

## A SURVEY ON PEOPLE AWARENESS ABOUT CAA AND NRC IN THE DISTRICT JIND, HARYANA (INDIA)

Nitin Kumar<sup>1</sup> & Megha Goyal<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology, Hisar, India

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Business Management, CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, India

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this Research Paper is to examine the awareness level of people about CAA and NRC and to get feedback of people about CAA and NRC in Jind region of Haryana. In this study, there are several identifiable variables were found among peoples' opinion about CAA and NRC. Using questionnaire as a research instrument, 70 sets of questionnaires had been filled by people on Google docs (online). Pie- diagram was used to present the findings about an awareness level and opinion of people about CAA and NRC.

**KEYWORDS:** CAA-Citizenship (Amendment) Act, NRC- National Register of Citizens

### Article History

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### INTRODUCTION

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 was passed by the Parliament of India on 11 December 2019. It amended the Citizenship Act of 1955 to provide a path for an Indian citizenship to the members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian religious minorities, who had fled persecution from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan before December 2014. Muslims were not given such eligibility. The act was the first instance of religion being overtly used as a criterion for citizenship under Indian nationality law.

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which leads the Indian government, had promised in previous election manifestos that will provide Indian citizenship to persecuted religious minorities from neighbouring countries. Under the 2019 amendment, migrants who had entered India by 31 December 2014, and had suffered "religious persecution or fear of religious persecution" in their country of origin were made eligible for citizenship. The amendment also relaxed the residence requirement for naturalization of these migrants from twelve years to six. Immediate beneficiaries of the Bill, according to the Intelligence Bureau of India, will be 31,313 refugees: 25,447 Hindus, 5,807 Sikhs, 55 Christians, 2 Buddhists and 2 Parsis.

The amendment has been widely criticized as it is discriminating on the basis of religion, particularly for excluding Muslims. The Office of the United Nations, High Commissioner for Human Rights called it "fundamentally discriminatory", adding that while India's "goal of protecting persecuted groups is welcome", this should be accomplished through a non-discriminatory "robust national asylum system". Critics express concerns that the bill would be used, along with the National Register of Citizens, to render many Muslim citizens stateless, as they may be unable to meet stringent birth or identity proof requirements. Commentators also questioned about the exclusion of persecuted religious minorities

from other regions such as Tibet, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. The Indian government says that Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh have Islam as their state religion therefore Muslims are "unlikely to face religious persecution" there. However, certain Muslim groups, such as Hazaras and Ahmadis, have historically faced persecution in these countries.

The passage of the legislation caused large-scale protests in India. Assam and other north-eastern states have faced violent demonstrations against the bill over fears that granting Indian citizenship to refugees and immigrants might cause a loss of their "political rights, culture and land rights" and can motivate further migration from Bangladesh. In other parts of India, protesters said that the bill is discriminated against Muslims and so they demanded that Indian citizenship be granted to Muslim refugees and immigrants. Major protests against the Act were held at universities in India. Students at Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Millia Islamia alleged brutal suppression by the police. The protests have led to the deaths of several protesters, injuries to protesters and police personnel, damage to public and private property, the detention of hundreds of people, and suspensions of local internet mobile phone connectivity in certain areas. Some states have announced that they will not implement the Act. The Union Home Ministry has said that the states do not have the legal power to stop the implementation of the CAA.

### **The Amendments**

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019 amended the Citizenship Act, 1955, by including the following provisos in section 2, sub-section (1), after clause (b):

"Provided that any person belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian community from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who entered into India on or before the 31st day of December, 2014 and who has been exempted by the Central Government by or under clause (c) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 or from the application of the provisions of the Foreigners Act, 1946 or any rule or order made there under, shall not be treated as illegal migrant for the purposes of this Act;"

A new section 6B was inserted (in the section concerning *naturalization*), with four clauses, the first of which stated:

- The Central Government or an authority specified on its behalf may, subject to such conditions, restrictions and manner as may be prescribed, on an application made on its behalf, can grant a certificate of registration or certificate of naturalisation to a person referred in the proviso to clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 2.
- The "exempted" classes of persons were previously defined in the Foreigners (Amendment) Order, 2015, (issued under the Foreigners Act, 1946):
- 3A: Exemption of certain class of foreigners. – (1) Persons belonging to minority communities in Bangladesh and Pakistan, namely, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians who were compelled to seek shelter in India due to religious persecution or fear of religious persecution and entered into India on or before the 31st December, 2014
- without valid documents including passport or other travel documents have been exempted under rule 4 from the provisions of rule 3 of the *Passport (Entry into India) Rules, 1950* [...]; or

- with valid documents including passport or other travel document and the validity of any of such documents has been expired, are hereby granted exemption from the application of provisions under the *Foreigners Act, 1946*, and the orders made there under in respect of their stay in India without such documents or after the expiry of those documents, as the case may be [...].
- The Rules had been further amended in 2016 by adding Afghanistan to the list of countries.
- Exemptions were granted to north-eastern regions of India in the clause (4) of section 6B:
- Nothing in this section shall apply to tribal area of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram or Tripura as included in the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution and the area covered under "The Inner Line" notified as under the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation, 1873.

### **Analysis**

The Bill amends the Citizenship Act of 1955 to give eligibility for Indian citizenship to the illegal migrants who were Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, and who entered into India on or before 31 December 2014. The bill does not mention Muslims. According to Intelligence Bureau records, the immediate beneficiaries of the Amended Act will be 31,313 people includes 25,447 Hindus, 5,807 Sikhs, 55 Christians, 2 Buddhists and 2 Parsis.

Under the Act, one of the requirements for citizenship by naturalisation is that the applicant must have resided in India for the last 12 months, and for 11 months of the previous 14 years. The Bill relaxes this 11-year requirement to 5 years for persons belonging to the same six religions and the three countries. The bill exempts the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, and Tripura from its applicability. It also exempts the areas regulated through the Inner Line Permit, which includes Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland. The inclusion of Manipur in Inner Line Permit was also announced on 9 December 2019.

The Bill includes new provisions for cancellation of the registration of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI), if there are any violations of the provisions of this Act or provisions of any other law of India. It also adds the opportunity for the OCI holder to be informed before the cancellation.

### **Exclusion of Muslims**

Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan are not provided citizenship under the new Act. Critics have questioned about the exclusion. The Amendment limits itself to the Muslim-majority neighbours of India and, secondly, takes no cognizant to the persecuted Muslims of those countries. According to *The Economist*, if the Indian government was concerned about religious persecution, it should have included Ahmadiyyas – a Muslim sect who have been "viciously hounded in Pakistan as heretics", and the Hazaras – another Muslim sect who have been murdered by the Taliban in Afghanistan. They should be treated as minorities.

Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh are Muslim-majority countries that have modified their Constitutions in recent decades to declare Islam as their official state religion. Therefore, according to the Indian government, Muslims in these Islamic countries are "unlikely to face religious persecution". The government states that Muslims cannot be "treated as persecuted minorities" in these Muslim-majority countries. The BBC states that while these countries have provisions in their constitution that guaranteeing non-Muslims rights, including the freedom to practice in their religion, non-Muslim

populations have experienced discrimination and persecution.<sup>[17]</sup>

Some similar acts for persecuted religious minorities, excluding the majority religion, have been introduced in other secular countries such as United States, case in point being the "Religious Persecution Relief Act, 2016", which has a similar approach "this bill declares that Syrian nationals who are religious minorities in their country of origin: shall be classified as refugees of special humanitarian concern, shall be eligible for priority to be processing under the refugee resettlement priority system"....

### **Exclusion of other Persecuted Communities**

The Act does not include migrants from non-Muslim countries fleeing persecution to India, particularly Rohingya Muslim refugees from Myanmar, Hindu refugees from Sri Lanka, and Buddhist refugees from Tibet, China.

The Act does not mention the Hindu refugees from Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan Tamils were allowed to settle as refugees in Tamil Nadu in 1980s and 1990s due to systemic violence from the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka. They include 29,500 "hill country Tamils" (Malaiha).

The Act does not provide relief to Tibetan Buddhist refugees<sup>[14]</sup>, who came to India in the 1950s and 1960s. Their status has been refugees over the decades. According to a 1992 UNHCR report, the Indian government has stated that they can remain refugees and do not have the right to acquire Indian nationality.

The Act does not address Rohingya Muslim refugees from Myanmar. The Indian government has already been deporting Rohingya refugees back to Myanmar.

### **Relationship to NRC**

Commentators have expressed their concerns that the people who were unable to produce required documents to prove their citizenship and inclusion in the NRC will be accepted as migrants and to be given Indian citizenship under the Bill provided they are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Christians, Parsis and Jains but not Muslims; and then latter would risk becoming stateless because they (Muslims) are not included under the Bill.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To test the awareness of the people about the CAA and NRC.
- To get the opinion of the people about the CAA and NRC.

### **Developing a Research Plan**

The present research is exploratory in nature. Since CAA and NRC are new phenomenon in India, there were hardly few studies in this area. Especially there is a huge gap between empirical and behavior studies on CAA and NRC in India. The study tries to find out the significance of popular perception regarding CAA and NRC.

The data for this research project has been collected through Self Administration. Due to time limitation and other constraints, direct personal interview study method has been used. A structured questionnaire was framed as it consumes less time duration and is very important from the information point of view, easier to tabulate and interpret. Moreover respondents prefer to give direct answer.

Development of research plan has the following steps:

- Sample Design
- Sample Unit
- Sample Size
- Sample Technique

### Population

Population means the study group of people to whom the researcher does his study / research and the population for my research is people of District Jind, Haryana.

### Sample Design

The complete study the number of population is known as a census inquiry. Sample is a group of few items, which represents the population from where it has been taken for the study.

The Process of Selecting sample has been Multi Stratified in Nature. At the first Stage 2 blocks of region / area have been selected with the help of **convenient sampling**. The size of sample is 70 respondents.

### Sampling Size

The sampling size of the study was **70**. The area of study was Jind Region.

## DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

### Data Analysis

The data collected from the various respondents have been analyzed for the purpose of drawing a conclusion. So these efforts have been made to analyze and interpret the collective data.

A brief of analysis and interpretation were given below:

### Q1. Is NRC a part of the CAA?

**Table 1**

Response	
Yes	39.7
No	39.7
May be	16.3
Don't Know	6.3

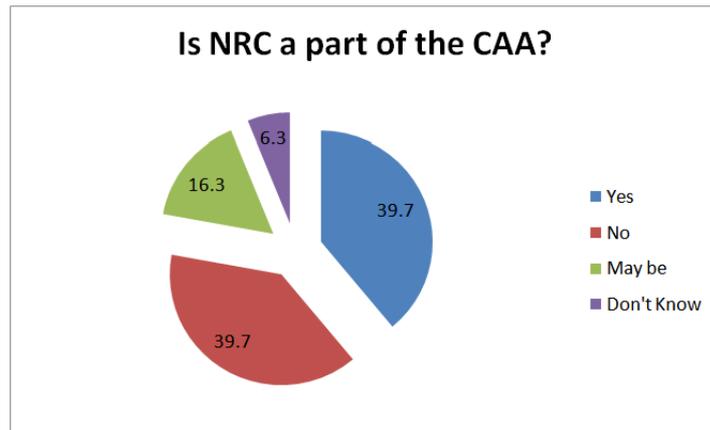


Figure 1

**Comment**

About 40% of people think that NRC is a part of CAA. About 17% of people think that NRC may be the part of CAA and 7% of people were not aware about this. So according to this data we can say that most of the people are not aware about the relationship between NRC and CAA.

**Q2.Do Indian Muslims need to worry about CAA+NRC?**

Table 2

Response	
Yes	19.4
No	69.3
May be	6.5
Don't Know	4.8

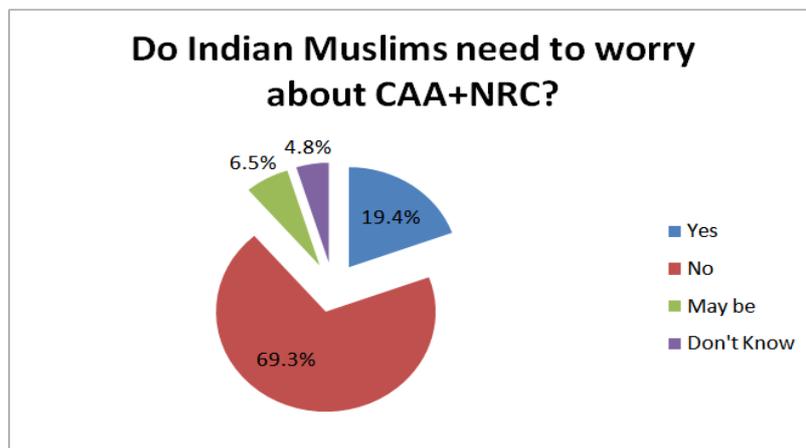


Figure 2

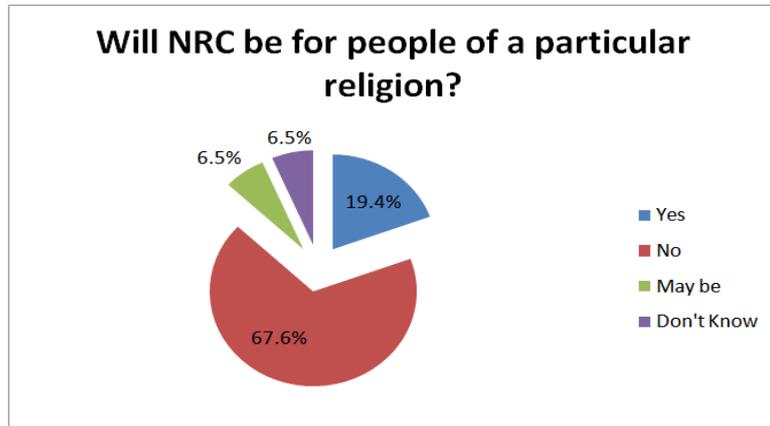
**Comment**

About 70% of people think Muslims need not be afraid of NRC. But 20% still feel that Muslims need to be afraid of such amendment. By this we can say that people do not have the complete information about NRA and CAA.

**Q3. Will NRC be for the People of a Particular Religion?**

**Table 3**

Response	
Yes	19.4
No	67.6
May be	6.5
Don't Know	6.5



**Figure 3**

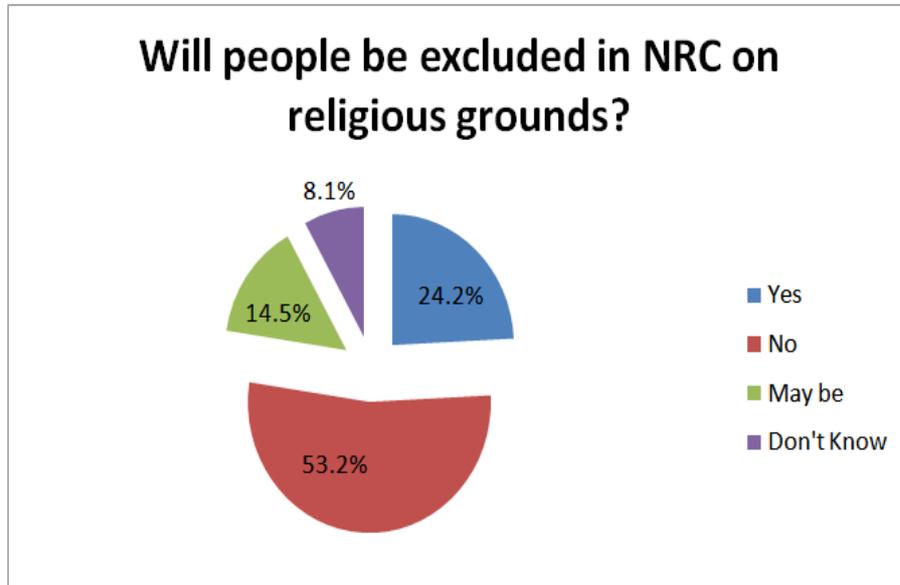
**Comment**

About 68% of people think NRC is not for the particular religion. But 20% still feel that NRC is for only the particular religion. By this we can say that people do not have the complete information about NRA and CAA.

**Q4. Will People be excluded under NRC on Religious Grounds?**

**Table 4**

Response	
Yes	24.2
No	53.2
May be	14.5
Don't Know	8.1



**Figure 4**

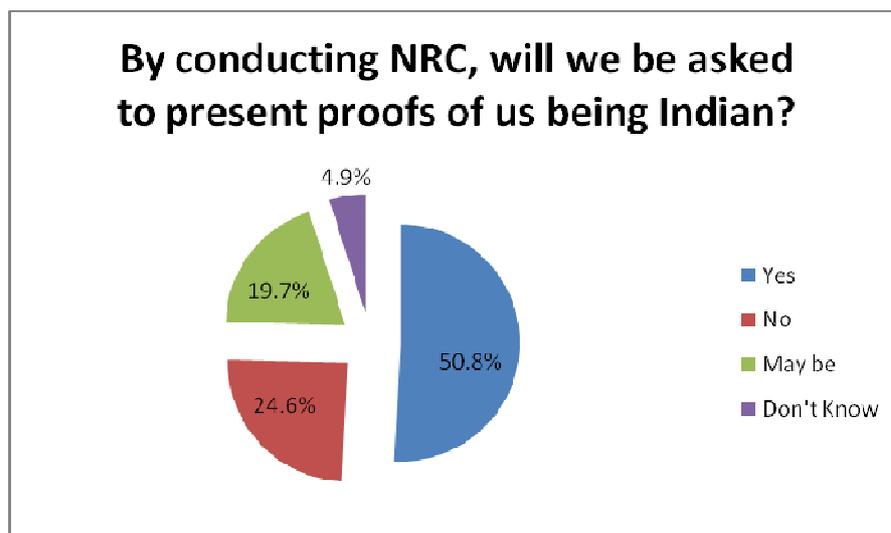
**Comment**

About 54% of people think people will not be excluded under NRC on religious basis. But 25% still feel that the people can be excluded under NRC on religious ground. By this we can say that people do not have the complete information about NRA and CAA.

**Q5. By Conducting NRC, will People be asked to Present Proofs of being an Indian?**

**Table 5**

Response	
Yes	50.8
No	24.6
May be	19.7
Don't Know	4.9



**Figure 5**

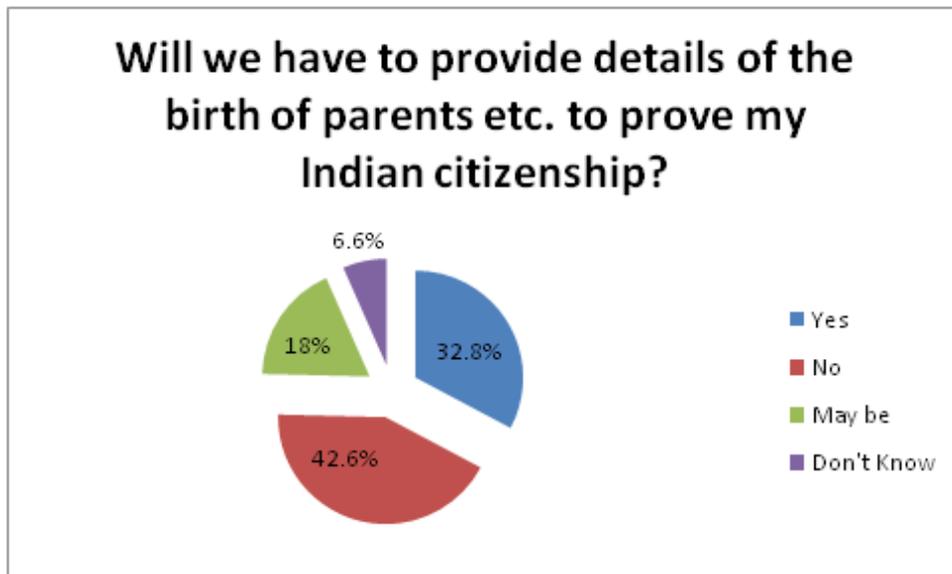
**Comment**

About 51% of people think when the government conducting NRC, they should have to present all proofs of being an Indian. About 25% feel that when the government conducting NRC, they shall not have to present proofs of being an Indian. And 20% says may be that is possible and 5% don't even have any knowledge about this. It shows us that most of the people were confused about NRA and CAA.

**Q6. Will we have to Provide Details of the Birth of our Parents & etc. to prove our Indian Citizenship?**

**Table 6**

Response	
Yes	32.8
No	42.6
May be	18
Don't Know	6.6



**Figure 6**

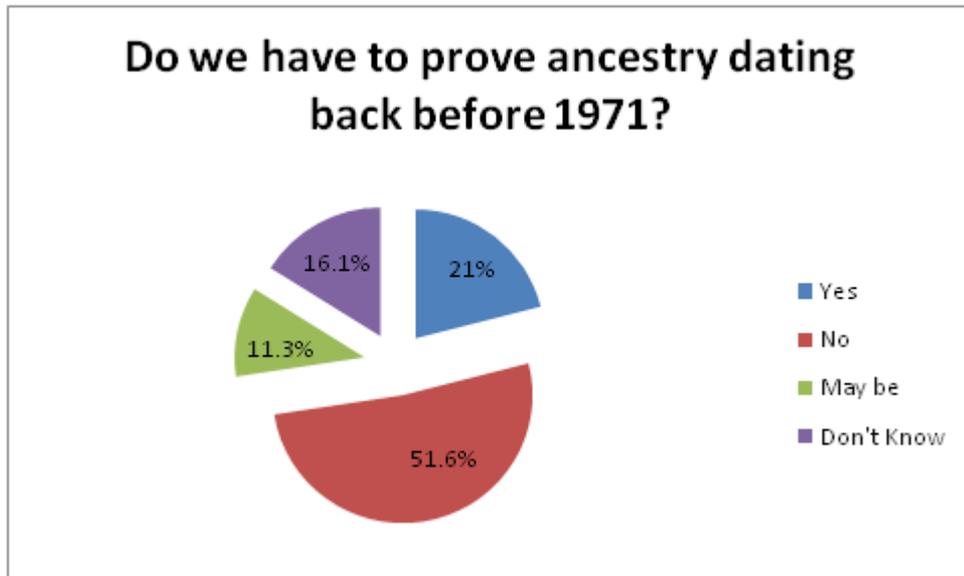
**Comment**

About 43% of the people think that they don't want to provide details of the birth of their parents and etc. to prove Indian citizenship. But 33% still feels that they have to provide details of the birth of parents etc. to prove their Indian citizenship. About 18% says may be that is possible and other 7% do not have any knowledge about this. It shows that most of the people were confused about NRA and CAA.

**Q7. Do we have to Prove Ancestry Dating back before 1971?**

**Table 7**

Response	
Yes	21
No	51.6
May be	11.3
Don't Know	16.1



**Figure 7**

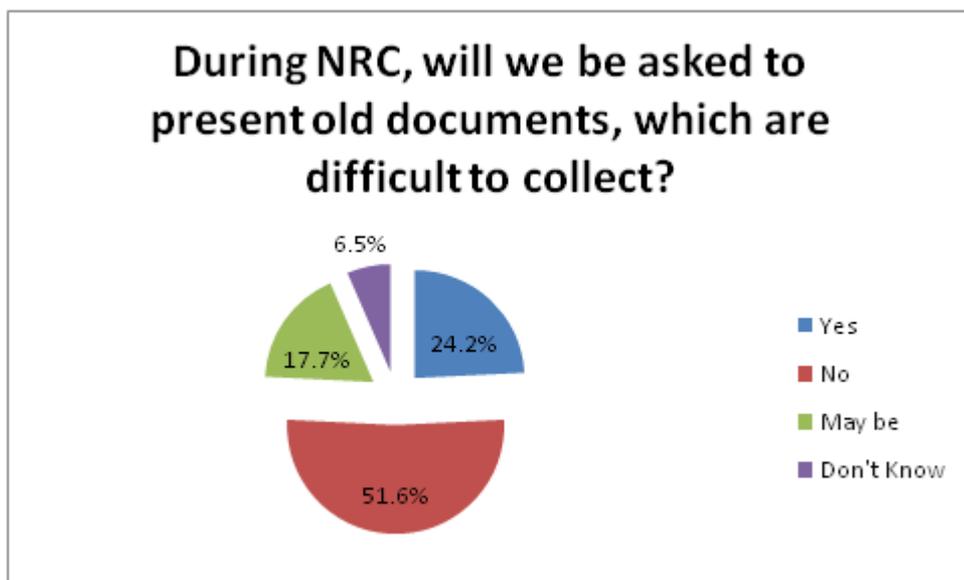
**Comment**

About 52% of the people say that they have not to prove ancestry dating back before 1971. But 21% still feel that they have to prove ancestry dating back before 1971. About 16% says may be that is possible and then 21% do not have any knowledge about this. It is clear that most of the people were confused about NRA and CAA.

**Q8. During NRC, will we be asked to Present Old Documents, which are Difficult to Collect?**

**Table 8**

Response	
Yes	24.2
No	51.6
May be	17.7
Don't Know	6.5



**Figure 8**

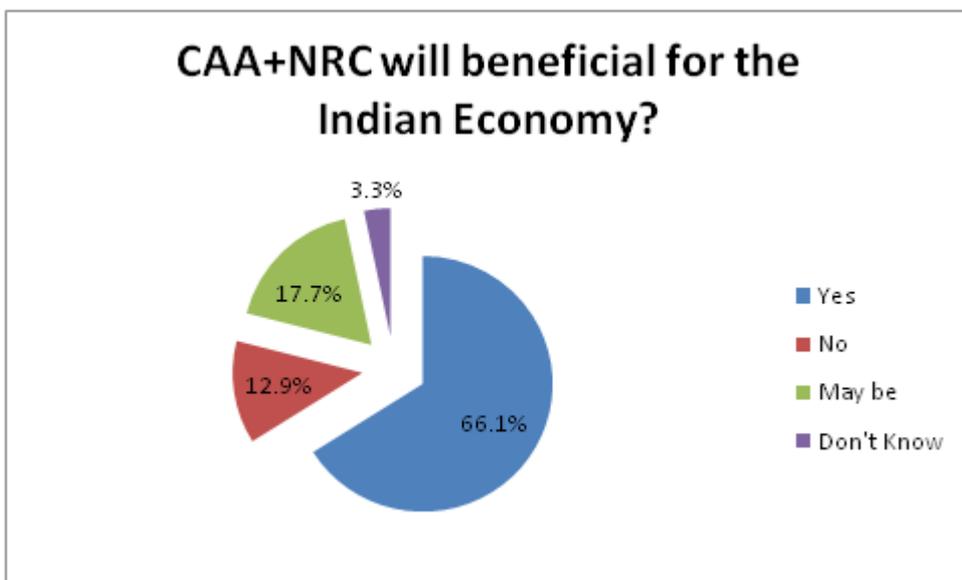
**Comment**

About 52% of people say that they will not be asked to present old documents, which are difficult to collect. But 24% still feel that they will not be asked to present such documents. And 18% says may be that is possible and other 7% do not have any knowledge about this. It is clear that most of the people were confused about NRA and CAA.

**Q9. Is CAA+NRC will be Beneficial to the Indian Economy?**

**Table 9**

Response	
Yes	66.1
No	12.9
May be	17.7
Don't Know	3.3



**Figure 9**

**Comment**

About 66% of the people says that CAA and NRC will be beneficial to the Indian economy. But 13% feels that CAA and NRC will not be beneficial to the Indian economy. About 18% says may be that is possible and other 4% even don't have any knowledge about this. It shows us that most of the people are confuse about NRA and CAA.

**Q10. CAA+NRC will help to Generate Employment for an Indian People?**

**Table 10**

Response	
Yes	58.1
No	17.7
May be	16.1
Don't Know	8.1

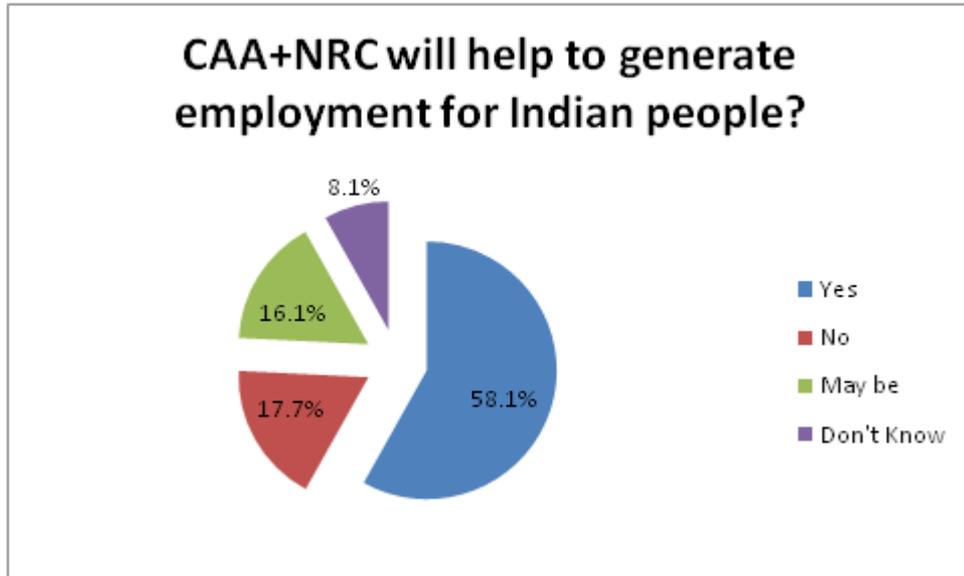


Figure 10

**Comment**

About 59% of people says that CAA and NRC will be helpful to generate employment for an Indian people. But 19% still feels that they will not be helpful to generate employment for an Indian people. 17% says may be that is possible and other 8% don't have any knowledge about this. It clearly shows us that most of the people were confused about NRA and CAA.

**Q11. Are you in the Favour of NRC?**

Table 11

Response	
Yes	79.4
No	9.5
May be	4.8
Don't Know	6.3

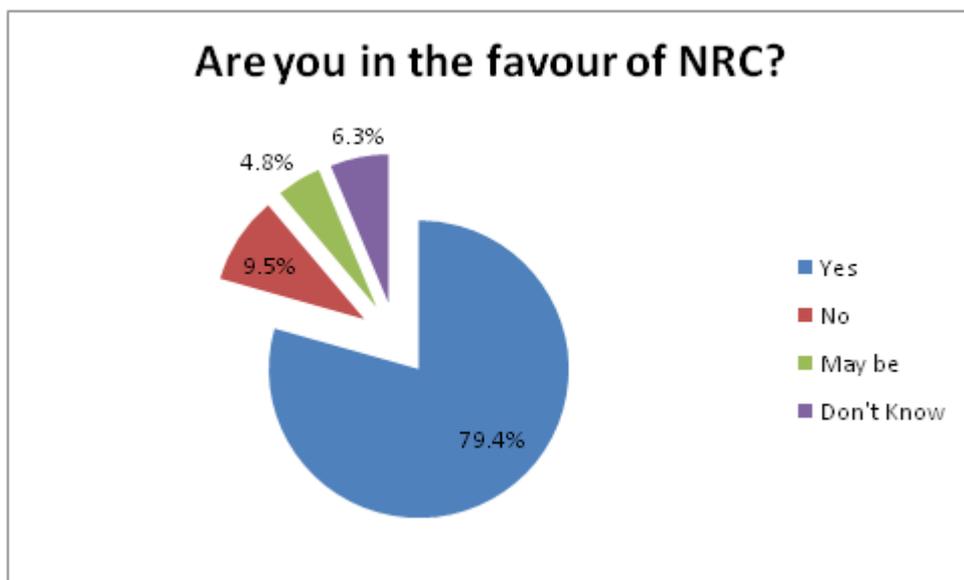


Figure 11

### **Comment**

About 80% of the people are in the favour NRC. But 10% are still not in the favour of NRC. 5% stands in middle and other 7% don't have any knowledge about this. It is clear that most of the people were in the favour of NRA and CAA.

### **Limitations of Study**

This study also has its own limitation that limits the applicability and validity of study. The limitations are given below:

- The sample size was small that cannot be applied to the entire population.
- CAA is a new launched Act so some people were not aware about this Act.

### **Findings of the Study**

After Analysis and Interpretation of the data these are followings findings that emerged:

- Most of the respondents are Male.
- Majority of the respondents i.e. 58 % comes under the age group above 40 years and 32% are comes under 25- 40 years.
- More than 60% of the respondents are related to student category.
- Most of the respondents' perceptions are neutral towards the CAA and NRC and also they are aware of CAA and NRC through the mass media.
- About 80% of the people are in the favour of NRC and CAA.
- About 21% of the people think that they have to prove ancestry dating back before 1971, which is only a rumor.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Overall we can say that most of the people (About 80%) are in the favour of NRC and CAA, but still they don't have the proper knowledge about these CAA and NRC. Approx 40% of people says that NRC and CAA are the Act related to Citizenship, so by this we can get to know the awareness level of the people. About 20% says Muslims have to worry about this amendment, but which is not basically true. About 21% of people think that, they have to prove their ancestry dating back before 1971, which is also just a rumor. Some persons are misguiding the people about NRC and CAA. In this study we conclude that if the people get the proper knowledge about these amendments then none will be against the CAA and NRC.

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