and rising communal tensions indicate a strong belief that social harmony is under strain. A clear majority believe that such actions contribute to fanaticism and polarization. This theme highlights public concern that identity-based politics is deepening divisions and weakening secular and inclusive governance.

4 Women's Safety Deficit

Women's safety emerges as a critical governance and social failure. A dominant majority believe that West Bengal is unsafe or completely unsafe for working women. Low awareness of women's safety legislation and the perceived mishandling of high-profile incidents further reinforce the belief that policy intent has not translated into effective protection or public confidence. This theme strongly intersects with law and order, institutional credibility, and social justice.

Interpretive Value of the Diagram

The horizontal bar diagram provides a **comparative snapshot** of public concern intensity across themes:

- **Demand for Change, Security Anxiety, and Governance Crisis** appear at the highest levels.
- **Women's Safety and Social Polarization** follow closely, indicating urgent social concerns.
- **Economic Constraints and Ideological Paradox** highlight structural and narrative-level tensions.

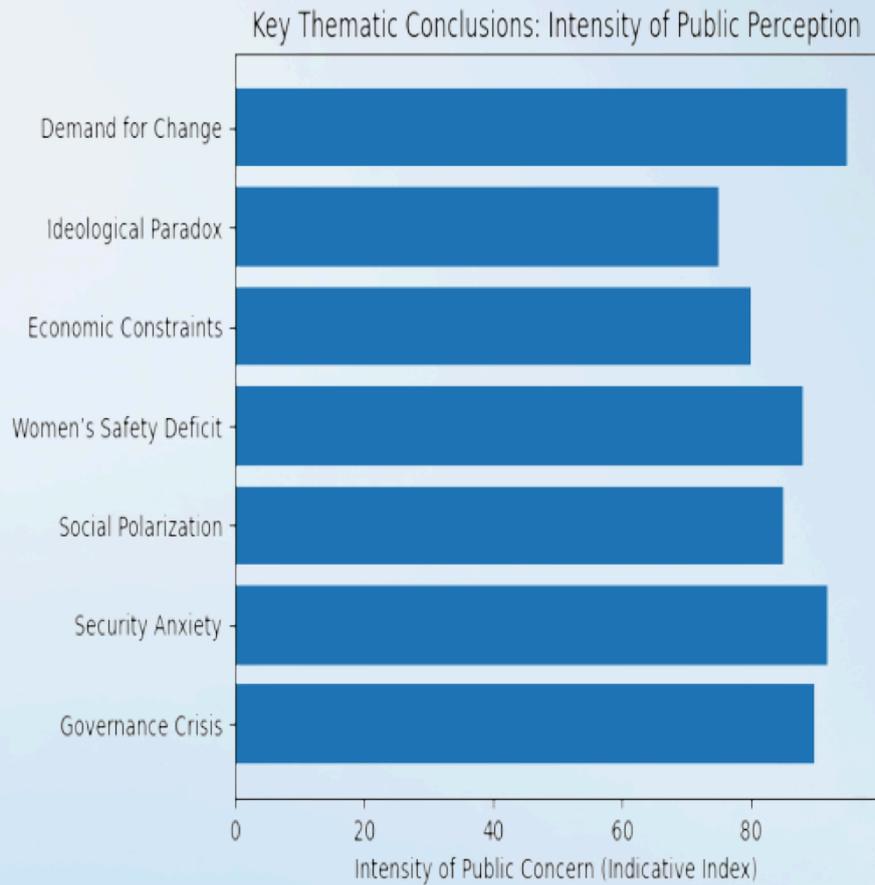


Figure 21

5. Economic Constraints

Most respondents perceive that the state government's policies and working style hinder industrial and economic development, either completely or to a significant extent. This perception has direct implications for investor confidence, job creation, and youth employment. The economic theme reflects frustration with governance inefficiencies and policy unpredictability rather than rejection of development itself.

6 Ideological Paradox

One of the most analytically significant findings is the ideological paradox revealed by the data. While nationalist sentiment among the people of Bengal is perceived as overwhelmingly strong, respondents simultaneously believe that political polarization and regionalism are overpowering nationalism in the political domain. This disconnect suggests a gap between societal values and political narratives, pointing to leadership and institutional failures rather than a decline in national identity.

Demand for Change

The strongest and most unambiguous theme is the demand for political change. An overwhelming majority of respondents express willingness to consider political alternatives in the upcoming assembly elections for better development and security. This finding synthesizes all preceding themes—governance failure, security anxiety, social polarization, women’s safety concerns, and economic stagnation—into a clear electoral signal.

Taken together, the thematic analysis and visualization reveal a society that remains deeply nationalist at its core, yet increasingly dissatisfied with governance, security management, social harmony, and development outcomes. The convergence of these perceptions explains the strong appetite for political alternatives and signals a critical moment in the state’s democratic and developmental trajectory.

Policy Implications

The survey findings carry significant implications for governance, institutional reform, social cohesion, economic development, and democratic stability in West Bengal. The following policy directions emerge directly from public perception trends reflected in the data:

1. Strengthening Democratic Institutions and Space for Dissent

Widespread dissatisfaction with democratic functioning and the perceived shrinking space for dissent underscore the need to reinforce democratic institutions and constitutional safeguards. Policies should aim to ensure transparency, accountability, and tolerance of opposition voices, including civil society organizations, media, and political dissent. Strengthening grievance redressal mechanisms, safeguarding freedom of expression, and promoting participatory decision-making can help restore public trust and democratic legitimacy.

2. Transparent and Effective Handling of Migration and Security Concerns

Given the strong public anxiety surrounding illegal migration and internal security, there is a clear need for transparent, rule-based, and institutionally coordinated approaches to border management, identification processes, and law enforcement. Effective implementation of institutional reforms, coupled with clear public communication, can help address security concerns while maintaining constitutional integrity and human rights standards. Cooperation between state and central institutions is essential to sustain public confidence.

3. Neutral and Inclusive Governance to Reduce Polarization

Perceptions of religious appeasement and political polarization highlight the importance of neutral, inclusive, and constitutionally grounded governance. Policy frameworks must consciously avoid identity-based favoritism and instead emphasize equal treatment, social harmony, and inclusive development. Institutional neutrality and consistent application of the rule of law can help mitigate communal tensions and strengthen social cohesion.

4. Robust Implementation and Communication of Women's Safety Laws

The gap between legislation and public awareness regarding women's safety laws indicates that policy success depends not only on legal enactment but also on effective implementation, enforcement, and communication. Targeted awareness campaigns, capacity-building within law enforcement agencies, fast-track justice mechanisms, and visible accountability measures are essential to enhance public confidence and ensure real improvements in women's safety.

5 Investor-Friendly and Stable Industrial Policies

Perceptions of governance-related barriers to industrial development point toward the need for predictable, transparent, and investor-friendly economic policies. Streamlining regulatory processes, reducing bureaucratic hurdles, ensuring policy continuity, and fostering public-private partnerships can improve the investment climate. Emphasis on employment generation, skill development, and infrastructure support will be critical for sustainable economic growth.

6. Constructive Engagement with Youth on Nation-Building and Development

Strong public support for nurturing nationalist ideology among youth suggests an opportunity to channel this sentiment into constructive nation-building initiatives. Educational curricula, civic engagement programs, skill development initiatives, and entrepreneurship platforms should integrate values of constitutional nationalism, social responsibility, and economic innovation. Meaningful youth engagement can help bridge ideological divides and align individual aspirations with broader developmental goals.

7. Concluding Policy Insight

Collectively, these policy implications point toward the urgent need for a balanced and responsive governance framework—one that effectively harmonizes security imperatives with constitutional rights, economic development with social inclusion, and nationalist sentiment with democratic pluralism. The survey findings suggest that governance challenges in West Bengal are not confined to any single domain but are interlinked across political, social, economic, and institutional spheres. Addressing these issues in isolation is unlikely to yield sustainable outcomes. Instead, a holistic and integrated policy approach is required to rebuild institutional credibility, restore public trust, reduce social polarization, and foster a governance environment conducive to long-term stability and inclusive growth.

Recommendations/Suggestions

Based on the survey findings, the following recommendations are proposed to address key governance, security, social, and developmental concerns identified by respondents:

1. Reorientation of Governance Values and Public Policy Priorities

Rather than ideological realignment, the findings point to the need for a governance framework grounded in constitutional values, public safety, national unity, transparency, and inclusive development. Respondents consistently emphasize effectiveness, neutrality, and accountability over partisan or identity-based governance. Rebuilding trust requires visible commitment to fairness, rule of law, and citizen-centric administration.

2. Strengthening Constitutional and Civic Nationalism

The survey reveals strong societal nationalist sentiment despite dissatisfaction with governance. Policymakers should harness this sentiment through inclusive, constitutional nationalism that emphasizes civic responsibility, national integration, and social harmony. Educational curricula, civic programs, and cultural initiatives should promote national values while respecting diversity and pluralism.

3. Expanding Democratic Space and Institutional Accountability

Perceptions of restricted dissent highlight the need to strengthen democratic safeguards. Institutional mechanisms should be reinforced to protect freedom of expression, political opposition, and civil society engagement. Independent oversight bodies, grievance redressal systems, and transparent accountability frameworks for public officials and law enforcement can help restore institutional credibility.

4. Comprehensive Women's Safety and Enforcement Reforms

Given strong public concern regarding women's safety and low awareness of related legislation, the government must focus on effective implementation, enforcement, and communication. This includes:

- Strengthening policing and fast-track judicial processes
- Expanding access to shelters, legal aid, and helplines
- Conducting sustained awareness campaigns on women's safety laws
- Monitoring outcomes rather than merely legislative intent

5. Youth Engagement and Civic Development

The survey underscores public belief that youth development is closely linked to values of nationalism, discipline, and civic responsibility. Governments and educational institutions should invest in youth-centric programs that promote leadership, skill development, volunteerism, and constructive civic participation, aligning individual aspirations with national development goals.

6. Strengthening Centre–State Institutional Coordination

Public concern regarding national unity and the handling of institutional reforms suggests the need for cooperative federalism. Constructive engagement between the state and central governments—particularly on security, electoral integrity, migration management, and law enforcement—can enhance public confidence and administrative effectiveness.

7. Community-Based Governance and Grassroots Engagement

Encouraging community participation through local safety committees, resident associations, and civil society partnerships can bridge trust deficits between citizens and institutions. Such grassroots mechanisms can support early conflict resolution, community policing, and inclusive governance practices.

8. Strategic Public Communication and Awareness Campaigns

Low awareness of key policies reflects a governance communication gap. Governments should adopt clear, consistent, and transparent public communication strategies, leveraging digital media, local outreach, and institutional platforms to ensure citizens are informed about laws, rights, and public services.

9. Industrial Policy and Investment Climate Reforms

Strong public perception that government policies hinder industrial development necessitates predictable, investor-friendly, and transparent economic governance. Streamlining approvals, ensuring policy stability, reducing administrative discretion, and fostering public-private dialogue can help revive industrial confidence and employment generation.

10. Depoliticization of Symbolic Religious Actions

Given widespread perception that symbolic political-religious actions promote polarization, political leadership should exercise constitutional restraint. Upholding secular governance norms and avoiding symbolic acts that may deepen communal divides is essential for social cohesion and institutional neutrality.

11. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Evidence-Based Policymaking

The effectiveness of reforms should be assessed through regular monitoring and independent evaluation frameworks. Data-driven policy corrections, citizen feedback mechanisms, and transparent reporting will ensure sustained relevance and public trust.

Collectively, these recommendations advocate for a balanced governance approach that reconciles public demand for security and national unity with democratic rights, inclusion, and economic development. Addressing these issues holistically can help rebuild institutional trust, reduce polarization, and lay the foundation for sustainable and inclusive growth in West Bengal.

Conclusion

The survey presents a comprehensive and nuanced picture of public sentiment in West Bengal. It reveals widespread dissatisfaction with governance and leadership, accompanied by deep concerns regarding democratic functioning, internal security, social cohesion, women's safety, and economic development. At the same time, the findings highlight a strong and resilient nationalist sentiment among the people, particularly at the societal level, even as respondents express unease over political polarization and regionalism dominating the political sphere.

A striking outcome of the survey is the pronounced willingness among respondents to consider political alternatives in the forthcoming assembly elections. This openness reflects not merely dissatisfaction, but an active search for governance models that can deliver security, development, social harmony, and institutional integrity. The convergence of these perceptions signals a critical moment in the state's democratic and developmental trajectory.

Overall, the findings offer valuable empirical insights for policymakers, scholars, civil society, and political stakeholders seeking to understand the evolving aspirations and anxieties of the people of West Bengal. By engaging constructively with these public perceptions and addressing the underlying concerns through inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance, there exists a significant opportunity to restore public confidence and steer the state toward a more stable, secure, and development-oriented future.



Who We Are

The Policy Root Research Foundation (PRRF) was formally established in the year 2019. It is a research oriented organization that seeks to undertake grass-root level of research on the issues with contemporary relevance and national interests which directly or indirectly affect the society. The areas of research include caste, gender, labour, youth, farmers, defence, internal security, education, health, livelihood and other socio-economic and political aspects of human development and society as a whole. The organization discusses and brings the topics which are neglected by mainstream media, on common platforms in public domain by organising, seminars, events, workshops and publishing articles, books, journals, research reports, working papers, etc. PRRF also recommends policy formulation and implementation to the governments, and contributes in nation-building by evaluating developmental policies/programmes through in-depth and comprehensive grass-root level research. Keeping this goal in mind, "Policy Root Research Foundation" is moving in the direction of making the country aware through various researches and events.

The organisation has dedicated and experience team members who are committed towards fulfilling its vision and objectives. Apart from the team members, PRRF also invites national and international experts who contribute their considerable time and actively involve themselves in the research works and activities of the organisation for better and effective outcomes.

Mission

The mission of the PRRF is to draw the attention or bring into the notice of the society and government towards the issues of contemporary relevance and concerns which are very significant for nation-building but hidden or unvoiced in the public domain or neglected by the mainstream media.

Vision

PRRF has a vivid vision to contribute towards creating an equitable society and conscious minds driven by knowledge and research which will further paved the way for nation-building.

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ANNEXURE

Q1. Are you a permanent resident of West Bengal?

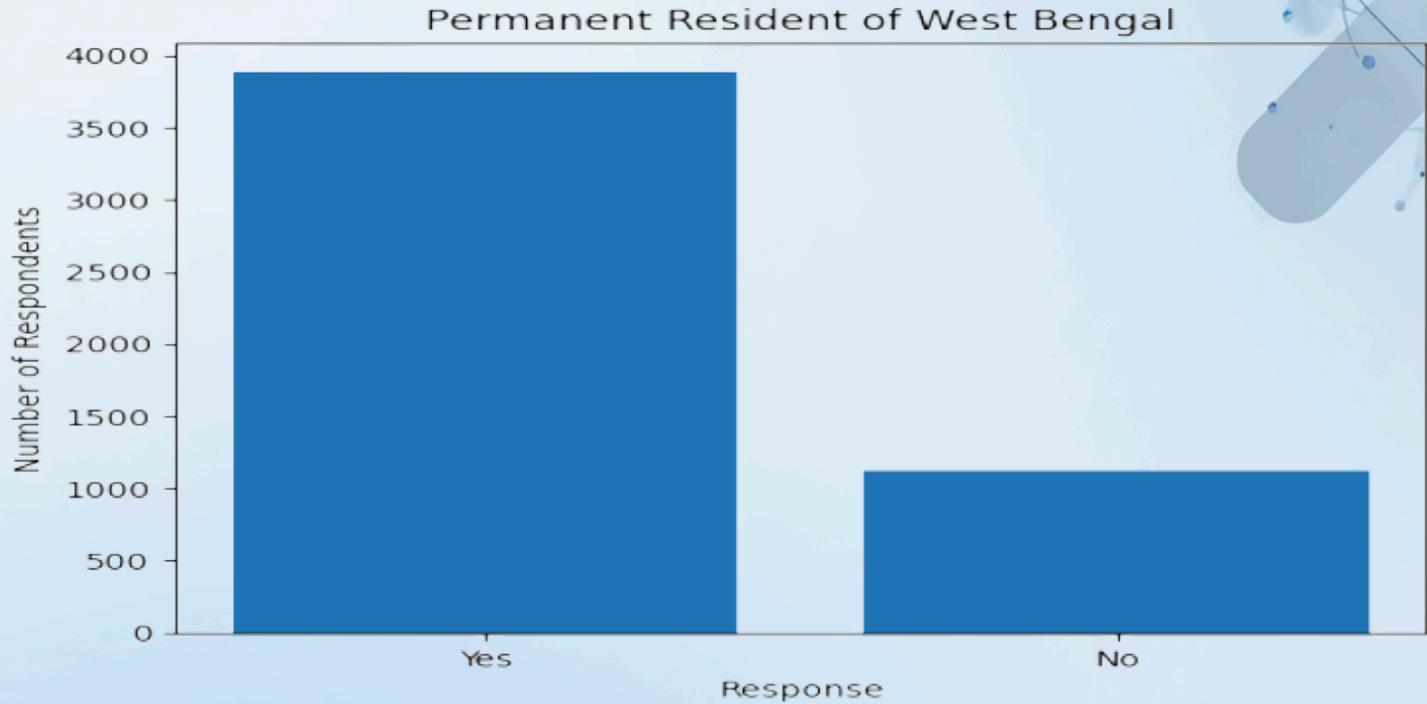


Figure1

Q2. As a resident, how satisfied are you with the functioning of the Bengal government?

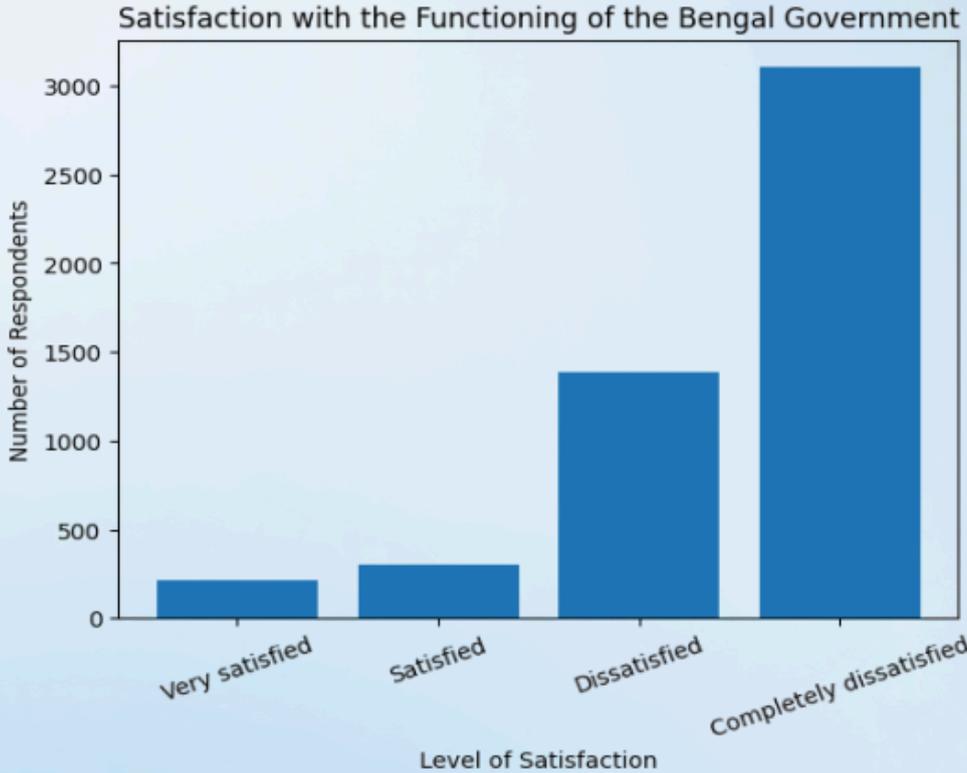


Figure2

Q3. Do you consider the Bengal government to be democratic and secular?

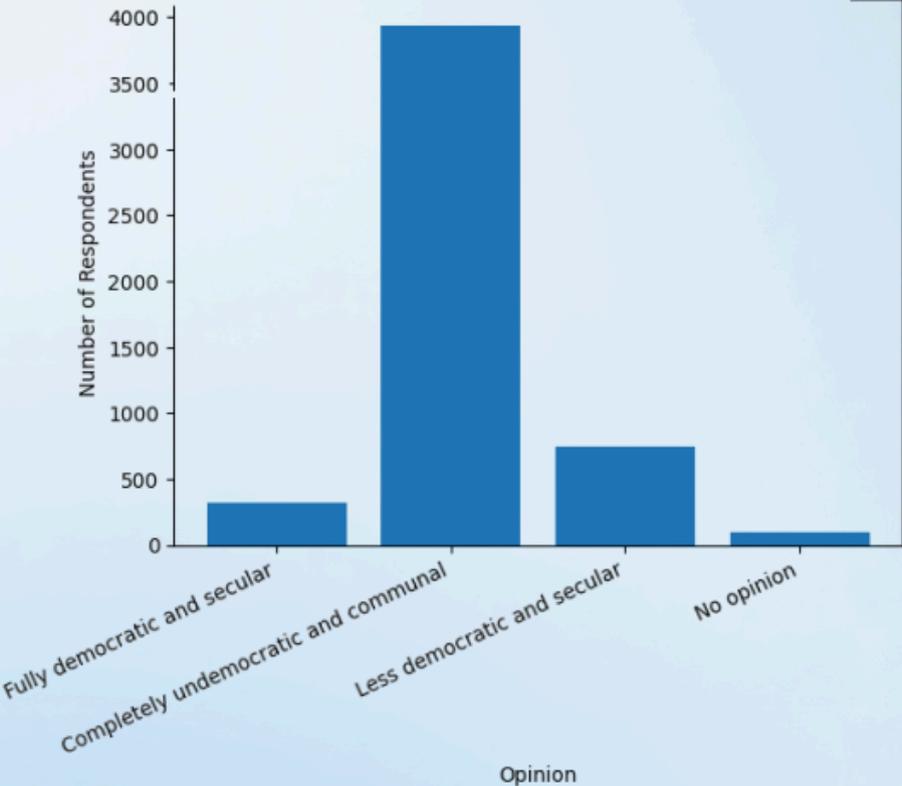


Figure3

Q4. How satisfied are you with Mamata Banerjee's performance as Chief Minister?

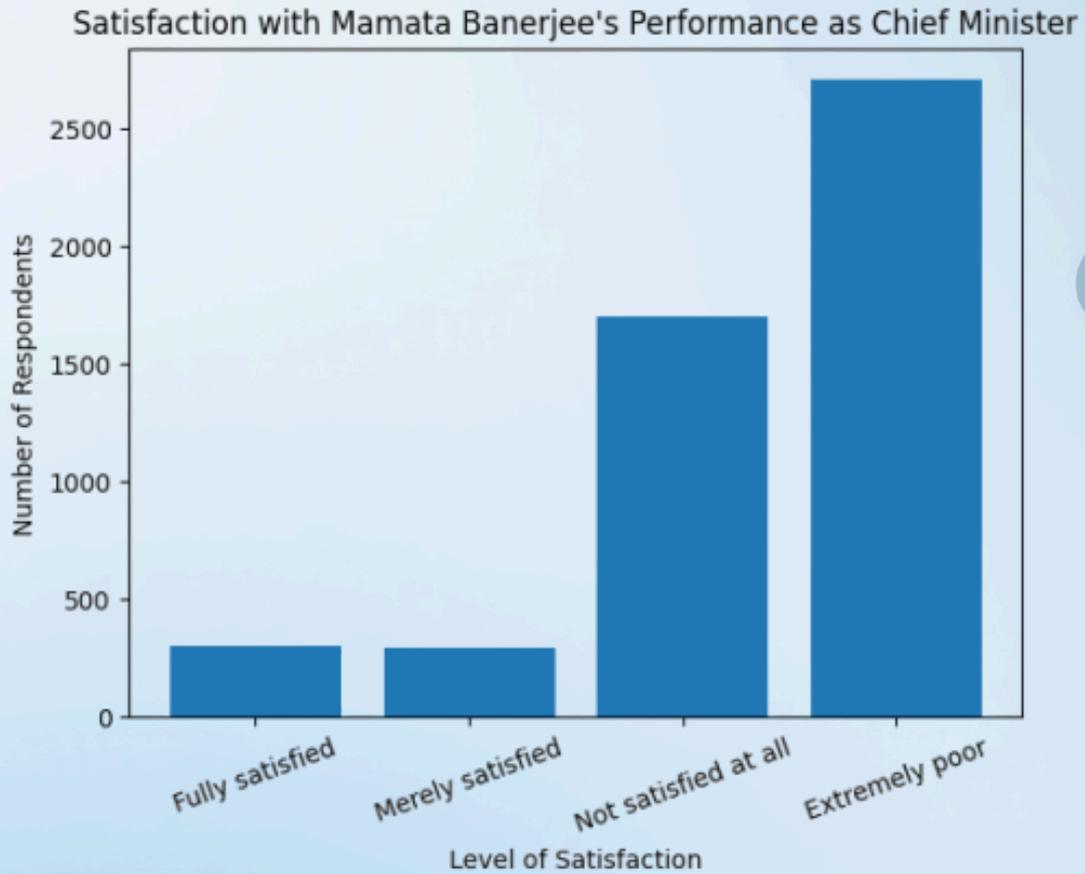


Figure 4

Q5. How favorable do you think the state's environment is for people, opposition parties, or social organizations to raise their voices against the government's anti-people policies?

Perceived Favorability of the State Environment for Raising Voices Against Government

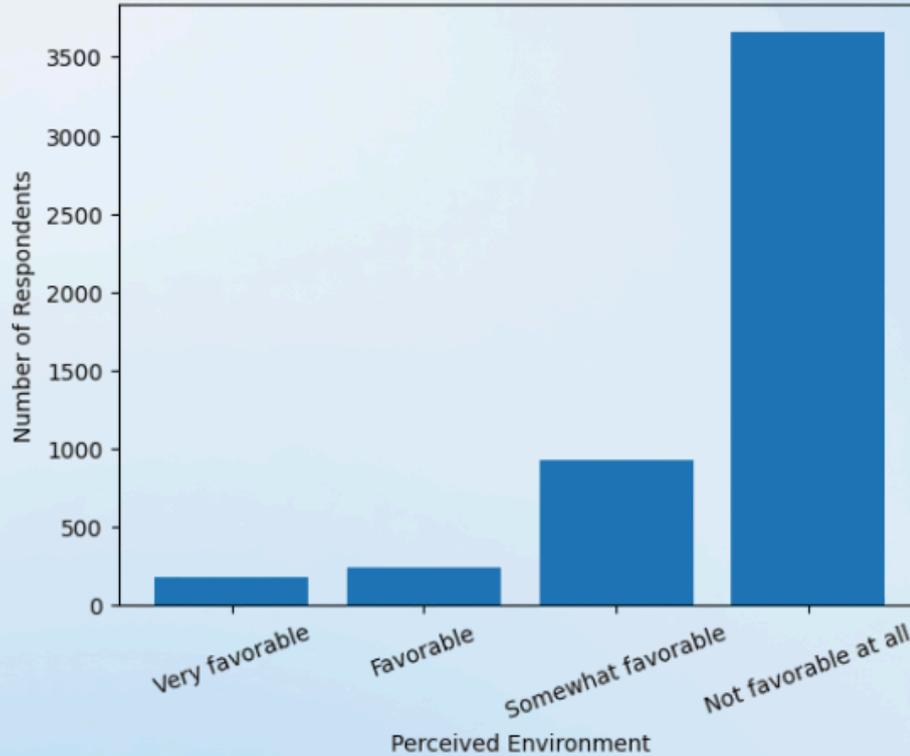


Figure 5

Q6. Do you consider illegal Bangladeshis and infiltrating Rohingya Muslims a threat to the state's security?

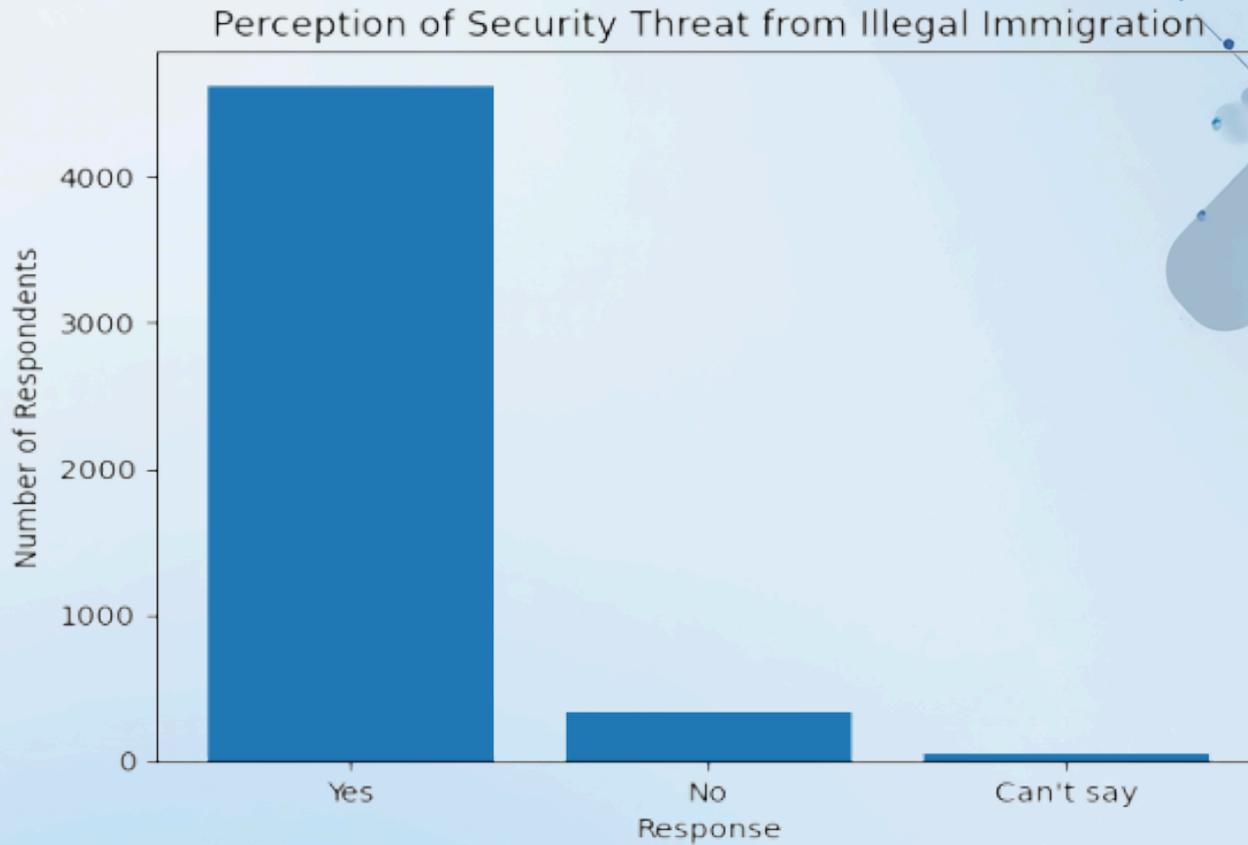


Figure 6

Q7. Do you believe that the SIR (Special Institutional Reforms/Records) being conducted by the Election Commission can rid Bengal of illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingya Muslims?

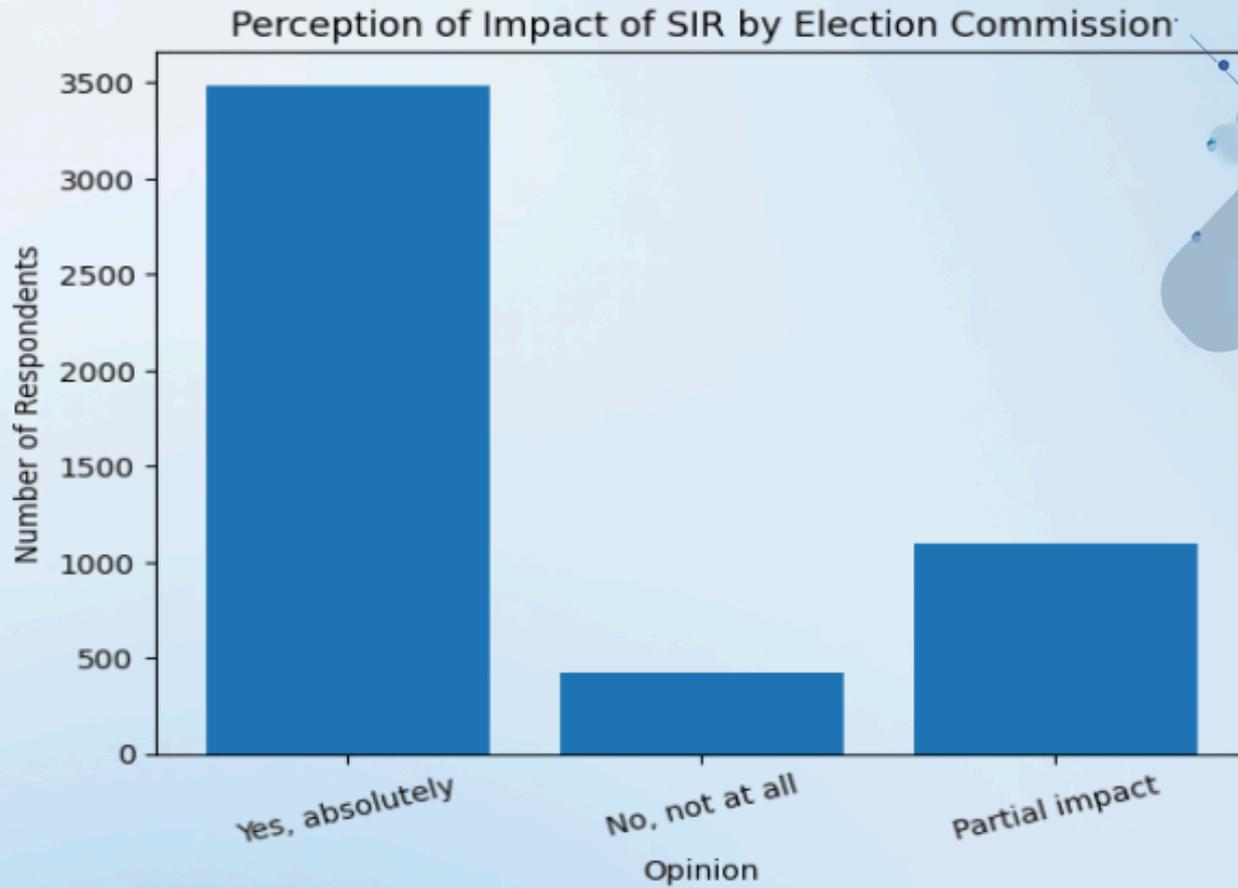


Figure7

Q8. In your view, does the Bengal government's attitude toward the SIR affect national unity and integrity?

Figure 8: Distribution of Impact of Bengal Government's Attitude Toward SIR on National Unity & Integrity

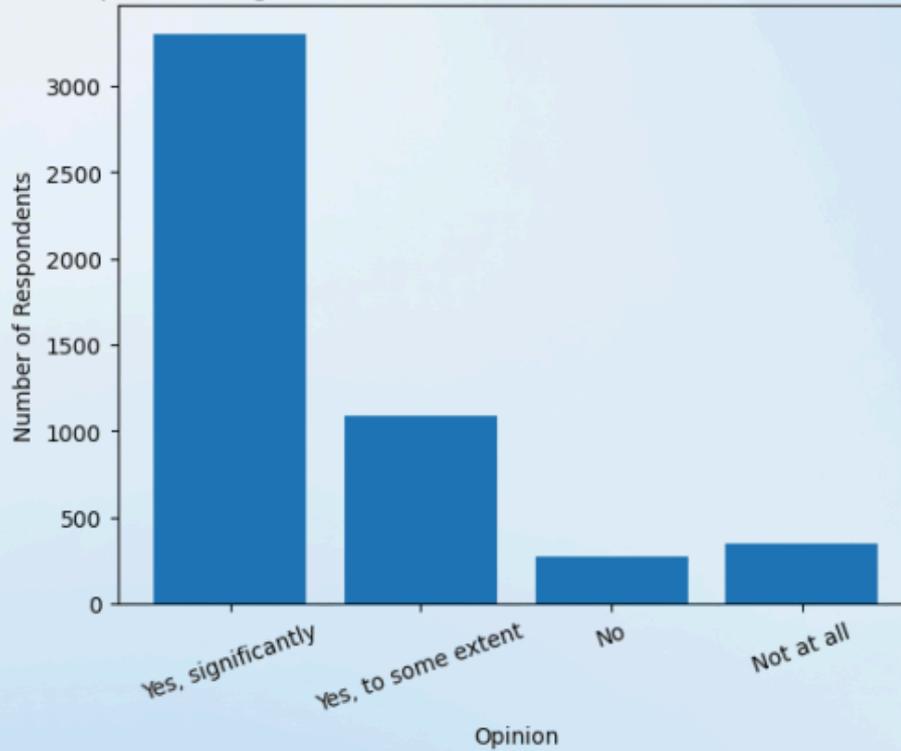


Figure8

Q9. Do you believe that the high number of illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingya Muslims is the reason behind the religious animosity arising against Sanatan Dharma in the state?

Perception of Reasons Behind Religious Animosity Against Sanatan Dharma in the State

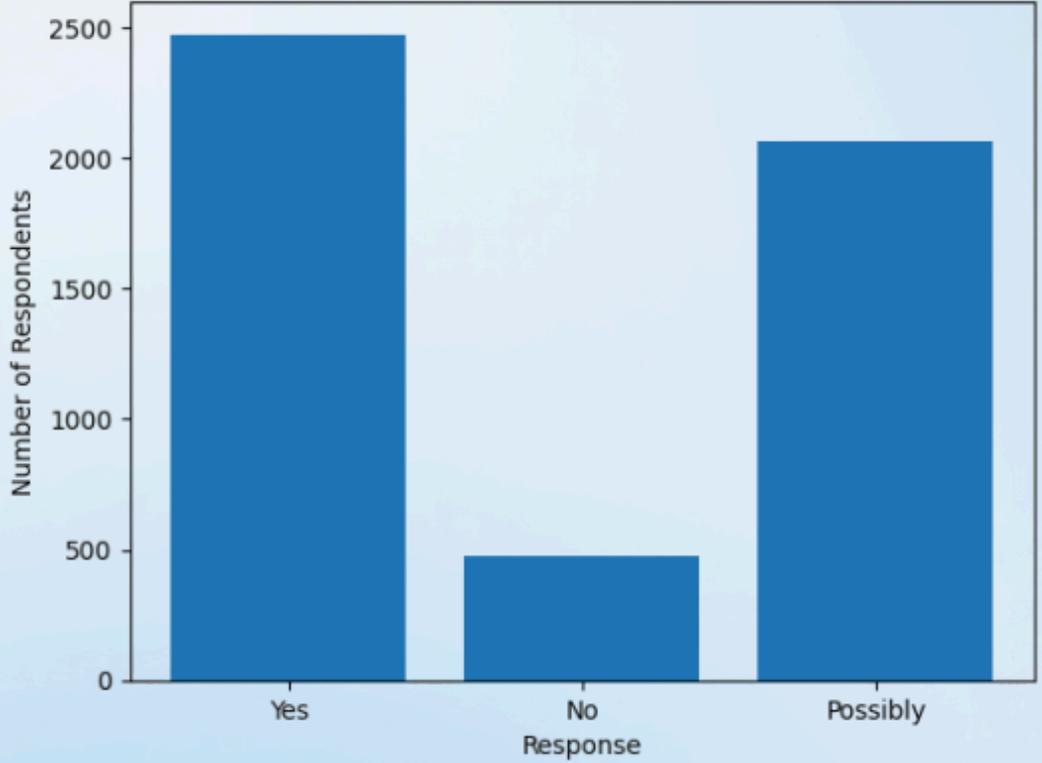


Figure 9

Q10. Do you feel that the state government is functioning with a policy of extreme appeasement toward a specific religion?

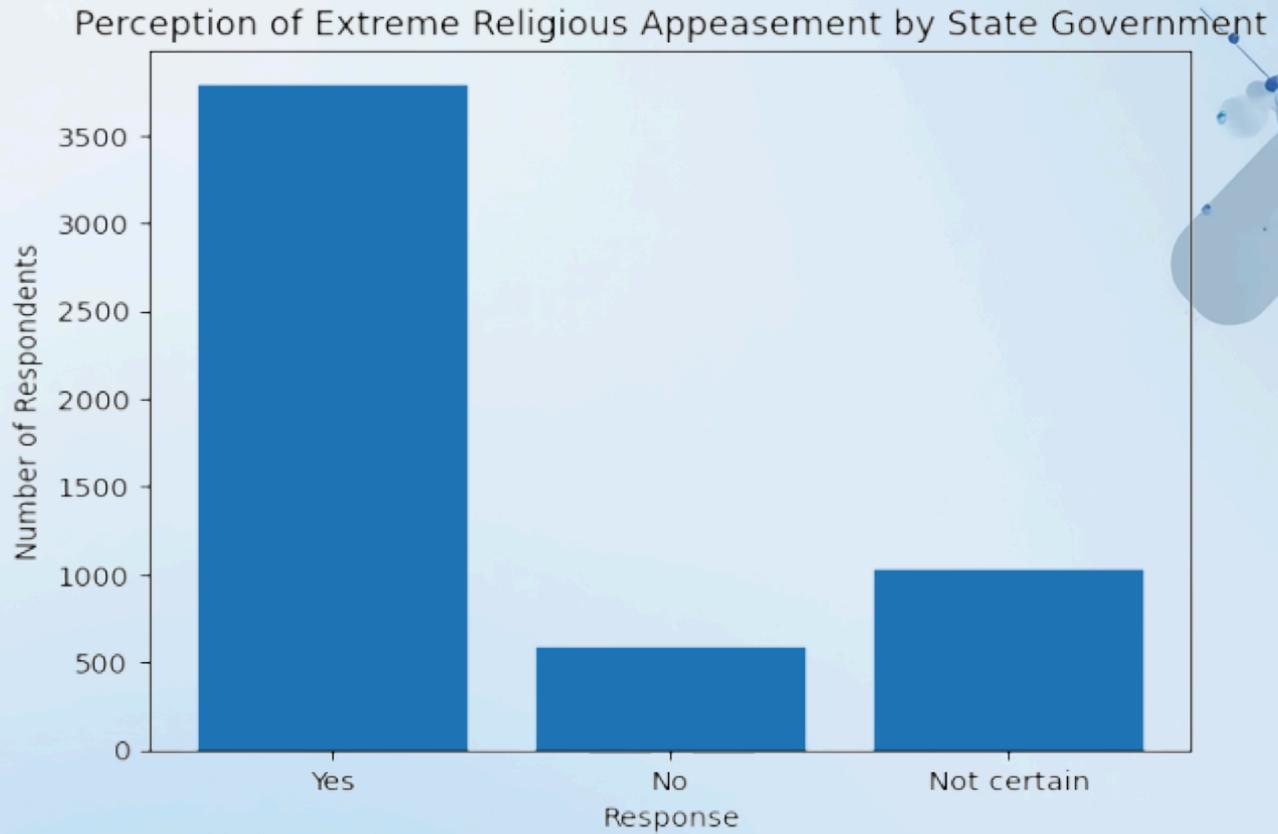


Figure10

Q11. Due to the government's appeasement policy and the increasing dominance of illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingya Muslims, could a situation of separatism arise in the state?

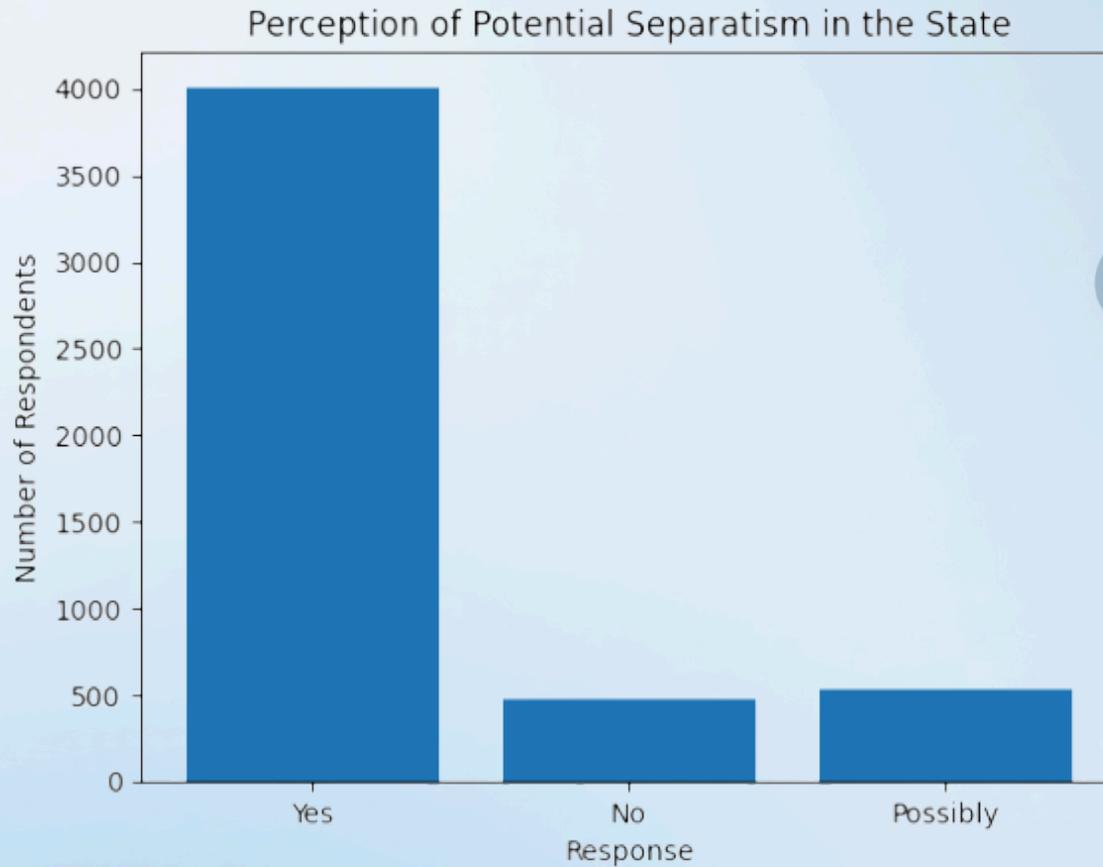


Figure11

Q12. Do you consider West Bengal to be a safe state for working women?

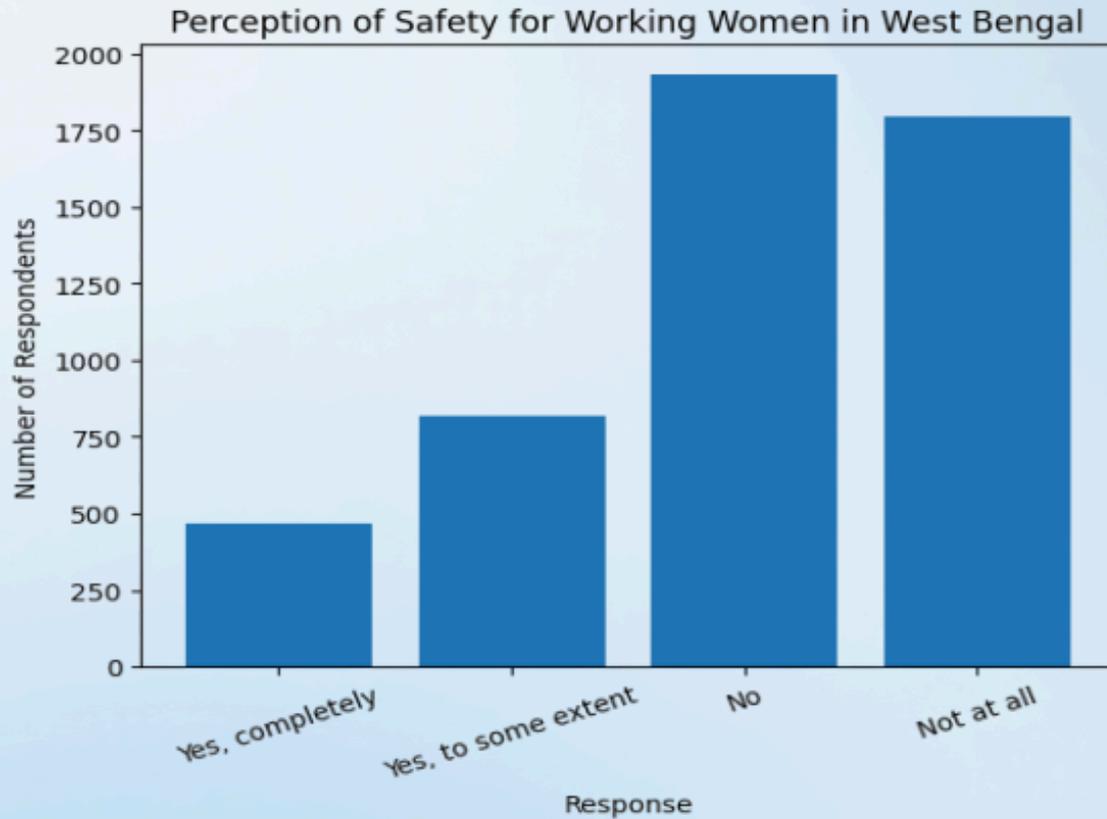


Figure12

Q13. Are you satisfied with the new bill introduced by the state government for women's safety?

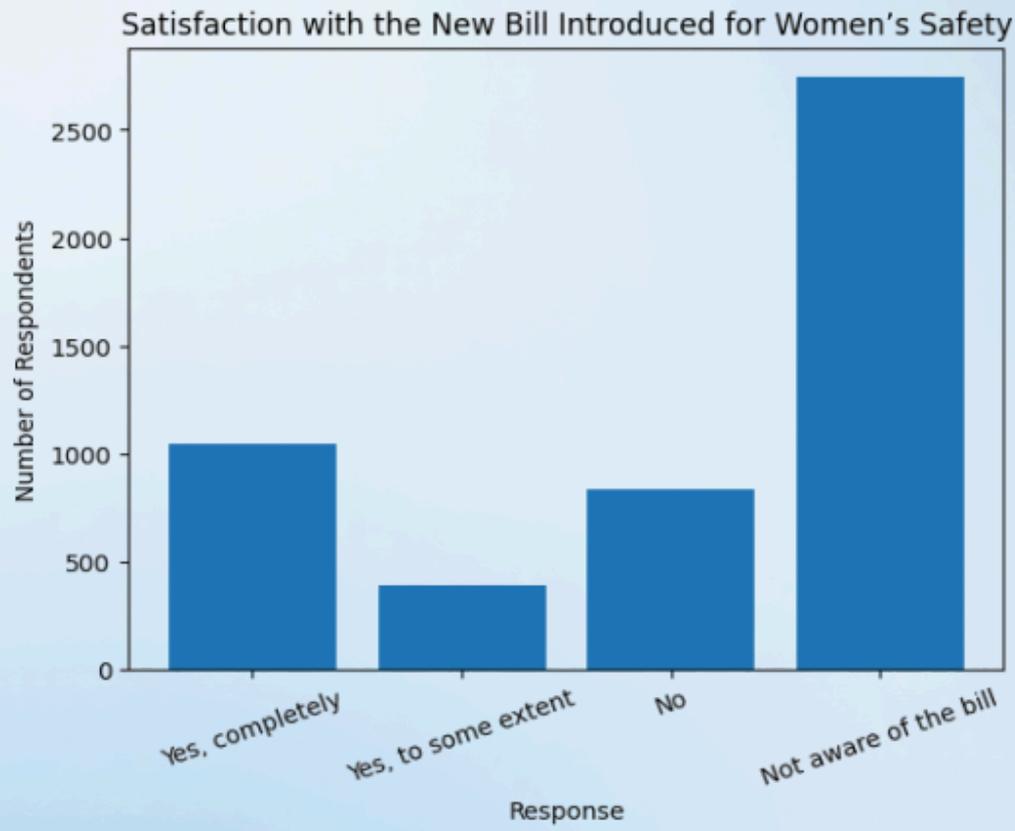


Figure13

Q14. Do you believe that the Sandeshkhali and RG Kar College incidents have tarnished the state's image across the country?

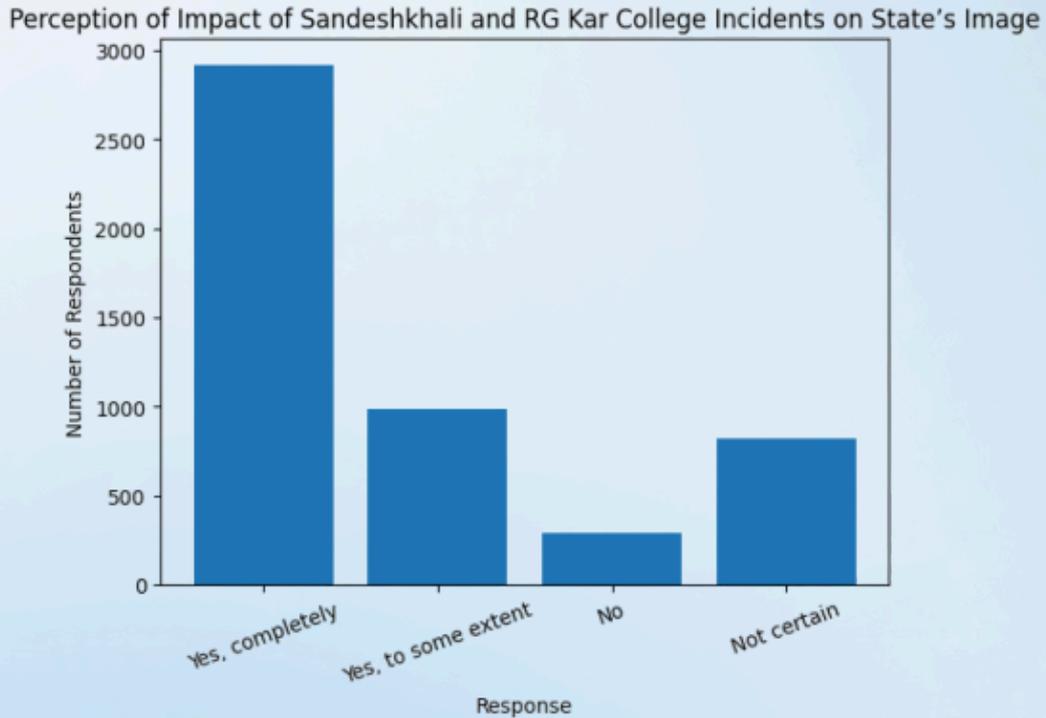


Figure14

Q15. How do you view the level of nationalist sentiment among the people of Bengal?

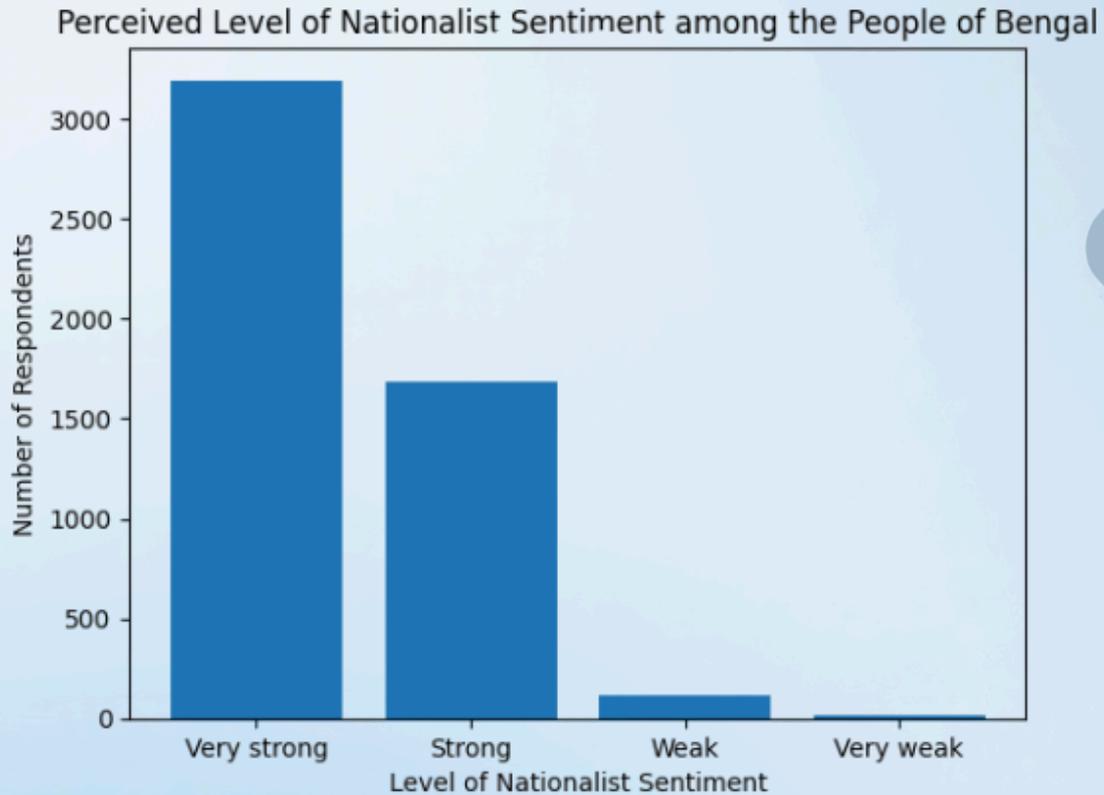


Figure15

Q16. Is political polarization and regionalism overpowering nationalism in Bengal?

Perception of Political Polarization and Regionalism vs Nationalism in Bengal.

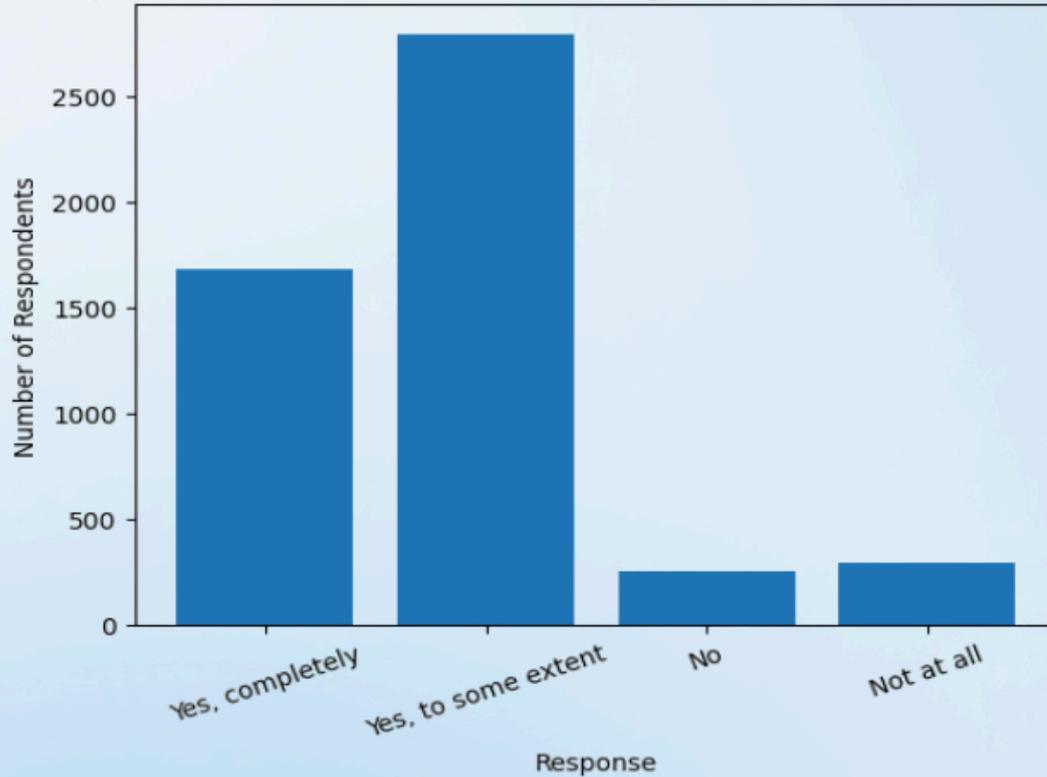


Figure16

Q17. Do events like MLA Humayun Kabir laying the foundation stone of a Babri Masjid-like structure promote religious fanaticism or polarization in the state?

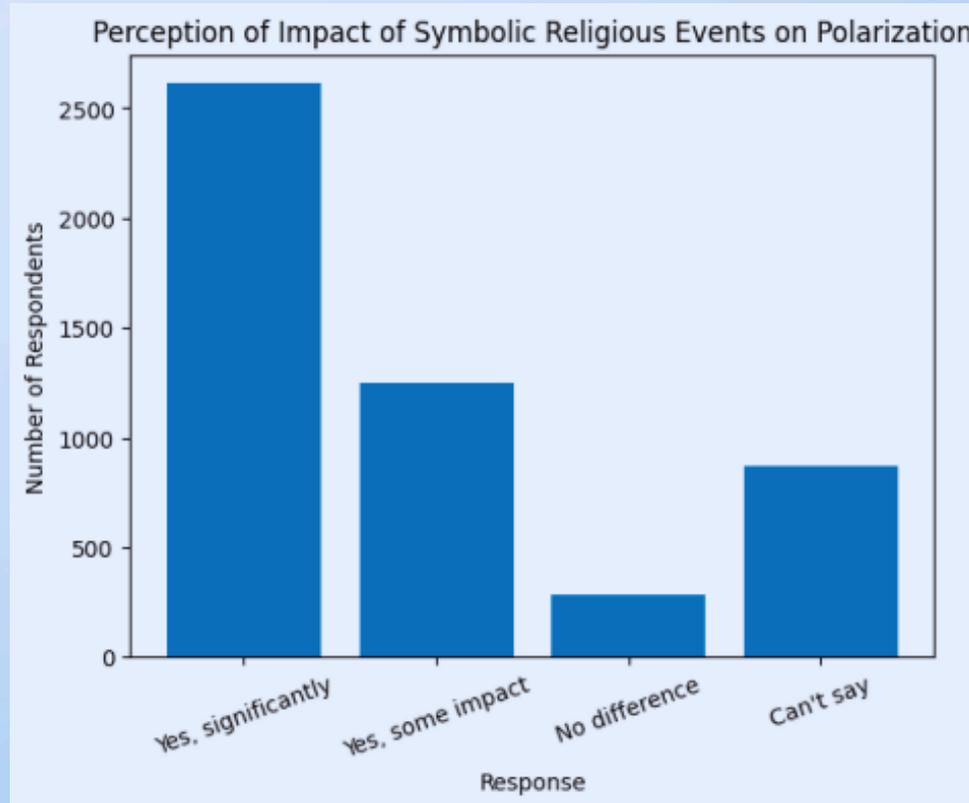


Figure17

Q18. Do you think the policies and working style of the state government are becoming obstacles to the state's industrial development?

Perception of State Government Policies as Obstacles to Industrial Development

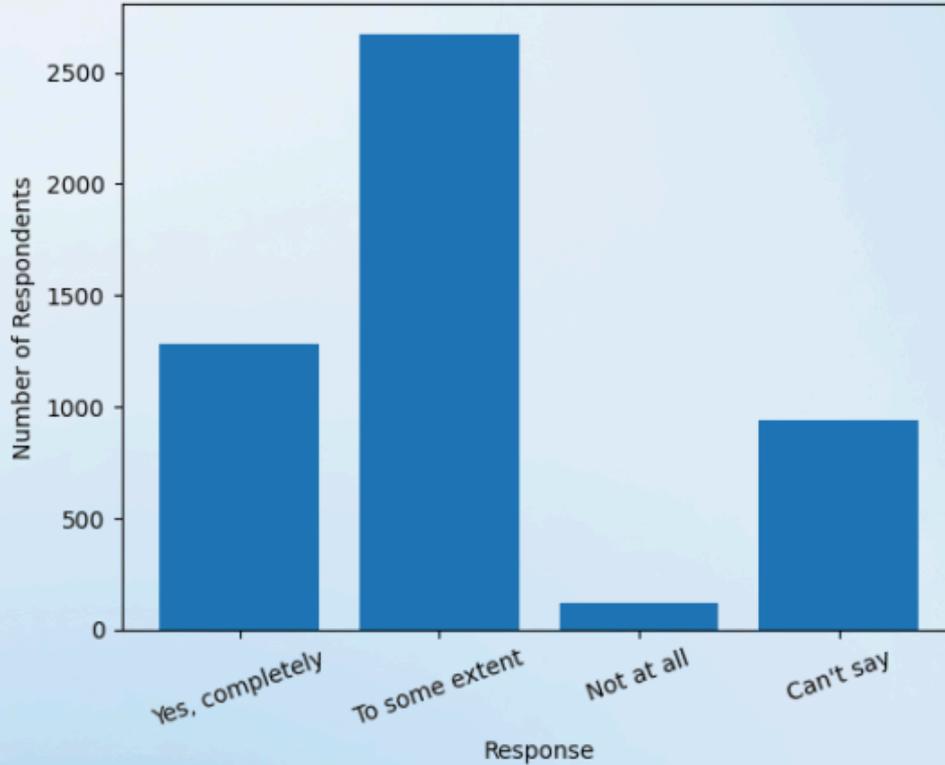


Figure18

Q19. Do you think the development of nationalist ideology among the youth of Bengal is necessary for their social and economic growth?

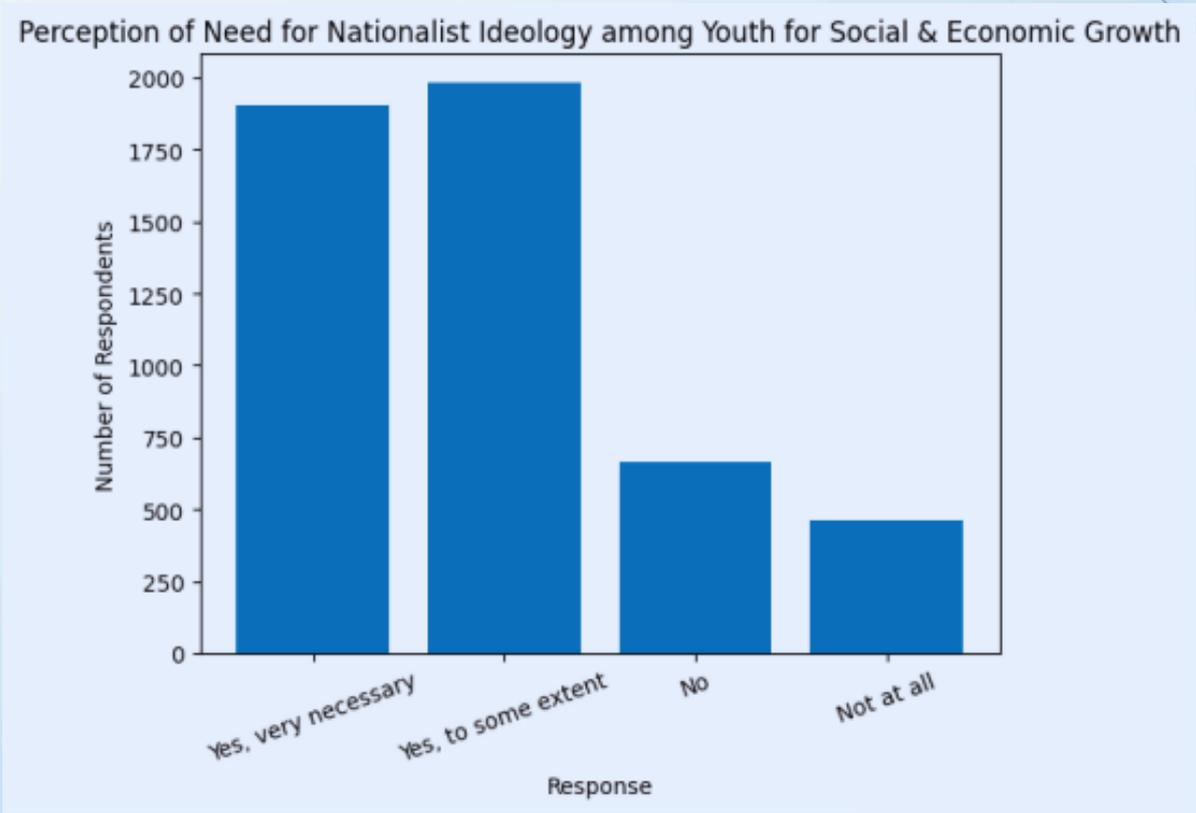


Figure19

Q20. In the upcoming assembly elections, would you consider other political alternatives for the all-round development and security of the state?

Willingness to Consider Political Alternatives in Upcoming Assembly Elections

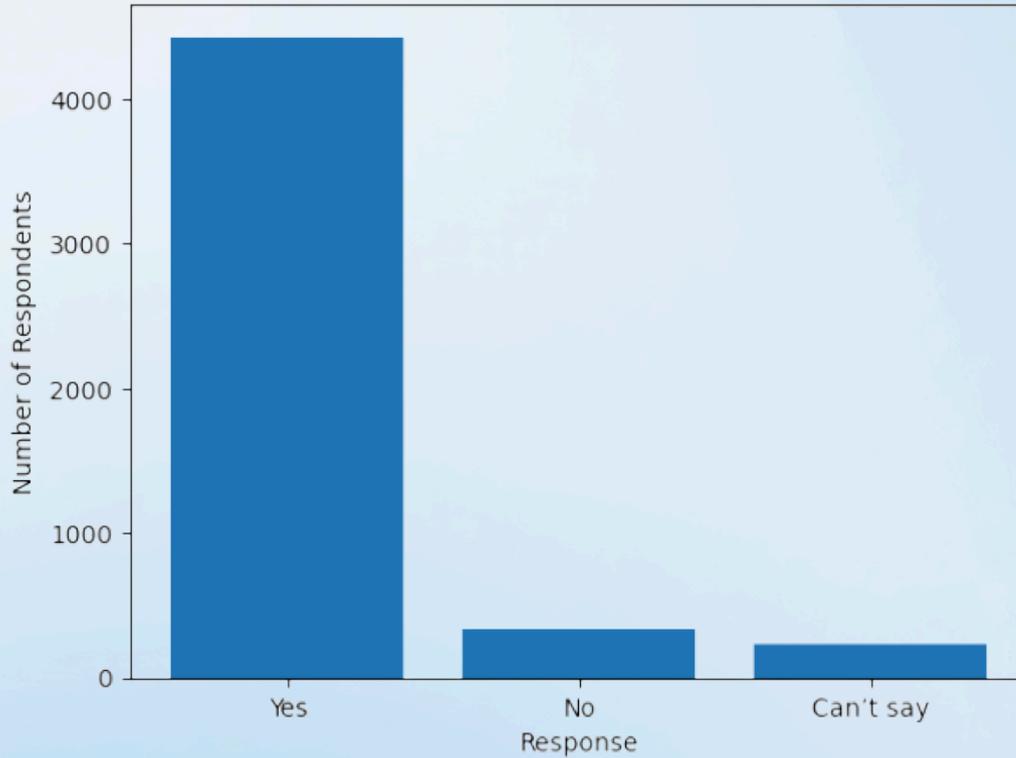


Figure20

