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**India and China in the world economic
governance: the case of the WTO**

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Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on 26th of April

Maria Povna

References

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ABSTRACT

One of the pivotal factors shaping the dynamics of contemporary international relations is the emergence of the "rising Asian giants" India and China onto the global political stage. Their rapid and sustained economic growth enables these developing countries to systematically enhance their influence in the international arena by pursuing proactive foreign policies, both regionally and globally. The thesis investigates the roles of India and China in global economic governance, focusing on their participation in the WTO. It examines how the behavior of these emerging countries changed during the ministerial conference of the protracted Doha Round over time. The preferences of these new trade influencers in multilateral negotiations are analyzed as well as the drivers laid behind those preferences. The findings suggest that major developing countries aim to maintain their domestic policy autonomy considering international norms and rules, seeking to maximize benefits from their engagement with the international order like other past and present states.

Keywords

Doha Round, domestic players, emerging economies, global governance, preferences, recognition, redistribution, developing countries, two-level game, the WTO.

Klíčová slova

Kolo z Dohá, domácí hráči, rozvíjející se ekonomiky, globální správa, preference, uznání, přerozdělování, rozvojové země, dvouúrovňová hra, WTO.

Title

India and China in the world economic governance: the case of the WTO

Název práce

Indie a Čína ve světovém ekonomickém řízení: případ WTO

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INTRODUCTION

The world order, as a system of specific ideas and rules governing international politics, is undergoing constant structural transformations. New players are emerging on the global stage, asserting their interests more forcefully and seeking more prominent roles in international affairs. The growing disagreements between these emerging powers and developed countries represent a significant challenge that demands a reassessment of existing rules and norms governing the global economic system. To comprehend the potential changes resulting from shifts in global power dynamics, it is imperative to analyze the true aspirations of these new "rising powers." On one hand, if their primary aim is to gain recognition and redistribute influence both within and beyond international organizations, then these organizations themselves must balance the interests of established and emerging powers (Nel, 2010). On the other hand, rising powers are interested in the decisions made by international economic organizations and advocate for substantial reforms to these institutions. The extent of their engagement and influence hinges on the economic issues and regulatory areas impacted by these decisions.

The WTO example vividly illustrates the evolving global order and the clash of diverse approaches to global economic governance. The sustained economic growth of India and China has empowered them to openly declare their ambitions within the international trade organization. These prominent new players have challenged the unipolar world order by demanding recognition of developing countries as full-fledged partners in global decision-making. The protracted Doha trade negotiations highlight the WTO Round's inability to reconcile the development objectives of developing countries while also accommodating the interests of developed nations.

The relevance of this thesis is defined by the dynamic evolution of a multipolar world, where global governance institutions encounter substantial challenges due to rapid transformations in the world economy, socio-political landscape, and cultural life of nations. ***The aim of the thesis*** is to explore the role, preferences, interests, and foreign economic strategy of emerging countries (India and China) in the context of the Doha Round to understand the dynamics of global economic governance. To accomplish this goal, this study seeks to investigate the following ***research questions***: RQ1. What were the trade policy preferences of a) India and b) China in Doha Round? RQ2. What explains the preferences of a) India and b) China in the Doha Round?

The theoretical foundation of this thesis draws upon Putnam's two-level games approach, Nel's interdisciplinary perspective on redistribution and recognition, and key principles from

liberalism and constructivism. Based on these theoretical frameworks, we establish the following ***hypotheses: (H1)*** The preferences of a) India and b) China in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players and ***(H2)*** a) India's and b) China's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by their concerns of redistribution and recognition. The chronological framework of the study is defined by the research objective and covers the time period (2001-2021) of the Doha Round trade negotiations. In terms of ***methodology***, based on the contributions of theoretical scholars like Bennett, Colin (2007); George & Bennett (2005); Gerring (2004); Odell (2001); and Yin (2003), we selected the case study method as our research approach because of its inherent effectiveness in conducting thorough empirical examinations of specific events. Our data mostly relies on 1) WTO regulatory documents; 2) official websites of government agencies in India and China and media coverage of the Doha Round's current status; 3) statistical databases; and 4) secondary sources.

The dissertation's scientific contribution lies in identifying the preferences, negotiation strategies and behavioral patterns of emerging countries such as India and China within the international negotiations of the Doha Round. The most significant outcomes obtained by the dissertation author include, first and foremost examination of the negotiation period of the Doha Round spanning from 2001 to 2021, with a focus on the pivotal roles played by India and China, the two largest Asian nations. Analysis of India's and China's emerging roles in global economic governance through their participation in the WTO, employing a flexible case-study format that began with broad question and gradually narrowing the focus as the research progressed. Investigation into the preferences and decision-making processes of the "emerging Asian giants" (India and China) in the context of the Doha Round, which are crucial for understanding the evolving dynamics of global economic governance and the impact of major developing economies on the international trade environment. Explanation of India's and China's preferences using Putnam's theory of two-level games, which underscores the economic interests of internal stakeholders, and Nel's constructivist approach, which highlights the concerns of rising countries regarding recognition and redistribution. This unique analytical framework provides deeper insights into the foundations of emerging countries' preferences and decision-making processes during the Doha negotiations. The empirical data gathered in this master thesis contributes significantly to enhancing the practical relevance of research on India's and China's roles in international relations, particularly within the context of developing countries.

The structure of our study corresponds to the research aim and comprises an introduction, four chapters, conclusion, and references. The introduction of the thesis justifies the relevance of the presented research, defines the objective and research questions, formulates hypotheses, discusses the theoretical and methodological foundations of the work, reviews literature dedicated to the emergence of emerging powers and their impact on the international economic and political order, and outlines the results obtained by the author and their scientific novelty. The first chapter presents the main subjects of the current research, namely the major developing countries - India, China, and the WTO. The first section examines the WTO as an international organization established for the purpose of global economic governance, within which countries with emerging markets are increasingly involved in developing all strategic decisions. The subsequent analysis delves into the rise of Asian giants and discusses their role in transforming the international trade system.

In the second chapter, the directions for future empirical research are outlined. The theoretical basis of this thesis includes the theories of liberalism and constructivism, the postulates of which are applicable to understanding the actions and policies of the studied states. Drawing on Putnam approach of two-level games and Nel's perspective on redistribution and recognition, the empirical part of the research (chapters 3 and 4) systematically elucidates the logic behind China's and India's preferences in key areas of Doha Round negotiations: agriculture, NAMA, services, and intellectual property. The hypotheses H1a/b, H2a/b are tested in specific cases of China and India, leading to the derivation of conclusions from the analysis. In the summary of our master thesis, the research findings are concisely presented to align with the stated objectives, culminating in key conclusions.

During our research, scholarly works by renowned economists and analysts like Barnett and Duvall (2005); Finnemore & Sikkink (1998); Frieden (1999); Hiscox (2009); Keohane (1984); Keohane & Nye (1987); Lake (2009); Moravcsik (1997); Nel (2010); Parizek (2019); Putnam (1988); Waltz (1979), Wendt (1992); and Zartman (2008) were examined, which focused on studying fundamental aspects of global economic development and international trade. For instance, Barnett and Duvall (2005) argue that ongoing changes in global economic governance institutions reflect underlying shifts in the distribution of economic power among states. Scholars emphasize that international institutions are often established by major powers to promote or safeguard their interests and advantageous positions. Lake (2009) stresses that states benefiting

from trade liberalization engage in rigorous negotiations to access the markets of industrialized countries, demonstrating a willingness to take risks to maximize their influence. Parizek (2019) points out that in international cooperation, states pursue economic gain while also expressing concerns about fairness, redistribution, and recognition. Moravcsik (1997) suggests that states' preferences are instrumental in shaping their behavior, driven by efforts to achieve justice and influenced by economic interdependence among domestic actors and global resource allocation. Therefore, what states want is a determining factor in what they do.

In testing our hypotheses, we rely extensively on Putnam's two-level games approach and liberal tenets and Nel's perspective concerning recognition and redistribution with a constructivist focus. Putnam conceptualizes the politics of many international negotiations as a two-level game: during negotiations, state representatives must balance the interests of their counterparts at the international tier (Level I) with the concerns and demands of their constituents, including the bureaucracy, interest groups, and media, at the domestic tier (Level II). This suggests that foreign policy mirrors the preferences of internal stakeholders. Putnam argues that international agreements will only be successfully negotiated if they yield domestic benefits (Putnam, 1988). Philip Nel explores the root causes for state behavior, their objectives, concerns regarding uneven wealth distribution, and the pursuit of global recognition, which states can attain through institutions purposefully established by society (Nel, 2010). The author explains that the redistribution of relative advantage (power, prestige, and wealth) alongside recognition are intertwined and reflect the state's increasing confidence in advancing its agendas on the global stage.

Literature on the "rising powers" of India and China provides valuable insights into their rapid economic ascent and their stance towards the existing international economic order (Hopewell, 2014, p. 3). Michalopoulos (2014) points out that the international community failed to seize an opportunity to consolidate ongoing liberalisation during the ten-year Doha Round negotiations. China and India emerged as key players in the WTO, positioning themselves as new analogues to "old powers." Grinin (2015) analyses the development models of India and China, factors driving their development, limitations of developing country models, and forecasts their prospects in the 21st century. Scholarly works overviewing the economic development of India and China have proven highly useful (Boden, 2012; Cooper and Schwanen, 2009; Emmott, 2008; Hung, 2009; Jacques, 2009; Ikenberry, 2008; Kahler, 2013; Panagariya, 2008; Ray & Saha, 2008).

Researchers highlight that the economic success of India and China has raised questions about potential shifts in global governance.

Examining China's tenure in the WTO, scholars like Gao (2015), Hilpert (2014), and Lim & Wang (2009) portray China as a "constructive member, pursuing its interests" (Lim & Wang 2009, p.1310). During the Doha Round negotiations, researchers such as Hopewell (2014), Shambaugh (2013), and Xiaotong & Keith (2017) highlight China's transition from a passive observer to an active participant and advocate of its own ideas. Assessing China's ascent as a major global economic power, scholars like Dickson (2003), He (2016), and Jefferson (2017) emphasize domestic factors and players that shape China's behavior and outcomes in WTO negotiations. Meanwhile, in various scholarly works, India is characterized as a committed advocate for developing country issues (Conceicao-Heldt 2013; Conceicao-Heldt 2013a; Narlikar 2006; Ray & Saha 2008; Sharma & Bhogal 2017; Srinivasan 2006). Amrita Narlikar (2006) notes India's increasing influence in employing "strict reciprocity strategies" and advancing the concept of a "veto player." Conceição-Heldt (2013) elucidates India's active and assertive stance in the WTO, exploring the origins of internal preferences and defining India's trade policy inclinations during the Doha Round negotiations. According to several researchers (Acharya 2014; Conceicao-Heldt 2013; Mansfield et al. 2007; Mishra & Miklian, 2016; Narlikar 2008; Narlikar 2013; Rodrigues-Vieira 2021; Sahni, 2007), India's trade policy preferences mirror the demands of influential interest groups at the national level.

Hopewell's works hold significant relevance for thesis preparation. Using the WTO as a focal point, she investigates substantial differences in the power dynamics of major developing economies and their behavior within the global trading system (Hopewell 2014). Through detailed analysis, Hopewell explores the preferences and negotiation strategies employed by emerging nations during ministerial conferences of the Doha Round, highlighting the reasons behind India and China's ascension as key players in global economic governance. In her scholarly articles (Hopewell 2014; Hopewell 2019; Hopewell 2021), she emphasizes that rising powers, despite professing solidarity and cooperation with the Third World, prioritize their own interests, sometimes at the expense of other developing nations. Ultimately, this body of literature, centered on the world's major trading participants, offers substantial groundwork for reflection and in-depth examination of the evolving roles of China and India in global economic governance.

CHAPTER 1

THE RISING POWERS INDIA AND CHINA AND THE WTO

In the early 21st century, a notable shift has occurred in the global economy and international relations, marked by the growing impact of specific nations often referred to as emerging markets or rising powers. These rising powers are distinguished by their substantial economic potential and active involvement in global affairs. The economies of emerging market countries exhibit consistent growth in economic metrics, expanding infrastructure, and dynamic socio-political initiatives (Vercueil, 2016). Given the increasing significance of emerging countries, not solely in the economic but also in the political sphere, it becomes crucial to understand their behavioral model and the associated consequences for international institutions regulating the global economy.

For more than half a century, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have been the main platforms for international negotiations on economic, financial, and trade regulation, where the United States and other industrially developed countries dominated (Hopewell, 2014, p.2). However, the economic success of India and China, along with nuclear capabilities, provided them a foundation to openly assert their ambitions on the global stage. These "Great Powers" challenged the unipolar world, insisting on the acknowledgment of developing nations as equal partners in global decision-making. Our research is centered on examining the role of emerging powers, such as India and China, in global economic governance, with a focus on their engagement in the WTO. The first chapter considers the WTO as a universal institution overseeing global trade in the context of the evolving structure of the world order. Subsequently, drawing from the WTO case, we discuss the rise of these Asian giants and their impact on transforming the international trade system.

1.1.WTO and the transformation of global economic governance

The current global order is facing a crisis and undergoing a process of reorganization. These changes trigger the modernization and adaptation of former models of international relations, as many of them struggle to keep up with the pace of development, breaking down and making room for innovative systemic solutions. Analysts offer diverse perspectives on the world order, portraying it as a unipolar system with the United States as the sole superpower (Huntington, 1999), an economically multipolar structure where states compete for global dominance (Zoellick,

2010), a G-zero world lacking a defined leader (Bremmer; Roubini, 2011), or a Multiplex world, implying a complex configuration of actors and ideas (Acharya, 2020). Despite the ongoing debate about the contemporary global governance system, it is worth acknowledging that Western centrality is fading into the past, and multipolarity is taking its place. (Wade, 2011).

The example of the WTO best reflects the evolving world order and the clash of different approaches to global economic governance, encompassing the establishment of rules and management at the international level across various economic domains such as finance, trade, and economic development. The establishment of the WTO in 1995 marked a significant milestone in the realm of global trade governance. Its primary objectives are the promotion of international trade liberalization and the regulation of trade and diplomatic relations among its member states. Currently, the WTO boasts a membership comprising 164 countries, collectively representing a staggering 98% of global trade and the world GDP (WTO 2021a). The essence of WTO membership revolves around the cultivation of a non-discriminatory trading system, where each member nation is accorded to assurance of equitable and consistent treatment for its exports in the markets of other member countries. In return, every country pledges to extend the same treatment to imports within its domestic market, thus fostering a reciprocal commitment to open trade. Initially, participating nations reached a consensus on the agenda for the forthcoming round. Subsequently, the highest authority within the WTO, the Ministerial Conference, assumes the pivotal role of authorizing the commencement of the round. Following this mandate, negotiations commence across all items stipulated on the agenda. Importantly, the WTO adheres to the "package principle," signifying that a round remains unfinished until resolutions are achieved on all agenda items.

Until recently, the decision-making process in multilateral negotiations was frequently controlled by developed countries, owing to their economic strength and administrative capabilities. For instance, in the decision-making regarding the so-called "Singapore issues" introduced in the context of the Doha Round, developed countries held primary interest. Their interests were aligned with further liberalization of trade in services and the reinforcement of intellectual property rights protection. On the other hand, developing countries aimed to address more immediate concerns, including agricultural liberalization, labor migration, and the swift implementation of various WTO agreements. Despite WTO regulations allowing concessions for developing nations, such as an extended transitional period and the removal of non-tariff

restrictions on exports, initiatives from developing countries were often blocked or disregarded by developed countries (Keating, 2015).

However, during the Doha Round, initiated in 2001, which aimed to continue the process of reform and advance trade liberalization with a special focus on the development needs of developing and least developed countries, a substantial shift in power dynamics within the WTO occurred (WTO, 2001a). The objective of this round of multilateral trade negotiations was to regulate the trade relations among WTO member countries. Developing countries view one of the key tasks of the round as reducing support and protective measures for agriculture in developed countries. Conversely, developed countries sought to improve access to the markets of goods and services of developing countries, primarily the most developed among them China, Brazil, India. Taken together, all these conditions were meant to provide equal competitive opportunities for all WTO member countries. During the complex negotiations at the fifth Ministerial Conference in Cancun (Mexico, 2003), fundamental disagreements between developed and developing countries were outlined on issues related to agriculture, access to non-agricultural markets (NAMA), "Singapore issues," and provisions for simplifying trade procedures (WTO, 2003).

The coalition of developing countries, G-20, led by Brazil, India, and China took a firm stance by rejecting further reductions in tariff rates for industrial goods unless reciprocal concessions were made by the U.S. and the EU in agriculture (Conceição-Heldt 2013). This move asserted the influence of developing countries. Unfortunately, the negotiations fell through. Cancun illustrated that preserving the multilateral trade system, reviving the Doha Round negotiations, and achieving its ultimate objectives would require substantial compromises from the leading players in global trade – the U.S., EU, and Japan – especially in sensitive areas, primarily supporting the agricultural sector. However, over the 20 years span of Doha (2001-2021), significant progress has not been achieved not only in resolving the round's package agreements but also in the broader spectrum of trade liberalization measures.

Assessing the Doha Round, it is crucial to highlight the enhanced role of developing countries in the process of global governance. In the Ministerial Declaration of 2001, it is noted that the majority of WTO member countries belong to the group of developing states, and their interests should be "at the heart" of the work program of the Development Round (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1). Key priorities for these countries include securing free access for their goods to developed markets, reducing cotton subsidies, and obtaining exemptions from

commitments on trade in services, which other countries might consider undertaking as a result of the ongoing round of negotiations (Keating, 2015).

To balance the imperatives of trade liberalization with the unique needs of developing countries, the international trade system introduced *Special and Differential Treatment (SDT)*. The Doha Declaration explicitly "confirmed that provisions for special and differential treatment are an integral part of the WTO agreements" (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, para. 44). The primary objective of SDT is to assist each developing country in achieving meaningful integration into the global economy. According to SDT, developing countries have longer transition periods when fulfilling trade liberalization commitments to achieve their development goals. Industrially developed countries can offer financial assistance to developing nations and provide them with preferential access to their own markets (WTO, 2023).

Despite significant concessions from developed countries, numerous disagreements persist on key negotiation issues. Throughout the Doha Round, India, acting as the coordinator of the G-20 and G-33 coalitions, advocated for a reduction in agricultural subsidies by developed nations and proposed the establishment of a "Special Safeguard Mechanism" (SSM) for developing countries. The rationale was that agricultural trade is crucial for ensuring the food security of developing nations (Conceição-Heldt, 2013). China, with its large population and low incomes, echoed the concerns of developing countries about internal food security. The contradiction between the positions of India and China and that of the U.S. proved insurmountable, leading to the failure of the Cancun conference. Although an agreement was reached in Hong Kong (2005) to completely eliminate all forms of export subsidies for agricultural products by the end of 2013 (WT/MIN(05)/DEC), this decision was not implemented, and agricultural issues remained a significant stumbling block in subsequent ministerial conferences of the Doha Round.

Access to non-agricultural markets also became a significant hurdle in the Development Round negotiations. Developed nations were interested in opening the markets of developing countries to their goods. In response, developing countries presented counter-requirements. Discussions on NAMA within the Doha Round centered on disputes over the application of formulas for reducing tariffs on industrial or raw materials. Developing countries linked the reduction of industrial tariffs to the simultaneous reduction of agricultural tariffs and subsidies (WT/MIN(05)/DEC). Concerning services, developing countries perceived this sector as underdeveloped, making liberalization less attractive. Consequently, developing nations were

willing to broaden access for foreign companies to their service markets, but only in exchange for a substantial reduction in agricultural subsidies by developed countries (McGuire, 2002). The Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration (2005) exempted developing countries from any commitments to liberalize the services sector (Sharma & Bhogal, 2017).

Through the formation of coalitions addressing critical issues, developing countries attract increased attention for themselves and their challenges, gaining the opportunity to assert their interests more forcefully. India, alongside South Africa and Brazil, as leaders among developing nations, secured significant victories in the intellectual property and access to medicines (Hopewell, 2014, p.19). The adopted Declaration on the TRIPS agreement and public health eased compulsory license requirements for developing countries. Legislative changes facilitated a simplified import system for generic drugs in the least developed countries lacking sufficient pharmaceutical production capacity (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/2). The proactive approach of developing countries in negotiations extends beyond this. Following the 2008-2009 crisis and the deceleration of economic growth in developed nations, trade conflicts and protectionism increased in their trade policies (Urata, 2009).

Thus, in the global economy, the influence of rising countries has markedly surged, with developed nations swiftly ceding ground. While the world's average economic growth rate was around 3-4%, China achieved an impressive 10% (World Bank, 2022). The increasing economic weight of China and India prompted calls for the acknowledgment of developing countries as full and equal partners in global decision-making. Over subsequent years, the Doha Round negotiation agenda expanded, covering issues related to development, the clarification and supplementation of existing WTO agreements, as well as agriculture, NAMA, trade in services, trade regulation, intellectual property, trade and the environment, trade facilitation, special and differential treatment, dispute settlement, and electronic commerce. During numerous ministerial conferences, India and China demonstrated their ability to resist imbalanced deals and effectively asserted substantial demands on developed countries (Hopewell 2017, p.1392).

One of the notable accomplishments of the Doha Round negotiations was the adoption of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) during the Ninth Ministerial Conference of WTO member countries in Bali (2013). This agreement was explicitly designed to substantially alleviate non-tariff measures arising from complex customs procedures (WT/MIN (13)/36). The signing of the TFA demonstrated the negotiators' capacity to compromise. At the Tenth Ministerial Conference

in Nairobi (2015), four new decisions were made regarding agriculture: export competition, public stockholding for food security purposes, cotton, and SSM (Ramasamy & Ananth, 2021). The outcomes of the ministerial conferences in Bali and Nairobi granted developing countries exemptions from service commitments, secured duty-free and quota-free access to markets, established preferential rules of origin for goods, and instituted a trading regime for cotton (WT/MIN (13)/36; WT/MIN(15)/DEC).

Despite the partial success of agreed mini-packages at the ministerial conferences in 2013 and 2015, the Doha Round has been mired in a prolonged impasse, failing to achieve its key negotiating objectives. The simultaneous existence of two decision-making principles within the WTO, namely, a single package and consensus (Ansong, 2012), has become extremely problematic due to the increased number of participants and shifting power dynamics. On one hand, achieving consensus is required for the entire package of trade liberalization measures, which is equally important for both developed and developing countries. On the other hand, the attempt to adhere to this principle, given the diversity of interests and the continuously growing number of WTO members, has resulted in protracted negotiations. Concisely, the deadlock of the Doha Round can be attributed to the paradox where countries aim to open the markets of their trading partners while exercising caution in liberalizing their own. Furthermore, the power balance in negotiations underwent a fundamental change. The slowdown in economic growth in Europe and the USA, the weakening of their negotiating power, and the emergence of rising powers like India and China contributed to the absence of an apparent leader in the Doha Round. This lack of leadership made it challenging to give new momentum to the negotiations and actively engage all participants.

The deadlock of the Doha Round has spurred the rise of Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs), where agreements can be reached more swiftly and efficiently than in protracted multilateral negotiations. Participants in the Round acknowledge the necessity of coexistence between regionalism and the multilateral system, referring to existing WTO provisions (WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1, para 29). However, the declaration from the Nairobi conference emphasizes the need to ensure that RTAs remain a complement to the multilateral trading system and not an alternative (WT/MIN(15)/DEC, para 28). WTO classifies all types of mutual preferential trade agreements, economic integration agreements, and customs unions as regional trade agreements. Major players in the global market have focused on creating large regional

economic blocs such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and the expansion of ASEAN through the Regional Comprehensive Partnership Agreement (RCEP). The key operating principle of RTAs is the most favored nation treatment, implying equal trade conditions for all member countries. RTAs regulate non-tariff restrictions, labor and environmental standards, investment, and intellectual property issues in much greater depth than the WTO norms alone (WTO, 2022).

An essential aspect of regionalization is the growing prevalence of agreements among developing nations. This trend is driven both by the escalating rates of economic growth and trade and the increasing participation of developing countries in Global Value Chains (GVC). The rapidly expanding economies of India and China are actively working to broaden their network of RTAs with individual countries or regional groups to optimize benefits and secure preferences in vital markets. Free trade zones serve as a mechanism for not only expanding trade and investment connections, thereby bolstering economic security, but also for political diplomacy and strategic influence which is extremely important in today's globalized world and in countering competitors. Once they establish a strong foothold in the region, rising powers become increasingly assertive in defending their economic interests at the international level (Sampson,2019; Ramesh, 2014).

Yet, some experts perceive the development of regionalism as a threat to the international trade system. Their concerns are related to the formation of mega-regional alliances, raising doubt about the WTO's effectiveness in regulating many crucial aspects of contemporary economic cooperation (Sulamaa & Widgrén, 2005). Mega Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) challenge the principles of universality and nondiscrimination that underlie the WTO regime. However, in the future, these mega-regions have the potential to fundamentally alter the role of the WTO in managing global trade, as asserted by scholars Stephen & Parizek (2018), and regionalism may emerge as one of the most promising ways to construct a global order in the 21st century (Acharya, 2017).The WTO case illustrates that the confrontation between developed and developing countries profoundly influences the global economic order. The divergence in rules within the international trade organization concerning the preferences of developed and developing countries has resulted in the deadlock of the Doha Round (Woolcock, 2019).

Negotiations were paralyzed along key tracks, namely, developing countries resisted expanding access to their markets for developed nations by reducing import tariffs, while developed countries, in turn, refused to eliminate agricultural subsidies. Owing to rapid economic

growth, emerging powers confidently assert their interests, safeguarding their right to substantial political space crucial for their ongoing development. Given that the WTO doesn't establish new rules, major players in the global market have opted to create RTAs to draft these rules outside its framework. A certain transformation of the WTO is now underway. This prompts an important question, can emerging regional systems integrate into the WTO, or will they result in the fragmentation of global trade? One thing is evident, WTO participants face a complex and lengthy process of engaging in multi-dimensional negotiations. The paramount aspect of this process involves delineating national economic interests and priorities, determining the limits of concessions, and establishing conditions that ensure the economic security of the country.

1.2. The Rise of China in the paradigm of globalization

China, with its rapidly expanding economic potential and export capabilities, remains actively engaged in the processes of globalization. Its sphere of influence stretches beyond neighboring states to encompass strategically important regions of the world. The dynamic rise of China as a global economic and political player has sparked extensive discussions about the phenomenon of "*the ascent of the Celestial Empire*." The majority of debates center on whether China will emerge as a "revisionist" power challenging the existing system or a power that upholds the "status quo" (Scott & Wilkinson, 2013). According to the perspective of David Shambaugh, a professor of Asian studies, China takes a "moderately revisionist position" and continues to behave as a force that supports the status quo through international organizations (Ly, 2021, p.5; 14). The world economy has evolved into a more complex and interconnected system, where the involvement of the People's Republic of China holds paramount significance, impacting both the nation itself and the global community. Beijing has consistently emphasized that peaceful development represents a strategic choice for China, aligning with its objectives of modernization, prosperity, and enhanced state power. Moreover, this approach is aimed at making a substantial contribution to global civilization (Yang Jiechi, 2011; Yanbin, 2016;).

The economic transformations associated with the policy reforms and openness to foreign trade have been a catalyst for the growth of the national economy, profoundly altering the landscape of the People's Republic of China. The extensive reforms initiated in 1978 were aimed at a gradual shift away from a centrally planned economy. Openness entailed broader access to foreign investments, technologies, and ideas in China, alongside the massive entry of Chinese

goods into global markets. Solving the agrarian problem and industrialization naturally emerged as fundamental tasks, serving as the most necessary prerequisites for societal restructuring. Over 700 million people were able to overcome poverty, and the country achieved a high level of socio-economic development (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2018). By the volume of nominal GDP, China surpassed Italy (2000), France (2002), the United Kingdom (2006), Germany (2007), and Japan (2010) (World Bank, 2022). Following its entry into the WTO, already in 2002, China experienced an impressive average annual GDP growth rate of 10% (World Bank, 2022). GDP per capita increased from \$1,053.1 in 2001 to \$5,614.4 in 2011 and further to \$12,556.3 in 2021, approaching the standards of high-income countries (World Bank, 2022).

At the core of China's economic success is its unique economic governance model, based on attracting investments, export orientation, the utilization of cheap labor, and the creation of special economic zones (Grinin, 2013). China's ascent to the WTO facilitated the attraction of investments, serving as a primary driver for the country's industrial production, predominantly catering to the needs of the "golden billion." In recent years, China has ranked as the world's second-largest recipient of FDI, drawing in around \$333.98 billion in 2021 (World Bank, 2022). Furthermore, China's accession to the WTO opened new horizons, propelling the nation into the position of the world's leading exporter of mass consumer goods like textiles, toys, footwear, and clothing. The scale of this achievement is striking, while in 2001, China exported goods worth \$272.06 billion, by the end of 2021, its exports amounted to \$3.55 trillion (World Bank, 2022). Over the past decade, China has assumed a leading role in global exports of electronics, chemical products, and pharmaceuticals. The primary destinations for these exported goods include the United States, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Germany (OEC, 2022). Currently, exports contribute up to 80% of the country's foreign exchange earnings (World Bank, 2022). China continues to maintain its status as the world's factory, with the industrial sector accounting for about 39.3% of the GDP. Alongside traditionally developed sectors such as textiles, coal, metallurgy, and machinery, new industries have emerged, including oil extraction and refining, chemical, pharmaceutical, space, and electronic industries (Britannica, 2022). There has also emerged an extensive industry producing copies, counterfeits, and replicas under global brands (OECD, 2016).

It is noteworthy that market reforms almost immediately triggered a reconfiguration of the industrialization process. The development of light, labor-intensive industries, followed by the

expansion of the service sector, led to an increased demand for labor resources. For many years, the availability of cheap and disciplined labor played a crucial role in maintaining the low cost of Chinese goods. Western companies leveraged the country's competitive advantages by establishing production facilities and outsourcing various operations, thereby integrating China into their global value chains (GVC). Over time, China not only became the largest exporter of intermediate goods to the global market but also evolved into a key player in the global GVC (Morrison, 2014).

The pursuit of export support, access to energy and natural resources, technology transfer, and investment protection has driven China's increased involvement in integration processes. Engaging in negotiations and signing free trade agreements (FTAs) are crucial steps for China in implementing its policy of openness to the external world, serving as significant means to expand international exchange and cooperation. Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) play a vital role in stimulating the liberalization of mutual trade ties between partner countries, contributing to their economic advantages. RTAs promote increased trade volumes, the removal of customs barriers, and the streamlining of cross-border movement procedures for goods between states. Currently, China operates under 16 FTA (WTO, 2022). The most effective integration agreements for China have been those with ASEAN. Within the framework of RTAs, the China-ASEAN agreement imposes zero tariffs on more than 90% of goods from China and ASEAN countries (ASEAN,2004). In 2021, the trade volume of goods between China and ASEAN reached \$878.2 billion, marking a 28.1% increase on an annual basis. Vietnam, Malaysia, and Thailand stand out as the top three largest trading partners of China in ASEAN (Embassy of PRC, 2022).

As China continues to deepen its reforms, enhance external openness, and pursue socio-economic development, it progressively integrates into the international community and establishes more intensive connections. Beijing strategically employs FTAs as diplomatic tools to achieve political goals (Li, 2015). An example of politically motivated agreements includes the FTA between China and the countries of Southeast Asia (ASEAN) and South Asia (Pakistan), as well as the mega-regional agreement RCEP. The conclusion of RTAs enables China to strengthen its geopolitical ambitions around the "Belt and Road Initiative" (2013). The goal of this extensive project is to foster multilateral and mutually beneficial cooperation among European, Asian, and African countries, with a focus on financing and building transportation infrastructure (Ferchen, 2016). China aims to become an equal player with nations that play a key role in shaping the new

world order and demonstrate a willingness to take responsibility for the development of global society.

After China's integration into GVCs, there has been a shift from predominance in the export of primary processing goods, raw materials, and materials to the dominance of industrial goods (WTO, 2014a). China is becoming a key trading partner for many countries, both in terms of exports and imports. An increasing number of nations find themselves dependent on the Red Dragon, reflecting China's growing significance as a market. China is increasingly drawn into the processes of globalization. To sustain its position as the "world's factory," the Chinese government introduced an ambitious plan in 2015 for the comprehensive modernization of its industry. This initiative, known as "Made in China 2025," pledges to foster innovation through a blend of market-oriented strategies and state regulations. The primary objectives include boosting the competitiveness of Chinese industries, fostering innovation, and diminishing China's reliance on foreign technologies and overseas investments (Kennedy, 2015). Given the rapid pace of the Chinese economy's development and robust state support for implementing this strategy, it is reasonable to assume that achieving the outlined goals is quite realistic. By 2025, China stands a strong chance of emerging as a leader in advanced technologies.

Despite the rapid economic development of PRC, the country faces internal problems such as an aging population, growing income inequality, corruption, energy resource shortages, environmental pollution, and others. If these issues are not addressed, the successes of China's economic growth will be significantly reduced, and the prospects will not be optimistic. The slowing pace of Chinese economic growth is a major concern for the country. Economic growth has slowed down as previous drivers of economic development are reaching their potential. Moreover, crisis realities also negatively impact China's national economy. Today, the prospects for exports are becoming increasingly uncertain. China's production is no longer characterized by low costs, and the geopolitical situation is exerting pressure on trade with crucial traditional partners, specifically, developed Western economies aiming to decrease their reliance on imports from China. Nevertheless, Beijing retains the opportunity to shift its focus towards alternative drivers of growth, particularly by fostering the development of high technologies and encouraging domestic consumption (Freeman, 2020).

The main external challenge for China is the escalating confrontation with the United States. China is viewed by the United States as an economic partner-competitor and a geopolitical

rival. Therefore, the U.S. regularly takes measures to counter China's economy (WTO, 2010). For instance, Chinese companies have been accused of intellectual property theft, and the Huawei case is one of the most vivid examples of tension in relations with Americans (Shepardson, 2021). Additionally, Washington accuses Beijing of subsidizing its industries to gain a competitive advantage in international markets. The U.S. has imposed tariffs on Chinese goods totaling over \$360 billion, and China responded with tariffs on American goods amounting to over \$110 billion (BBC, 2020). It turns out that close trade and economic ties, along with huge volumes of mutual trade, are no longer a guarantee that disagreements will not escalate into a sharp conflict, where trade disputes become a lever for mutual political pressure.

As the world's largest exporter, PRC had a significant interest in protecting its exports in the international market, which was the primary reason for the country's accession to the WTO. The Doha Round (2001) provided an opportunity for China to shift its preferences from the regional to the global level and strengthen its positions in the world economy. Throughout the conduct of this round, China evolved from a modest, low-profile participant burdened with excessive commitments to a key player in the WTO (He, 2016). China's accession to the WTO underwent a complex negotiation process lasting nearly 15 years. The prolonged nature of the negotiations was attributed to the unique aspects of China's economic transformation, its rapid economic growth, the evolution of GATT into the WTO, and the expansion of its regulatory scope. Upon joining the organization as a developing country, China received certain preferences (WTO, 2001b). As a new WTO member, China remained in the background during the early stages of the Doha Round, as it was unfamiliar with the general procedural rules of negotiations. Moreover, Beijing's restrained behavior might be explained by its dual stance on agriculture, a dominant issue on the Doha Development Agenda (Gao, 2015). Being a populous, low-income country, China shared the concerns of developing nations regarding internal food security and aimed to limit further liberalization in the agricultural sector. Conversely, as a significant exporter of agricultural products, China also advocated for reduced barriers in other developing countries (Lim & Wang, 2009, p.1312).

During the 5th ministerial conference in Cancun (2003), China aligned itself with the developing world, advocating for the protection of millions of farms from the consequences of agricultural liberalization. As part of the G20 coalition, China supported the demand for a reduction in agricultural subsidies by developed countries (Hopewell, 2014). Concerning NAMA,

China aimed for significant reductions in tariff and non-tariff barriers to enhance the competitiveness of its goods in the global market. At the ministerial meeting in Hong Kong (2005), Beijing supported the Swiss formula, considering the interests and needs of developing countries. As a result, the Swiss formula was modified (WT/MIN(05)/DEC, para.14). In services negotiations, China initially took a defensive position. At that time, the service sector was underdeveloped, as Beijing was oriented towards the export of manufacturing goods. However, later on, China shifted its position, agreeing to expand market access and eliminate barriers in various service sectors to strengthen its global economic standing (Lim & Wang, 2009). Presently, the service sector is advancing as swiftly as the industrial sector once did. Prioritizing the protection of intellectual property rights (WT/DS362/R), China aims to enhance its IP framework, foster innovation, and encourage international cooperation in this field. In the Doha Round negotiations, PRC, bolstered by economic strength, aligned itself with developing countries and advocated for the relaxation of patent laws on medical preparations (WTO, 2010). China seeks technological exchange and collaboration with foreign trade partners while endeavoring to protect the legitimate intellectual property rights owned by foreign enterprises in China (The State Council Information Office of the PRC, 2018).

China approached e-commerce development cautiously (Gao 2020), since it faced certain hurdles on the path to digital transformation. The lack of a regulatory framework, insufficient investments, and underdeveloped infrastructure not only in China but also in some countries worldwide are main obstacles to the development of the digital economy. Hence, during the protracted Doha Round negotiations on further e-commerce development, the 164 WTO member states failed to reach a consensus (WT/MIN(17)/23/Rev.1). However, China distinguished itself at the 11th Ministerial Conference in Buenos Aires (2017), emphasizing the need to stimulate cross-border e-commerce in the B2B and B2C formats and proposing the exchange of information and experiences on the procedures for forming electronic trading platforms involved in cross-border transactions (WT/MIN(17)/23/Rev.1).

Regarding environmental protection, China supports developing countries and opposes the consideration of WTO environmental standards. The concerns of developing countries revolve around the potential additional trade barriers that could arise from the implementation of environmental measures. Utilizing a special and differentiated regime, China retains the right to formulate and implement its environmental policies (Permanent mission of PRC to UN, 2007).

Recent trends in Beijing's environmental diplomacy at the regional level indicate a growing affinity with neighboring countries. Collaborating with these nations, such as Japan and South Korea, holds the promise of reaping both environmental and economic advantages (Maizland, 2021).

Tracing China's behavior throughout the Doha Round negotiations, we observe a gradual shift in its approach. China's entry into the WTO as a full-fledged member, coupled with economic growth, solidified its standing in the global market. The 2008 financial crisis further heightened China's significance in the world economy and bolstered its self-assurance (Men, 2009). At a mini meeting of ministers in Geneva (2008), China was involved in the main negotiating group for the first time, and its opinion became decisive in coordinating various interests. Regarding the "special safeguard mechanism" designated for developing countries, allowing them to temporarily increase tariffs in response to abrupt import surges or price declines (Conceição-Heldt 2013, p. 436), China supported India, a leading force in the G-33 (Scott & Wilkinson, 2013). Even in the face of pressure from the U.S. and its allies, China demonstrated its ability to protect its interests. Despite the failed negotiations, PRC perceives the Doha Development Round as a chance to assert its interests and strengthen its role in global governance.

China has taken a more proactive role in WTO Rules negotiations, particularly in discussions related to anti-dumping measures (Lim & Wang, 2009). China, as a leading exporter and a significant player in global trade, faces substantial scrutiny through anti-dumping investigations. In the last two decades (2001-2021), the United States initiated 186 anti-dumping cases, encompassing a wide array of goods imported from China, such as machinery, electronics, light industry, metals, and minerals (WTO, 2021b). Leveraging the dispute settlement mechanism established by the WTO, Beijing actively defends its economic interests and addresses complaints filed against it (WTO, 2023). China also demonstrates its proactiveness in trade facilitation negotiations, seeking to enhance the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of customs processes for its export destinations (Gao, 2015, p. 15). Hong Kong took the lead as the first WTO member to report the ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement in Bali, highlighting China's commitment to simplifying trade procedures (WTO, 2014b). In the Doha Round, China was particularly active in ensuring that the issue of SDT was an integral part of the negotiations (WTO, 2004). China advocated for its status as a developing country to safeguard its interests and ensure the development of vulnerable sectors of the economy. The application of SDT enables China to

bolster its economic development and create fair conditions for competition in the international market.

Thereby, tracing China's path in global governance, it becomes evident that its ascent is intricately linked to its burgeoning economic power. The implementation of economic reforms, trade liberalization, and strategic investments contributed to China becoming a major trading power. A distinctive aspect of China's economic development strategy was the establishment of market relations under the guidance of the Communist Party, employing comprehensive five-year plans (Grinin, 2013). With dynamic growth and deep integration into the global economy, coupled with increasing confidence and ambitions, China has expanded its role in global politics. In particular, in the context of the Doha Round negotiations, China has evolved from a passive observer to an active participant, actively promoting its own ideas. Beijing has effectively employed WTO trade policy rules to safeguard its economy, skillfully maneuvering around or neglecting obligations to open the domestic market for goods and services.

1.3. India as one of the new centers of global influence

India, positioned as one of the hubs of influence, represents a vast domestic market and potential human capital, enabling the Republic to achieve impressive success despite a low degree of economic openness. Leveraging growing economic opportunities, instituting internal social and political reforms, and fortifying diplomatic and military capabilities, India, which was previously satisfied with a constrained global role, now makes deliberate efforts to enhance its international status. The prevailing view is that economic power forms the basis for a state's growing opportunities in managing the global economy (Kahler, 2013). However, we concur with Hopewell's argument that India's rise was primarily steered by the mobilization and leadership of coalitions of developing countries (Hopewell 2014, p.1). This section is dedicated to the evolution of India's standing in global governance.

India has emerged on the world stage as a democratic country with an extensive territory, a massive population (over 1.2 billion), a strong economy, and a distinctive culture. It is a big transitional economy that organically combines essential features of developed capitalist, socialist, and developing countries (Grinin, 2013). Transformations in India since its declaration of independence in 1947 have made its economy more open to domestic and foreign investments, facilitating the rapid integration of the country into the global economic system. Following the

liberal reforms of 1991, New Delhi did not primarily emphasize export-oriented production, despite the evident increase in export volumes. India's success was constructed upon an alternative development model. The initial economic approach, termed "external growth," involves the development of large and medium-sized industries (including agro-industries), making significant contributions to gross economic indicators across various sectors. The secondary approach, labeled "internal growth," focuses on establishing a multitude of micro-enterprises (Tyurin, 2018). Today, India also prioritizes internal production and consumption. However, as a result of trade liberalization, many Indian enterprises are increasingly exploring opportunities beyond the domestic market.

India's integration of economic reforms and entry into the WTO has positioned it among rapidly developing nations. The shift from an agrarian to a service sector-driven economic model has contributed to an average annual GDP growth of 7% (World Bank, 2022). Over the period 2001-2021, India's trade volume experienced a remarkable surge, increasing by 9.5 times to reach \$966 billion (OEC, 2021). Notably, key sectors driving the country's industry include energy, metallurgy, engineering, chemical, and light industries. India's possession of nuclear weapons and active development in the space industry further enhance New Delhi's substantial influence in international affairs (SIPRI, India).

Agriculture remains a pivotal sector of the Indian economy. Over the last two decades, agricultural production has surged from \$112 billion to \$456 billion. This sector also contributes to 12% of India's exports (OECD, 2022), ensuring food security, generating employment opportunities in rural areas, and, consequently, fostering a substantial domestic market for industrial goods. Nevertheless, the primary impetus behind India's economic growth is the service sector, constituting a noteworthy segment of the Indian economy and playing a key role in value addition. Presently, the service sector holds the largest share in India's GDP at 53.89% (Statistic times, 2021). Indian information technology, business process outsourcing, consulting, and other services are globally recognized for their high competitiveness and quality. Leading companies in the IT and software sector, including Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, and Wipro, serve as epicenters for technological innovation and development (IBEF, 2022). The service sector attracts significant foreign investments, makes a substantial contribution to exports, and generates a considerable number of jobs. While India exported services worth \$17.34 billion in 2001, this figure rose to \$138.53 billion in 2011 and reached \$240.66 billion in 2021 (World Bank, 2022).

The vast and consistently growing market in India can be explained by fundamental factors contributing to economic growth: democratic governance, market liberalization, investments, and the workforce. Technologies are crucial for India's economic expansion, improving manufacturing processes to enhance speed and efficiency. Nevertheless, challenges such as protectionism, poverty, inequality, escalating unemployment, and environmental concerns may affect India's progress in sustainable development. To maintain robust growth rates in the upcoming decades, India must secure a continuous flow of long-term investments and boost its exports (Peter & Varghese, 2018).

In its pursuit of expanding international trade, India is increasingly exploring liberalization at both bilateral and regional levels. Free trade zones serve as a mechanism for the Republic to enhance not only trade and investment ties but also diplomatic relations. As of today, the country is involved in 15 active RTAs (WTO, 2021). India's orientation towards economic liberalization has prompted a strategic focus on strengthening connections with ASEAN. Through participation in regional agreements, India provides substantial concessions on its goods, enhancing their competitiveness in the market. However, over the past decade, imports into India from participating RTA countries have outpaced Indian exports to these nations, suggesting that Delhi's partners were better positioned to capitalize on favorable access conditions to the Indian market. For instance, in 2020, India's exports to ASEAN countries amounted to \$29.5 billion, while imports from the bloc were \$42.3 billion (OEC, 2022). This observation emphasizes that regional trade agreements can bring significant benefits to participating countries while simultaneously impacting their trade interests. Consequently, India chose not to participate in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). New Delhi justified this decision by expressing concerns about the increase in imports from developed countries, such as the influx of Chinese industrial goods or New Zealand dairy products, which could displace domestically produced goods (Das, 2022). India's stance indicates that the country is not yet fully prepared to completely open its markets.

Simultaneously, India is actively working to enhance its capabilities and opportunities. The Make in India initiative (2014) seeks to integrate India into the global supply chain, focusing on strengthening and energizing the development of the domestic industry and implementing significant infrastructure projects through the attraction of foreign investors (PIB, 2021). India's foreign policy endeavors illustrate the nation's commitment to establishing a network of strategic

partnerships, allowing it to exert influence on international affairs and safeguard its interests. Nevertheless, India has yet to achieve the capacity to dictate its terms to other countries on the global stage. The scale of its foreign trade, a crucial driver of international engagement, remains relatively modest. New Delhi has refrained from embracing greater openness, influenced by the costs of democratic politics and longstanding apprehensions about foreign dominance.

Despite impressive growth rates, India is considered one of the poorest countries on the planet. The GDP per capita in 2001 was \$449.9 (US dollars), and in 2021, it reached \$2238.1 (US dollars), highlighting that India lags behind leading world countries in this measure by more than tenfold (World Bank, 2022). In an effort to feed its enormous population and alleviate poverty, New Delhi is pursuing gradual economic liberalization by joining the WTO. During ministerial conferences of the Doha Round, India's priorities were consistently focused on agricultural issues, which form the fundamental backbone of its economy, providing food security and livelihoods for over 60% of the country's population (Sharma & Bhogal 2017). As the coordinator of coalitions G-20 and G-33 within the Doha Round, India took a confrontational stance against developed countries. Negotiations on agriculture marked New Delhi's rise in global economic governance.

At the ministers' meeting in Cancun (2003), as the leader of the G-20 coalition, India called for a reduction in agricultural subsidies from developed countries, asserting that agricultural trade is a necessity for ensuring the food security of developing countries. During the sixth ministerial conference in Hong Kong (2005), a final deadline for the phased elimination of all export subsidies by 2013 was agreed upon (WT/MIN(05)/DEC). As a leading force in the G-33 coalition, India proposed the creation of a Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) to protect domestic farmers from sudden price changes (Sharma & Bhogal, 2017). As a participant in the NAMA-11 coalition, India also advocated for the protection of its industrial sector from trade liberalization and was willing to agree only to minimal reductions in tariff rates for industrial goods, as this sector was not competitive at the international level (Conceição-Heldt, 2013). New Delhi endorsed the modified Swiss formula, introducing new possibilities for more favorable development (WT/MIN(05)/DEC, para.14). The negotiations in Hong Kong (2005) reflected India's pivotal position and the evolving economy. India was gradually emerging as a powerhouse in the services sector and aimed to advance the liberalization of cross-border service supply (Mode I) and the movement of individuals across borders (Mode IV). Despite dissatisfaction among its allies in developing countries, New Delhi's stance was considered too ambitious (Ray & Saha, 2008).

What concerns India's position on intellectual property, it remains steadfast. During the early years of the Doha Round, India, along with Brazil and South Africa, emphasized the need to bolster public health and opposed excessively stringent intellectual property regulations that could restrict access to essential medications, especially for impoverished and vulnerable populations. The adoption of the TRIPS Declaration represented a notable victory for the developing world (Ray & Saha, 2008). In alignment with the TRIPS Agreement, India revised its pharmaceutical regulations in 2005. These amendments mandated Indian companies selling generic drugs to pay "reasonable" royalties to foreign patent holders for copies sold in the Indian market. Additionally, compulsory licenses were established for the export of pharmaceutical products to the least developed countries (Greene, 2007). To shield local producers from inexpensive imports, New Delhi consistently employs trade protection measures. For instance, India accuses China of widespread dumping, as Chinese goods are priced 10-70% lower than comparable Indian products including chemicals, toys, electronics, textiles, and leather (Kochher, 2019). Simultaneously, India contends with anti-dumping measures imposed by the U.S. For many years, New Delhi and Washington have been in consultations concerning the application of anti-dumping measures within WTO rules, particularly related to steel casting products (WTO, 2018).

Let us note that India's stance in the Doha Round of negotiations has transformed over time, mirroring the shifting priorities of the country due to its deep integration into the global economy. An illustrative instance is India's involvement in the IP negotiations mentioned earlier. Another noteworthy example is India's conduct at the ministerial meeting in Bali (2013). Initially, New Delhi aimed to facilitate consensus-building for a multilateral agreement on trade facilitation procedures (Sharma & Bhogal, 2017). However, India was later criticized as a spoiler when it opted to postpone the signing of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (Parizek, 2019). Acknowledging that e-commerce unites domestic and global markets, blurring the lines between domestic and trade policies, India expressed its support for e-commerce at a WTO General Council meeting as early as June 2001 (Kapoor & Mukherjee, 2018b). Over time, concerns emerged that a permanent moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions might limit the political autonomy of developing countries, perpetually tying them to the developed world for digital products and technologies (Dhyaeya Ias, 2021). In 2017, New Delhi formally submitted a document to the WTO opposing any negotiations on e-commerce issues (Kapoor & Mukherjee, 2018). India consistently backs multilateral initiatives for environmental protection and the principles of free and fair trade.

However, the nation aims to sidestep rigorous environmental standards that could potentially impede its growth prospects. India endeavors to portray itself on the global stage as a responsible actor open to compromise, yet it remains steadfast in safeguarding its interests (Lalas, 2020).

The above-mentioned positions of New Delhi within the Doha Round characterize India as a strong player in both the offensive-interest coalition, G-20, and the group of countries with defensive interests, G-33. As a leader of the "third world," India advocates for a strict special and differential treatment regime for developing countries, aiming for greater fairness and inclusivity in the multilateral trading system. Despite its contradictory behavior in the Doha Round negotiation process, in our view, India maintains a balanced stance grounded in the protection of national interests. India's unique position stems from its desire to preserve the political space necessary for the country's continued development and its engagement in global governance.

Thus, an important aspect in Chapter 1 was the discussion of the rise of developing countries such as India and China in the global economy and international politics. We managed to demonstrate that, owing to economic prowess (China) and coalition leadership (India), these emerging nations have become key participants in the existing international economic order. Both countries actively opposed the West and expressed solidarity with developing nations on issues of free trade during numerous ministerial conferences of the Doha Development Round. The emerging disparities between developed and developing nations are recognized as a significant challenge, demanding a reconsideration of existing rules and norms that govern the global economic system. Miles Kahler (2013) suggests that the increasing economic and political influence of India and China forms the basis for exceptional opportunities for these rising nations in managing the global economic governance.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The preceding chapter has illustrated the evolving role of India and China in global economic governance through their participation in the WTO. This chapter is intended to underpin the present investigation and put forward hypotheses derived from the theoretical approaches. Owing to his assumptions about the economic benefits of domestic players, in section 2.1 we will turn to Robert Putnam's two-level game approach and liberalism theory to expound the preferences of the two Asian giants, India and China, in Doha round negotiations within the WTO. Whilst, in

section 2.2. the constructivist postulates and Nel's interdisciplinary perspective on redistribution and recognition and will disclose the preoccupation of the emerging states about recognition and redistribution.

2.1. Liberalism and Putnam's two-level games approach

Liberalism came into being in the 17th century throughout the time of Enlightenment as a political philosophy, doctrine, and movement, whose subject matters were social reality, crucial ethic premises, metaphysical averments, and mythical narration (Moravcsik 1992, p.5). Thenceforth, liberalism has evolved into social science theory that was interested in analysing modern society and explaining individual preferences along with the social backdrop of politics. Nowadays, liberalism, as one of the main IR analytical approaches, purveys a wide spectrum of conceptions and assertions regarding the significance of cooperation, economic interrelations, and behaviour which attenuate the harsh power of dominant states. Thusly, individual, social groups, international organizations (IOs), economic interdependence, global cooperation, and regimes have become paramount to the theory (Jackson and Sorensen 2013). Robert Putnam's two-level game model enriches this understanding by elucidating how domestic preferences, influenced by societal actors and economic interests, interact with international negotiations to foster cooperative outcomes. In this section, we are pledged to succinctly analyse cornerstones of liberal theory, anchoring our heed to economic inducements of domestic actors within states and the linkage of domestic-international levels, as proposed by Putman.

Liberals are convinced that, by nature, an individual is prone to cooperation and mutual assistance, so violence or wars are only the implication of the imperfection of social institutions. Moravcsik unveils this joint statement by declaring that in today's reality which is set in the globalization process, states are induced to cooperate with each other in order to build strong social, economic, and cultural ties, therefore, their foreign policy may expedite or obstruct such cooperation (Moravcsik 1992). Correspondingly, a number of domestic actors might profit from or be negatively affected by these policies, so they push the government for ones that foster the accomplishment of their objectives. Such prevailing sentiment conveyed through internal political institutions, determines state preferences that constitute a range of collective aims stipulating foreign policy. In other words, preferences explain the quest to reach desirable through the set of political orders that affect feasible outcomes of an interaction (Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow,

Siverson, & Smith, 1999). This places preferences at the root of the states' behaviour, incentivizing them to respond to social turbulence that extends beyond state frontiers. By the same token, social turbulence, in a certain sense, is required to bring states together and encourage exorbitant foreign policy action or shift in formed approach, otherwise, states would have no rational ground to cooperate in global politics and just stay secluded.

However, we must not depreciate the fact that after WWII, the emergence of close trade and investment ties between states ensured conflict-free interaction due to the realization of the costly implications of confrontation, thusly, letting economic factors overshadow the significance of military power in the modern world (Dingding 2012). Such an environment gave rise to interest groups, namely, separate individuals, transnational corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and wider society that according to the theory of complex interdependence, proposed by R. Keohane and J. Nye, managed to lobby in favour of enhancing cooperation rather than entering belligerency (Keohane & Nye 1987). For this reason, from the liberal perspective, they have become key international actors that cannot be disregarded in the context of globalization. Following this train of thoughts, Keohane construes cooperation as "*a unity of actions produced by discrete entities that originally have not been in concord with each other, nevertheless, came to acquiescence by dint of negotiations*", or so-called "*policy coordination*". During the policy coordination process, participants frequently revamp their behaviour to the expected preferences of others or accept policies of other governments in order to shorten the path to the accomplishment of their own goals (Keohane 1984, p. 51).

Against this backdrop, Moravcsik brought about three fundamentals of liberalism: 1) the primacy of societal actors, 2) states or other political institutions represent a part of domestic society and 3) the configuration of interdependent state preferences determines state behaviour (Moravcsik 1997. P. 515). Relying on these fundamentals, he distinguished three types of liberalism, in particular, *commercial* that emphasizes whether domestic actors are going to win or lose from the transnational economic interchange, *republican* that outlines the influence of different forms of domestic representation and the impetus to participate in bargaining and lastly, *ideational* that is preoccupied about social order and impact of convergence and divergence of social values on states conduct (Moravcsik 1997). The most auspicious way to negotiate diverse values, policies, and heterogeneous preferences is through international organizations that provide

a platform within which their participants could attempt to interact constructively in order to resolve multiple issues or settle contradictions.

Hence, currently, "*interaction is seen as a bargaining process between entities at the global level, taking place in institutionalized dimension at the UN and its affiliated organizations as well as the IMF, WB, WTO and rather informal governance framework, for instance, the G-8 or the G-20*" (Conceição-Heldt & Mello 2017). Accordingly, the state's vision of the benefits and costs of the appointed course of behaviour is impacted by these institutions. They palliate the consequences of anarchy, which liberals see as temporal, by enabling rational and selfish actors to fixate on the absolute rather than the relative gains of cooperation. In this vein, marking the reciprocal benefits and interests of the players involved in the interaction, institutions insinuate anticipated conduct, respectively, annihilating the fear of more powerful entities bequeathed in the anarchist realm (Goldstein 2007). Consequently, to circumvent the disastrous effects of belligerency in anarchy, players aim at finding these reciprocal benefits from long-term cooperation that can contain potential conflicts.

Thus, understanding the stance of states in the international arena is a complex endeavor, due to the multifaceted nature of influencing factors, including power distribution and the diverse strategies and interests of the wide array of actors involved. These actors often pursue distinct objectives, such as fostering economic growth, safeguarding industries, or attaining favorable market access, therefore, it is crucial to employ an analytical framework capable of comprehending the interplay between domestic and international levels of decision-making. In this context, the two-level games approach emerges as a pertinent and meaningful concept for the purposes of this thesis, as it offers a valuable foundation for understanding the interactions and negotiations between domestic and international actors involved in trade policy formulation and implementation.

Originally introduced by Robert Putman in 1988, *the two-level game approach* managed to reform our sculpted structural-realist apprehension about the world order as it illustrated the interplay between internal and external spheres of politics, which corresponds to national (Level II) and international (Level I) levels in the game. The internal sphere pertains to domestic actors who chase their interests by exerting pressure on the government so that last introduce beneficial policies for the former and policymakers who strive to gain power by building coalitions with those actors. The external sphere involves national governments who want to augment their ability

to satisfy domestic pressure whilst slashing the negative impact of foreign developments. On that account, Putman emphasizes the importance of recognizing that as long as states remain sovereign, yet interdependent, central decision-makers cannot disregard either the internal or external sphere (Putman 1988).

Within this framework, Level I in the negotiation process entails preliminary discussions among international actors, possibly leading to a provisional agreement. However, the ultimate destiny of this agreement hinges on Level II, where the emphasis shifts to domestic factors. At this stage, governments deliberate on ratification and formulate positions grounded in domestic political dynamics. The crux to this theory lies in the concept of the "win-set" within the Level II constituency, representing the range of Level I agreements capable of garnering majority support among constituents. Essentially, the win-set delineates the boundaries of acceptability within the domestic context. It is the chief negotiator or the agent on behalf of his constituents who enters the bargaining arena to mediate between his partners at the international level and with his electorates at the national level. The agreement is likely to be concluded only when the win-sets of engaged actors converge. In these terms, *"the win-sets are potential outcomes that might be admitted by domestic actors (social classes, legislators, parties, interest groups, bureaucratic agencies, public opinion, etc.) who need to ratify the agreement by getting the imperative majority among the voters or present an alternative option of government support"* (Putman 1988, pp. 437-438). During such a two-level bargaining process, three factors might affect the final outcome: uncertainty about a win-set, international pressure, and the role of the chief negotiator.

The first factor uncertainty about the win-set could serve as both a bargaining tool and a hindrance. On the one hand, negotiators have the impetus to underestimate their own win-sets, in this way bluffing and projecting persuasiveness as they know better about their stand at the external level, on the other hand, they are not sure about the win-set of their opponents what raise the chance of involuntary defection or failed ratification. Second, international pressure on domestic politics might alter the internal equilibrium, therefore affecting international negotiations. The third factor is the role of the chief negotiator who is considered to be "a formal link between internal and external levels" as he balances between maintenance of the international bargaining power and compliance with domestic constraints, and accordingly, his predilections regarding his future political position, the balance of power and his vision of the national interests in the international environment may substantially shape the negotiations (Putman 1988, pp. 453-457).

Moreover, being cognizant of heterogeneous preferences between the legislative, the executive, and interest groups, in the example of the US, Putnam aptly fleshed light on a veto power that each actor may apply during negotiations and turn down worthy agreements. Finally, completing the full list of domestic determinants with public opinion, the scholar demonstrates how the average citizen could restrain the government's actions, and correspondingly, how important for the government to earn trust and support to take vital decisions (Putnam 1988). In such a manner, he puts on a central stage account of the interests and preferences of domestic groups in the scrutiny of the foreign policy of the states and accentuates the ultimate goal of negotiations, either effective or distributional. By effective negotiations, we mean the conclusion of mutually beneficial agreements that result in cooperation between players, while distributional aim refers to winning more than others. Consequently, the probability of victories hinges on the preferences and coalitions together with political institutions on the internal level and strategies of negotiators on the external level: international agreements will only succeed if they favour domestic actors.

Tracing Putnam's two-level game theory and its applicability in political discourse, we put forward the following hypothesis: *H1. The preferences of a) India and b) China in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players.*

2.2 Constructivism and Nel's interdisciplinary perspective on redistribution and recognition

Since the late 1980s, constructivism has been equated with a method, a new paradigm, a theory, or even a way of thinking. There is no unanimous answer, rather different viewpoints. In this thesis, we are sharing the stance of conventional constructivist Alexander Wendt, who claimed that “*constructivism is a systematic ontology in which intersubjective knowledge constitutes identities and interests*” (Wendt, 1992, p. 425). It implies that constructivism’s major merit is that it discards the biased material approach of other IR theories to global politics, depicting the world as socially constructed. The social system affects identities, ideas, decisions, norms, interests, preferences, and behaviour of the states and other international actors making them core concepts of constructivism.

Advocates of the theory affirm that the international system is one of the most complex systems in which interaction occurs, and stresses the changing identity moulded in the process of

communication. There are no initially set beliefs and values, entities acquire them in the process of activity, notably, they cognize themselves only by interacting with other entities, entering into communication with them, i.e., into certain relationships. As Wendt put it "*Conceptions of self and interest tend to "mirror" the practices of significant others over time. This principle of identity-formation is captured by the symbolic interactionist notion of the "looking-glassself," which asserts that the self is a reflection of an actor's socialization*" (Wendt, 1992, p. 404.) Therefore, constructivism possesses the ability to spell out the essence of the social world, the nature of identity that defines states' internal and international image perceived by domestic and prominent actors of international relations along with their behaviour, preferences, aspiration to fair redistribution of power and wealth, recognition, set of actions and interactions that paving the path in global economic governance.

Unlike liberalism, which perceives identity as singular and relatively static, constructivism assumes that the dynamic relationship between material structure, international social structure, and domestic politics creates multiple identities in world politics. By presenting interests and identities as dependent variables that are constructed through interactions, it argues that they are potentially transformable in the long term. For onward argumentation, it is essential to acknowledge the significance and complexity of identity, which emerges as scholars explore the conduct shaped by the interests of global actors and its broader impact on global transformations. For instance, David Campbell indicated "*identity as an imminent facet of being, accordingly, no one could exist without it*" (Campbell, 1998, p. 352). Its uniqueness consists in the ability to depict both sameness and difference in time and space, marking core aspects of human action and fragmented oscillating Self (Brubaker & Cooper 2000). Referring to Wendt, "*identity is a feature of a subject that spawns motivational and behavioral inclination, i.e., an actor cannot know what it wants unless it knows what it is*" (Wendt, 1999, p. 224, 231).

In other words, identities conceal the individual's comprehension of oneself which, for its part, flags their interests. However, he appends that "*actors don't own portfolio of interests that they carry around independent of social context; rather, they determine their interests in the course of defining situations*". (Wendt 1992, p. 398). This reasoning is echoed in Ted Hopf's work where he propounded that identities are vital in political discourse by virtue of being solidly associated with motives laid behind the preferences, choices, and deeds that clinch a certain degree of predictability in behavior and order, in this way, reducing irretrievable uncertainty and mistrust

tangible between global figures (Hopf 1998). Thereby, identity serves as a peculiar bridge between the international and domestic environment, with interests alongside individual preferences.

The next assumption of constructivism account for “anarchy is what the states make of it” (Wendt, 1992). Nogueira and Messari interpret this supposition by stating that “*we reside in the world we construct, in which we are the protagonists, and which is a fruit of our choices*” (Nogueira & Messari, 2005, p. 162). Jackson and Sorensen support this perception of anarchy defining it as “*a system of states that cannot exist independent of their practice since there are no states independent of the rules by which they recognize themselves*”(Jackson & Sorensen, 2013, p 216). As a result, calling the international system anarchic indicates our perceived definition of this notion. In order to diminish the repercussions of anarchy, international organizations (IOs) are formed, since they embody interests and identities, hence generating new understanding of oneself and others. Looking at IOs through the prism of constructivism, one cannot fail to notice that they help shape socially acceptable behavior on the global arena, acting as a kind of platform where persuasion and discussion as a part of negotiations between states can lead to a change in interests and subsequent actions, as well as remodel identity. Identity, in such collective terms, is considered to be rather consistent and role oriented.

Thus, Thomas Risse asserts that IOs are apt to appear once the participants share the same values and norms (Risse 2000). Norms, another tenet of constructivism, have multiple definitions, but predominantly, they are interpreted as the standard of behavior (Axelrod 1986). Finnemore & Sikkink describe them as “*a set of intersubjective understandings evident to actors that imposes behavioral claims on those actors*” (Finnemore & Sikkink 1994, page 3). Hoffmann refines the meaning attributed to norms calling them “*self-reinforcing regularities*”, “*stabilizers of expectations around the shared expectations*”, and “*obedience with the standard or vision across most of the society*” (Hoffmann 2010, page 4). In turn, international norms explicitly show what behavior is reckoned appropriate and which is unwelcomed, in such wise, bestowing the legitimacy for deeds to restrain those who infringe these norms (Maurer & Perkovich 2017, p. 73). To this extent, the logic of appropriateness appears.

Indeed, norms are seen as an elucidation of recurrent behavior which is widely accepted (Katzenstein, 1996). They go through the whole so-called “*wheel-of-life*” or “*life cycle*”: norm emergence, norm cascade, and norm internalization (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, p.893). The first phase, norm emergence is incentivized by social groups, which Finnemore & Sikkink call norm

entrepreneurs, targeted at convincing global players to accept, or stick to certain behavior in compliance with prevailing norms. The second phase, norm cascade could be taken as infestation due to the high tendency of norms to be accepted swiftly among the masses. The last phase, norm internalization comes when norms are taken for granted and acceptance of them takes place without any disputes (Finnemore & Sikkink 1998, p. 896-901).

All the above-described constructivist's tenets are closely intertwined and take us to the second theoretical focal point of our thesis predominantly associated with critical theories: the redistribution-recognition conundrum. It has engulfed the bulk of the world's states and become quintessential in the IR debate in the wake of soaring inequality (mostly material) and outrageous social injustice stemming from the established international system. The current international system is characterized by a power narrative that brings about hurdles, stifling rising and ambitious status aspirants from challenging the status quo (Ward, 2017). For instance, the South's 'revolt against the West' evidently shows the deficient form of recognition which implies political humiliation and disrespect on the part of already developed countries and result in vertiginous social change. The more states develop, the more they seek to confirm their identity claim, gain respect, economic and political heft, and the more they strive to build *'institutionally and culturally, expanded forms of recognition - that the normatively directional change of societies proceeds'* (Honneth, 1995, p. 93).

That is to say, states have the zest to reinforce their positions in the global arena, secure their preferences and stand for their interests. For this reason, Nancy Fraser noted the replacement of *"socioeconomic redistribution by cultural recognition as a remedy for unfairness and the aim of political tussle"* (Fraser 1997, p. 11). At the heart of recognition, ascertains French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, stands an endeavor *"to be intersubjectively acknowledged by the other powers as legitimized entities who can act independently and take charge of others in the community"* (Ricoeur, 2005, p.79). For example, emerging economies attempt to demonstrate some qualities to shift the norms of the international system, hence, insist on the legitimacy of social standing that is frequently addressed by more powerful countries with the use of force or considerable economic leverage. This confrontation results in a *"dilemma of social insecurity"* owing to feelings of mistrust and misrecognition that thrust emerging economies to imperil their own security as well as the security of others (Murray, 2018, pp. 14-17). Whereas the demand for

redistribution stems from a sense of insufficient representation and involvement in accessing the benefits and influence within the existing order (Schrim, 2019, p.116).

Philip Nel's unique perspective on redistribution and recognition deviates from traditional IR theories, as he adopts an interdisciplinary approach that integrates concepts from constructivism, realism, and critical theory. He suggests that emerging countries are driven by not only the pursuit of power and wealth but also by a desire to reshape global economic structures through redistribution. Their objectives transcend mere reputation and relative power gains, encompassing a deeper need for inter-subjective acknowledgment of their distinct identities and corresponding interests through recognition (Nel, 2010). Such aspirations aim to alter the distribution of global economic benefits, primarily in favor of developing countries to advance national and international development in the developing world and ensure equal representations in the international forums. This broader agenda and strategies seek to exploit the established regime and challenge specific norms and practices within a global order that has historically ignored the interests and concerns of the developing world. Ultimately, the objective is to propel the Global South towards what they perceive as optimal and equitable conditions for progress on national and international fronts (Nel, 2010, p.974). Therefore, redistribution extends beyond mere material gains, instead it represents a strategic diplomatic maneuver aimed at sustaining domestic growth and advocating for comprehensive global economic reforms.

In such a wise, Nel discerns recognition not only as complementary to redistribution but as a logically and ethically paramount concept. In his vocabulary, recognition is a synonym for prestige or reputation for power which is tantamount to the mutual acknowledgment of the states as respectful members of society with their unique identities. Correspondingly, everyone is considered to have equal rights and privileges once a decision or step is made on the global chess board. Ergo, the self-esteem of developing countries is dependent on such recognition since it mirrors the flourishing confidence in their ability to promote their policies during negotiations (Nel 2010, p. 953). Denying equal membership rights represents disrespect, while failing to appreciate distinct qualities or identities can be viewed as a form of humiliation (Nel, 2010, p.965). Whereas, redistribution, in his conviction, alludes to "*who gets what, when, and how of global politics*". That implies that global redistribution is based on supply and demand relations. Firstly, on the national level, developing countries strive to balance a conservative economic stand grounded on integration with the global economy. Then, on the international level, within their foreign policies,

they counterbalance the mercantilist conduct of Western states - gatekeepers of global neo-liberalism (Nel 2010, pp. 958-962).

Thus, on his perspective, developing countries put as an objective primary to correlate policies while chasing economic growth directed at fair redistribution of income and wealth, by strengthening access to external markets for their products, services, and capital, attracting foreign direct investment and ensuring a source of credit. Secondly, they want to bolster South-South interconnection with the view of restoring the industrializing world after years of desolation, outwardly summoned programs of structural adjustment and trade liberalization, wobbling aid flux, and unkept pledges of technology transition. Lastly, in the case of the post-WWII trade regime, in particular, the WTO, Nel accentuates how developing states crave to do away from the game of ignorance and 'invisibleness' of the needs of the evolving world. They struggle for attention and acknowledgment of being divergent and "*worthy of 'special' and 'preferential' treatment*", to cite a bestseller example, Doha Road in the framework of WTO negotiations that we meticulously study in the present thesis (Nel 2010, p. 971).

In this way, Nel's reflection on the redistribution-recognition debate drove us to the second hypothesis: **H2:** a) *India and b) China's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by their concerns of redistribution and recognition.*

Hitherto, we delved into the theoretical jungle and examined two key theories, namely liberalism and constructivism that are germane to our research with a strong focus on Putnam's two-level game approach and Nel's interdisciplinary perspective to redistribution-recognition reasoning. These theoretical underpinnings serve as the foundation of our analysis in understanding the evolving role of China and India and its driving aspirations within the WTO, offering insights in the changing dynamics of global economic governance. The next section will finalize Chapter 2 by providing a methodological framework that outlines the systematic approach we have taken in our investigation. This framework will specify the sequence of actions, and decisions we have made, and highlight the main sources that have guided our research ensuring a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the topic at hand.

2.3. Method

Drawing on the scholarship of theoretical researchers such as Bennett, Colin (2007); George & Bennett (2005); Gerring (2004); Odell (2001); and Yin (2003), the case study method was chosen as the research approach due to its inherent suitability in conducting rigorous empirical

examinations of specific events. The main aim of a case study is to scrutinize a decision or a sequence of decisions, delving into the reasons behind their formulation, the methods of their implementation, and the outcomes achieved (Yin 2003, p. 12). In accordance with the logic of case studies as presented by George & Bennett, we were able to define the aim of our study, formulate research questions, and develop hypotheses. The flexible thematic approach to research enabled us to commence with general questions and gradually narrow down our focus as the study progressed.

The present thesis covers the period of the Doha Round negotiations from 2001 to 2021, where two prominent Asian Giants, China and India, played pivotal roles in advocating for the interests of developing countries. These emerging economies draw our interest as they have gained increasing prominence on the global stage. Through an in-depth case study of these two countries in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, we aim to unveil the driving forces behind their positions and decisions in the Doha Round. We attempt to determine whether these positions primarily stem from economic considerations in Sections 3.2, 4.2 or are rooted in aspirations for recognition and equitable resource distribution within the international economic system in Sections 3.3, 4.3.

Our data predominantly relied on a diverse array of primary sources including official documents and publications sourced from the WTO to ensure the highest degree of accuracy and reliability. This compilation featured legal documents, materials from ministerial conferences, WTO annual reports, and multilateral trade agreements, all of which served as essential references. We also accessed official websites of government agencies from the countries under study and considered official statements made by representatives of pertinent government departments and senior leadership figures in both India and China. Additionally, our research incorporated an examination of regional and preferential trade agreements, joint statements, and briefing notes.

To provide a holistic insight, we complemented the primary data with secondary sources, including scholarly articles that focused on emerging countries' roles in global economic governance, their participation in the WTO, and the impact of domestic politics and various domestic stakeholders. We have considered media reports from reputable international news agencies such as Al Jazeera, Indian Express, The Hindu, Reuters, and Xinhua, which have provided valuable insights into the current status of the Doha Round and key issues in international trade. Finally, we integrated statistical data from well-established sources, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), The Observatory of Economic

Complexity (OEC), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Statistics Portal for Market Data (Statista), the National Statistics Bureau of China (NSBC), the Statistics Times and the WTO. These statistical databases furnished quantitative information and relevant indicators that bolstered our analytical framework.

The theoretical framework of this thesis is shaped by Putnam's two-level games approach, Nel's interdisciplinary perspective on redistribution and recognition, and foundational principles from liberalism and constructivism. Drawing upon these theoretical underpinnings, we formulate the following *hypotheses*: **(H1)** *The preferences of a) India and b) China in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players and (H2) a) India's and b) China's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by their concerns of redistribution and recognition.*

To test these hypotheses, the study will utilize logical observable implications aligned with each assumption. Thus, if the H1(a,b) is valid, India's and China's trade policy preferences should align with the interests of major domestic economic actors such as powerful interests groups, bureaucracies, SOEs and sectors (e.g., agriculture, NAMA, services, intellectual property). Their negotiation stances during the Doha Round should reflect measures consistent with specific domestic economic conditions, such as protectionist measures or liberalization efforts benefiting key industries. Observable patterns of lobbying or influence from industry groups within sectors affected by trade negotiations should be evident in public statements, policy proposals, reports and other forms of advocacy during the trade talks. In case the H2 (a,b) is correct, and India's and China's preferences in the Doha Round were indeed shaped by concerns about redistribution and recognition, their negotiation positions and priorities would likely center on achieving fairer economic outcomes for developing countries. This stance could emphasize the need for reforms addressing the developmental needs and interests of emerging economies, particularly in key sectors. Furthermore, preferences among emerging countries might emphasize the importance of inclusive and equitable global economic governance, advocating for policies that boost developing countries' participation and decision-making power within the WTO. India and China could prioritize initiatives to enhance recognition of their distinct identities and interests, promoting reforms aimed at reducing asymmetries and fostering a more balanced distribution of economic benefits.

In such wise, Chapter 2 of the thesis serves as the essential theoretical and methodological foundation, providing a framework for the subsequent analytical segments. This chapter includes a discussion of the sources utilized for data collection, the rationale behind the research decisions made, Putnam's two-level games approach and Nel's interdisciplinary perspective on redistribution and recognition, and the key tenets of liberalism and constructivism. These theoretical perspectives emphasize the significance of various factors such as identity, norms, the international system's nature, domestic groups, actor preferences, the interplay between domestic and international levels, as well as concepts of redistribution and recognition. In continuation, the thesis proceeds with the analytical part, which is divided into two chapters: Chapter 3, titled "Case Study of China," and Chapter 4, titled "Case Study of India." These chapters aim to substantiate the hypotheses put forward previously and address the specific research questions set forth in the study:

(RQ1) What were the preferences of a) India and b) China in the Doha Round?

(RQ2) What factors explain the preferences of a) India and b) China in the Doha Round?

By structuring the analysis in this manner, the thesis aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on the preferences and decision-making processes of India and China in the Doha Round, ultimately providing insights into the dynamics of global economic governance and the role of emerging economies in shaping international trade policies. However, this study is not without limitations. The primary limitations include the scope of the research, which focuses on the Doha Round negotiations and the specific cases of India and China, potentially limiting the general applicability of findings to other WTO negotiations and countries involved. Additionally, data availability and access to certain primary sources posed certain constraints.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY: CHINA

The provided case study centers on the People's Republic of China, a prominent player in the global arena and its crucial involvement in international trade negotiations, specifically the Doha Round. With its unique authoritarian political structure and rapid economic development, China presents an intriguing subject for analysis. Our primary focus in the first section is to investigate the first research question (RQ1a), namely, identify and comprehend China's trade

policy preferences, dissecting its stance across sectors like agriculture, NAMA, services, and intellectual property within the DDA. The subsequent sections aim to unpack the factors influencing these preferences by testing our hypotheses (H1a, H2a) and addressing the second research question (RQ2a). Employing the two-level games approach in the second section, we explore whether the preferences of an authoritarian state correlate with the economic aspirations of its domestic agencies. In the third section, we assess whether these preferences reflect concerns related to redistribution and recognition, providing valuable insights into the complex dynamics that characterize China's role in shaping global trade.

3.1. China's preferences

Stephen & Parizek (2019) argue that preferences in international relations are inherently elusive as state representatives and entities often refrain from explicit disclosure, therefore, they can only be estimated either based on the scrutiny of the trade and domestic economic profiles of the member states, considering both tangible aspects like "at the border" techniques and intangible elements like "behind the border" capitalist institutions or based on the analysis of government expressed positions during the Doha Round negotiations, extracting insights from statements made at Doha Ministerial Conferences (p.6). Our approach involves a dual strategy, combining attributional and observational methods to detect preferences, with an emphasis on the latter.

Referring to Conceição-Heldt (2013), the trade policy preferences of member states dynamically oscillate between protectionist and liberal stances in response to the economic considerations in play. A liberal preference denotes a state's inclination toward increased trade liberalization in a specific economic sector, whereas a protectionist trade preference signifies a country's desire to maintain the existing state of affairs by upholding a substantial level of protection for a particular economic sector. States may exhibit protectionist inclinations in one sector while embracing liberal attitudes in another as representatives strategically engage in trade-offs between sectors that stand to gain or lose from altering the status quo during negotiations, adjusting their positions according to the issues at hand (p. 435).

China's trade policy preferences in the Doha Round reflected a reluctance to go beyond its commitments made upon WTO entry (WT/MIN(03)W/8). This resulted in varied negotiating positions, with offensive stances on NAMA and wage-intensive agricultural products, defensive postures on services and domestic agriculture, and some positions falling somewhere in between (Sally, 2011, p. 9). Besides, China accentuated the political significance of dodging the clashes

with the developing countries throughout the bargaining proceedings, however, it also demonstrated ambivalence in its attitude here (Xinquan, 2013, pp.185-188). Beijing has been seeking fortunate outcomes, engaged constructively in the negotiations, and persisted passive and reticent at critical moments by applying a wait-and-see policy. It made neither marked demands, i.e. in agriculture, nor proposed liberalization itself, leaving all the leadership in the G20 for India and Brazil. To cite another example, Beijing favored the tariff-cutting "Swiss Formula" aligned with its self-interest, although, claimed distinct coefficients for developed and developing countries. With regard to sectoral agreements for services exacted by the US, China turned it down, supporting developing countries, but also because it didn't want to have it as a central topic of the Doha agenda. Last but not least, following the unfortunate Cancún Ministerial Conference, China viewed "Singapore Issues" negatively out of defensive self-interest (Hilpert, 2014, pp 16). In continuation, we will expound the country's preferences in each sector of interest in detail.

To begin with *agriculture*, Minister of Commerce Bo Xilai, on behalf of PRC, outlined comprehensive set of trade policy preference during the Doha Round at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference. His statement emphasized several key points, namely, the immediate provision of preferential treatment to the least developed countries, with an emphasis on duty-free and quota-free access for their products; the acknowledgment of specific products as "special" and the establishment of a "special safeguard mechanism" (SSM's) tailored for developing countries; the assurance of flexibilities for developing nations, allowing them to adapt to the challenges posed by global trade liberalization; the proposal of "early harvest" that can benefit developing countries; and a crucial focus on eliminating all forms of export subsidies, together with a substantial reduction in trade-distorting domestic support, particularly by developed countries (WT/MIN(05)/ST/59). Hence, stated points appear to embody a blend of contradictory preferences in this area. While Beijing calls for heightened liberalization from developed nations, it also supports protectionist measures for developing countries. On top of that, China stresses the importance of offering substantial special and differential treatment to all developing nations (WT/MIN(05)/ST/59).

Concerning *industrial goods*, the focal point of China's preferences in NAMA negotiations was to secure extensive access for Chinese goods in foreign markets, with a key objective being the reduction of both tariff and non-tariff barriers. This stance was aimed at enhancing the global competitiveness of Chinese exports while advocating for a specialized regime designed to

accommodate the circumstances of developing countries (WT/MIN(03)/ST/12). From the outset, China endorses a Swiss formula featuring dual coefficients. Simultaneously, China emphasizes the importance of preserving other flexibilities designated for developing countries (WT/MIN(05)/ST/59). Additionally, China played a leading role in a coalition of developing nations seeking differentiated treatment for Recently Acceded Members (RAMs) (TN/AG/GEN/24). Overall, Beijing actively supported liberal policies aimed at expanding market access globally and aligned with the interests of developing countries to facilitate their participation in global trade by favoring the changes in WTO rules that would enhance their export opportunities and economic development in this domain.

In services, having exceeded the commitments of other WTO members in coverage and market-opening depth upon joining the organization, China initially expressed reluctance to address this field (Matoo, 2003). As discussion about service liberalization continued, the PRC delegation advocated for measures such as strengthening the legal framework, enhancing regulatory capacity, and providing flexibility for its domestic market and SOEs reforms (TN/S/W/9). However, over time, recognizing tertiary sector growing importance, Beijing became more active during the Doha Round negotiations and leaned towards supporting a status quo with gradual liberalization, emphasizing the importance of broadening market access and removing barriers in some service subsectors. Subsequently, China turned its attention to Mode IV, advocating for the mobility of natural persons to deliver services, thus, seeking to broaden the access of its professionals, such as engineers, architects, and IT specialists, to foreign markets while simultaneously addressing challenges related to labor mobility (TN/S/W/14).

With regard to *TRIPS*, China strives to attain a prominent status as an innovative nation and comprehends the pivotal role of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in fostering innovation, facilitating technology transfer, and nurturing its indigenous industries. In this field, China places great emphasis on several key priorities. Firstly, it is committed to strengthening legal safeguards and effective management of intellectual property within its borders, including the protection of patents, copyrights, trademarks, and other forms of intellectual property related to research and development (China's State Council Information Office, 2018). Secondly, China is dedicated to safeguarding traditional knowledge and genetic resources against unlawful appropriation and unauthorized use. In pursuit of this objective, China is advocating for introduction of mechanisms

that deter unauthorized use and plagiarism through the reinforcement of legal protections and the establishment of international standards within the IPR framework (IP/C/M/67, para 113-114).

Additionally, China is actively improving its intellectual property enforcement system, with a specific focus on combating counterfeiting and IPR violations, namely, addressing issues related to counterfeit goods and the unauthorized use of patents, trademarks, and copyrights (IP/C/M/67, para 54-59). Furthermore, China is engaged in international scientific and technical cooperation in the field of intellectual property. It advocates for open and mutually beneficial technology and innovation exchange, taking into account the rights and interests of all parties (China Daily, 2020). Lastly, as part of the Doha Round, China supports initiatives aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries to protect intellectual property rights. For instance, it seeks more flexible TRIPS provisions to increase the accessibility of essential medicines at affordable prices (Yu,2020). This stance reflects China's proactive approach towards adapting international trade regulations to better serve its interests and those of developing countries, indicating a willingness to engage in constructive dialogue and negotiation within the WTO framework to achieve desired reforms in intellectual property rights and related policies.

3.2. Domestic economic interests

Taken the fact that the late 1980s witnessed a shift in international relations inquiries, emphasizing the significance of domestic politics as a pivotal element of states' foreign policies (Putnam, 1988; Evans et al., 1993; Moravscik, 1993; Milner, 1997; Fearon, 1998), we will attempt to conduct a comprehensive analysis of both internal and external determinants which influence China's trade policy preferences in the Doha Round. These include socio-political considerations, which imply the desire for a fair and balanced global trading system echoing concerns about recognition and redistribution, as well as domestic economic factors, including the needs, economic interests, and costs of domestic agents.

Focusing on the domestic aspect and leveraging the Putman's two-level games model in this section, we assume that the above-indicated sector preferences of China on level I (external) are influenced by the interests of specific domestic actors operating at level II (internal). To put it more concretely, our hypothesis, ***H1a, suggests that the trade policy preferences of China in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players.*** Although this theoretical framework has historically evolved within a Western-centric context, primarily concentrating on developed countries over the past three decades (Wolf & Zangl, 1996;

Lisowski, 2002; Schelkle, 2018; Lutz & Hilgers, 2019), there has been a growing body of scholarly literature (Narlikar, 2010; Hopewell, 2015; Blarel & Paliwal, 2019) applying Putnam's approach to developing countries. However, such applications have often been implicit, neglecting the distinctions between developed and developing countries, as well as the unique tendencies within the latter. In alignment with the stance of Conceição-Heldt and Mello (2017), we are committed to demonstrating that this approach needs to be adopted to emerging powers in a more explicit and systematic fashion.

For instance, in advanced Western economies like in the US, the ratification process heavily hinges on legislative action. Yet, when applying the two-level game framework to situations where legislative endorsement is not the central focus for trade negotiations, as seen in China, it becomes essential to reassess Putnam's original framework (Oswald & Eckhard, 2023, p.658). Putnam's perspective didn't confine the ratification of internationally reached agreements solely to legislative votes. He acknowledged alternative avenues such as public opinion and the influence of key veto players (Putnam, 1988, p.448, p.451). Expanding on this viewpoint, we assert that in the case of China, in authoritarian settings, the ratification of agreements outside formal institutions predominantly occurs through the bureaucratic apparatus at the level II, given the substantial veto power wielded by these individuals. Key bureaucratic entities, in particular, the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM), the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), and relevant State Council units like the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) or the Ministry of Information Industry (MII), are instrumental in this level. Additionally, other influential figures connected to these bureaucracies such as significant actors within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) holding veto power and State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs), substantially shape decision-making dynamics (Oswald and Eckhardt, 2023, p.663), by articulating both offensive and defensive interests, delineating the scope for strategic maneuvering.

Alibaba, the technology giant, emphasized the distinct nature of China's economy in comparison to that of most developed nations. Besides bureaucracy, it encompasses the degree of government participation, the stage of development, growth rate, control over foreign exchange, and the allocation of resources (Alibaba Group Holding Limited, 2014). Indeed, since the initiation of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms, China has embraced what economists categorize as a socialist market economy (McDonagh, 2022, p.3). In this economic system, a robust state-owned enterprises sector coexists alongside market capitalism and private ownership. The state-owned

economy, representing socialist ownership by the entire population, plays a leading role in the national economy, consolidated, and developed with the state's assurance (Constitution of the People's Republic of China (1982), Article 6-7).

Despite the PRC government's efforts to introduce market-oriented reforms and decrease state ownership of productive assets, a considerable share of such assets in China continues to be government-owned. The government keeps acting as a crucial entity in regulating industry development through the imposition of industrial policies (WT/GC/W/745). In such instances, decision-making tends to be centralized, often with limited public input, enabling leaders to pursue long-term objectives and respond assertively to perceived threats (USCC, 2022). Even the Ministry of Commerce, seemingly holding exclusive authority, might find itself compelled to adopt assertive negotiating stances to avoid being perceived as an untrustworthy representative of China's interests, particularly in an environment increasingly shaped by nationalistic foreign policy sentiments (Kobayashi, 2007, p. 155). Hence, China foreign policy preferences are often profoundly shaped by the priorities of the uncontested ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP), specifically focusing on maintaining regime stability and territorial integrity, protecting national sovereignty and security, promoting sustainable social and economic development, and advancing strategic interests (Information Office of the State Council, 2011).

Nevertheless, past decades have seen the Chinese regime exhibit characteristics described by Lieberthal and Oksenberg (1988) as "fragmented authoritarianism", reflecting a diffuse, intricate, and occasionally highly competitive nature in internal structure, where domestic actors engage in bargaining. This implies that successful foreign policy execution requires a degree of cooperation from societal actors. The surge in the utilization of bargaining in Chinese policymaking can be attributed to the prevalence of holistic economic and technical issues dominating the agenda. These issues involve various trade-offs and arise within the framework of collective leadership and an expanding bureaucracy characterized by both increasing size and technical complexity (Lampton & Lieberthal, 1992, p.37). Therefore, in order to maintain political dominance and absolute control while effectively advancing national interests, the CCP must bring together a fragmented state apparatus, comprising divided bureaucrats, political factions, and local governments, as outlined by Norris (2016). Alternatively, China's government embraces a tactic of integrating the ascendant business elite into the Party to neutralize political opposition or competition between internal actors, provided that a significant portion of the country's economic

leaders tends to abstain from openly challenging governmental directives (Dickson, 2003). Simultaneously, it attempts to assure social contract with the ordinary Chinese populace by promising stability, sustained economic growth and employment opportunities (Yu, 2018).

When analyzing each sectors of interest, it becomes apparent that *agriculture* plays the most crucial role in DDA. In this domain, China emerges as a major player in the global production of essential commodities such as cereals, cotton, fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry, eggs, and fish (Fact and Details, 2013). However, despite its substantial output capacity, it paradoxically stands as the world's largest agricultural importer due to rising demand and limited arable land availability (Statista, 2022). It prompts Beijing to adopt a resolute stance to mitigate adverse impacts on its fragile domestic sectors, especially the primary sector (Berger, 2013). Thus, the significance of agriculture and its direct link to rural development in sustaining China's food security and social stability elevated them as top government priorities. Considering its influence of food supply on consumer prices, the progress of the domestic agriculture sector has ramifications for broader social stability (The Economist, 2021). The PRC is the biggest and most densely inhabited country in the world, and the welfare of dwellers predominantly depends on the capability to feed them with safe and nourishing food, but it uses merely 12.7% of arable land and 8% of global freshwater to support 1/5 population in the world, providing a considerable input to global food security (The World Bank, 2022). China's agricultural backbone is formed by 200 million small family-owned farms, each averaging around 1.5 hectares and leased to rural workers for periods of 30 to 50 years (Facts and Details, 2013). However, these small farms face challenges in selling their products as prices are highly contingent on market supply and demand dynamics, impacting the income of rural laborers. The growing number of aging farmers without access to medium and large-scale land also contributes to low labor efficiency and food deficit (Shittu 2014).

Furthermore, over the past two decades, a stark disparity in development between urban centers and rural regions has emerged in China, marked by a notable decline in the rural population, which has raised more concerns regarding China's food security. Factors like low wages, rudimentary working conditions, and a lack of social security in rural areas drive an estimated annual migration of 10 million people to developed nations or urban areas in pursuit of improved employment opportunities (The World Bank, 2022). While, in 2001, approximately 63% of China's populace resided in rural areas, with 50% engaged in agricultural activities, by 2021, only 37% of the total Chinese population lived in rural regions, and a mere 24% were employed within

the agricultural sector (ILO, 2021). Agricultural issues have gained so considerable attention that despite the absence of a farmers' union, Ministry of Agriculture took on the role of representing farmers and their economic concerns in Chinese domestic politics, contending that Chinese trade negotiators had already granted quite a lot of concessions within the framework of the WTO (Hilper, 2014, p.243). Hence, it was unsurprising that the MOA was hesitant to liberalize primary sector during Doha Round, expressing apprehension about its potential impact on agriculture and the associated risks of unsettling a peasantry that has historically posed challenges across China's extensive dynastic history (Bishop 2018).

Correspondingly, recognizing the pressing need to support small-scale farmers in less competitive regions, the state, and particularly the CCP, emphasized the primordial importance of the economic and social development of rural areas for its ruling legitimacy (Weinhardt & Brink, 2019, p.268). To address these challenges, the CCP insisted on protectionist trade policies for developing countries to shield farmers from competition due to imports and trust in agricultural subsidies to fulfil societal objectives, such as employment, poverty reduction, and overall development (The Economist, 2021; Liang, 2013, p. 213). In recent years, China's rural assistance has exceeded OECD averages, reaching over 20% of farm receipts by 2015, and the country's current support for the primary sector amounts to 2.4% of its GDP, fourfold the OECD average (OECD, 2017). By 2016, the Chinese authority allocated for about \$212 billion to aid its producers, a considerable sum compared to Western countries (OECD, 2017). As a result, the Chinese authority has positioned itself as the foremost global agricultural subsidizer, obstructing WTO initiatives to enact essential reforms in agricultural subsidy practices, despite the urgent need for such changes among other developing nations (Hopewell, 2021, p.19). Simultaneously, as a significant participant in global trade, PRC sought to level the playing field and overcome obstacles that hindered its agricultural exports from penetrating developed country markets (WTO, 2004). Hence, China also pushed for the liberalization of the agricultural industry from developed nations, despite encountering domestic resistance, arguing that such measures would enhance productivity and competitiveness of its primary sector (Ravenhill & Jiang, 2009, p. 40).

Expanding on our investigation with another economic area, we discovered that China's accession to the WTO opened new horizons for the nation in secondary sector. The Red Dragon became a preeminent world exporter, specializing in the production of mass consumer goods, including textiles, toys, footwear, and clothing (The World Bank, 2022). Therefore, in NAMA,

China's trade preferences heavily focused on liberalization, were deeply tied to its status of the "world's factory," contributing significantly to GDP and employment. As of 2021, the industrial sector constituted 39.3% of GDP and employed 29.1% of the population (Statista, 2022). While historically Chinese government pursued an export-led growth strategy to secure global market access for its manufactured goods by negotiating tariff reductions and eliminating non-tariff barriers to achieve a trade surplus and bolster foreign exchange reserves, NDRC proceeds cautiously with NAMA liberalization. The commission expresses concerns about potential impact of external competition on domestic infant industries that may result in job losses and social unrest (Bishop & Xiaotong, 2019, p.16). Indeed, practically every industrial sector in China, irrespective of its degree of advancement or global integration, is found in a precarious balance between growth and expansion amidst an ongoing economic slowdown. It is further complicated by the existence of substantial accumulated debt, presenting a great challenge for the state as it confronts a multitude of economic matters (Bishop 2018).

Furthermore, during the Doha Round talks on NAMA, Chinese authority sought to strengthen its socialist market economy by prioritizing strategically vital industries for national security and social stability such as energy and defense as well as pillar industries such as equipment manufacturing, automotive, construction, iron and steel, nonferrous metals, chemicals, electronic information, and technology (Jefferson, 2017). Since SOEs maintain control over these subsectors (Ferracane & Lee-Makiyama, 2017), contributing to government revenue and employment prospects (Jakobson & Knox, 2010, p.24), political leadership recognizes that SOEs success is their success. Consequently, CCP feel compelled to be accountable to the interest of SOEs, by implementing trade policies to support industrial objectives and stimulating their economic benefits.

China's commitment to retaining SOEs in crucial subsectors facilitates global prominence, allowing the government to employ subsidies, pursue mergers and acquisitions, and block competition, all aimed at advancing national interests (Jefferson, 2017). Former President Hu Jintao's goal of building a "harmonious society" prioritized the state-owned sector and national champions over foreign companies, a sentiment that persists today (Weifeng, 2021). Nevertheless, over two decades, China experienced economic growth rate fluctuations, transitioning from 9.6% to 6.7% between 2008 and 2016. This shift marked the exhaustion of previous growth catalysts, including low-cost labor and substantial foreign investments. Simultaneously, concerns about

energy resource scarcity intensified. By 2021, China became the world's leading importer of crucial resources such as crude oil, coal, natural gas, and copper ore (OECD, China, 2021), driving its strategic imperative to reduce reliance on external energy supplies and enhance energy security. Another factor which stimulates China preferences in DDA is the desire to transit from low-cost, labor-intensive industries to high-tech and advanced manufacturing, reducing dependence on foreign technology imports. To foster domestic innovation and global competitiveness, Chinese government introduced the Made in China (MIC) 2025 initiative. This strategic move was designed to fully integrate into the global manufacturing chain and enhance cooperation with industrial economies (ISDP, 2018).

What regards tertiary sector, upon joining the WTO, Chinese policymakers deliberately sought improved market access and the elimination of regulatory obstacles to facilitate the expansion of the service industry. This approach was deemed crucial in offsetting the decline in China's manufacturing and export competitiveness (Rutowski, 2015). Besides, China's Secretariat in the report for the second Trade Policy Review of China added that Government's commitment to opening the services sector for involvement from both private enterprises and foreign entities is a strategic measure to offer alternative employment avenues, particularly as a way of alleviating pressures on the agricultural sector (WT/TPR/S/199, p. 14 para 26). It justifies the fact that WTO membership was needed to instigate internal reforms to attain these objectives. As part of China's 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015), comprehensive reforms were initiated to nurture the growth of the service sector, including tourism, healthcare, education, information technology, and financial services (Xinhua News Agency, 2011). An important milestone occurred in 2013 when the share of the service sector, accounting for 46.9% of China's GDP, surpassed that of industrial production 44.2% for the first time (World Bank, 2022).

However, despite an ambitious agenda for transformative reforms, numerous vested interests pose potential obstacles, with powerful state-owned monopolies and regulatory bodies resistant to increased competition and relinquishing control over market prices (Rutowski, 2015: Mattoo, 2003). Particularly conspicuous is the impact in the financial, telecommunications, and cultural services sectors, where liberalization, if not executed cautiously, could pose the highest risk to national security, as observed by Ravenhill and Jiang (2009). For instance, influenced by major state-owned telecom companies, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MII) adopted a conservative stance stemming from a fear of losing profits and privileges to external

competition (Jiang, 2010, p.246). Moreover, this defensive stand and restrictive regulations mirrored a great many extant challenges for Beijing such as dominance of imports of services, discriminatory regulatory measures, informal bans on travel, a number of constraints on the transboundary supply of services, unduly onerous licensing and operating requirements, and other measures to impede foreign service suppliers of banking, insurance, telecommunications, Internet-related, express delivery, legal and other services to attain their full market potential in China (Bin, 2015, p.18).

Chinese government, attempting to address these challenges by prioritizing the development of financial services, demonstrated its commitment to granting foreign providers of banking services the prerogative to establish their own banks and engage in mergers with existing state-owned or private banks (WT/MIN(01)/3). Breakthroughs began in 2018 with Xi's endeavor to opening the economy to foreign investment, aiming to attract capital inflows, meet domestic demands, and counteract manufacturing-related challenges. The Chinese government has facilitated foreign enterprise access to the internal financial market by lifting limits on foreign ownership across various financial institutions, including insurance, banking, funds, and upcoming ventures (The Economist 2021, p.42). Owing to multiple waves of liberalization and privatization attempts, the telecommunications sector in China has emerged as the world's largest market. However, historical disparities in economic development and a significant consumption gap persist, with the eastern part being more advanced and the western part facing accessibility challenges, particularly with fixed-line telephones (Statista 2022). Evolving technologies and constant inflation add further complexity.

Concerning TRIPS, China's trade policy preferences in intellectual property have evolved within the context of a delicate balance among diverse economic interests of stakeholders in the midst of conflicting demands of value creation and value capture, as highlighted by Zhao (2020). Over time, China's approach to intellectual property protection was characterized by a more lenient enforcement regime, aligning with a mercantilist orientation that prioritized rapid economic development and technology transfer (Peng et al. 2017). This stance aimed to facilitate domestic innovation and industrial growth by absorbing foreign technologies, thereby propelling China's ascent on the global economic stage.

The genesis of China's National Intellectual Property Strategy can be traced back to the mid-2000s, when governmental leaders recognized the necessity for substantial economic changes

to push the nation forward. They view the imperative to craft a new, comprehensive economic strategy to evade what is commonly referred to as the 'middle-income trap'—a developmental stage wherein a country achieves a certain level of wealth but struggles to catch up with more advanced counterparts (Yu, 2016, p. 27). Consequently, the protection of intellectual property rights assumes growing significance for domestic firms, particularly those intensifying their technological focus (Zhang, 2005). For instance, the study by Hsu, Wang, and Wu (2013) showcases the importance of IPR protection at a local level, revealing how differences in preferences can result in varied economic outcomes based on firms' financing decisions, Research and Development (R&D) investments, and patenting activities.

President Xi Jinping highlights the critical role of IP protection in bolstering China's business environment, fostering economic openness, and safeguarding vital national security technologies, especially as Chinese enterprises engage more in foreign investments like the Belt and Road Initiative (Ho, 2021). The Chinese government sees IP protection as crucial for driving technological and scientific innovation, promoting economic development, and facilitating global exchanges in science, technology, economics, and culture. Xi reaffirmed this commitment during his 2019 speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos (Xinhua News Agency, 2019). Consequently, China's stance on intellectual property reflects strategic trade-offs, supporting domestic company interests and aligning with innovation policies while integrating into broader international trade discussions. By adopting standards akin to Western jurisdictions, China reduces external pressures and minimizes successful claims at the WTO, highlighting an internally motivated process of strengthening intellectual property rights (Pinto-Ido, 2021, p.75). However, despite the fact that this stance may be formally plausible, we have to admit that the real China's behavior might contradict its preferences.

Ultimately, focusing on FTAs as additional evidence of bureaucratic influence, the divide is evident between export-oriented, labor-intensive manufacturing sectors supporting liberalization and import-competing sectors, like agriculture in CAFTA and AUCFTA, and services in AUCFTA, Singapore-China FTA, and New Zealand-China FTA negotiations, opposing it with protectionist domestic interests prevailing (Jiang, 2010, p. 241). For example, in AUCFTA talks, Beijing faced agricultural challenges amid strong interests and rural stability concerns, while CAFTA's launch involved centralized policymaking and provincial competition, minimizing complaints about agricultural losses. The government's focus on 'three agricultural'

issues persisted, with the MOA representing farmers' concerns and strongly opposing opening Chinese agriculture to Australia due to adverse impacts under WTO commitments and ongoing struggles in the family-based agricultural structure. NRDC's conservative stance limited Chinese negotiators' autonomy and aligned with protectionist sentiments, particularly in large staple agricultural products and major services sectors (i.e. telecommunications with monopoly profits), apprehensive of potential economic setbacks due to external competition. Although manufacturing industries generally favor FTAs, their support during negotiations has been less vocal compared to the opposing voices from agriculture and services (Jiang, 2010, p. 243-244).

Based on the analysis utilizing Putnam's two-level games approach, our findings lend partial support to the hypothesis *H1a, positing that the preferences of China in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players*. While significant domestic actors such as bureaucracies and SOEs indeed wield considerable influence and resist some of the policies, the CCP's centrality in decision-making within the fragmented authoritarian structure is apparent, resulting in ambivalent positions at the international level. The ability to reconcile conflicting interests among domestic stakeholders is not only contingent upon ministry power dynamics, but also political vulnerability within sectors undergoing liberalization, and the central government's prioritization of 'economic security' versus 'liberalization' (Ravenhill & Jiang, 2009, p.45). The CCP's overarching objectives, in particular, regime stability, territorial integrity, and strategic interests, shape and constrain the actions of these actors. Hence, preferences of the letter are considered in the final decisions about foreign policy if they align with the CCP's priorities. Yet, the party asserts control to shape outcomes or facilitate breakthrough in challenging negotiations when these preferences potentially jeopardize its legitimacy or broader strategic motives.

An illustrative example is observed in agricultural sector, where MOA played its role on behalf of the farmers to push China for protective measures to benefit developing countries, reflecting concerns about domestic social stability tied to rural economies and livelihoods. However, there is aspect of China's international positions that does not align neatly with domestic economic interests. For instance, China advocacy for some agricultural liberalization by developed countries lacks explicit support from specific domestic constituencies, such as pro-export farmer unions or lobbying groups, indicating on a potential misfit between certain international preferences in this sector and the hypothesis linking them to domestic economic motivations.

Similarly, in the services, Beijing's evolving international positions towards gradual liberalization and market access reflect a growing recognition of sector importance. Nevertheless, apparent domestic concerns from service providers about competitiveness and market access were not fully addressed in international negotiations, revealing a conflict of interests between domestic economic priorities and broader strategic objectives of CCP.

Simultaneously, the evaluation of TRIPS shows partial alignment with H1a. China's emphasis on intellectual property protection, focusing on technology transfer and economic development, mirrors domestic aspirations for fostering innovation and industrial growth. Nonetheless, challenges in balancing IP rights enforcement with rapid economic development hint on the impact of broader long-term objectives of Chinese authority on country's preferences in the international level. In NAMA, the evidence supports hypothesis H1a, despite apprehension from the NRDC about potential impacts on infant industries. China's focus on market access and reduced trade barriers in industrial goods generally aligns with the interests of export-oriented industries seeking global market share. The Chinese government's prioritization of strategically important industries, including energy, defense, and key manufacturing sectors, reflects efforts to enforce its socialist market economy and maintain its status as the "world's factory," utilizing state-owned enterprises to advance national interests through subsidies, mergers, and competition blocking. Lastly, China's negotiation outcomes of FTAs reinforce our assessment conclusion, showing a mixed alignment with the hypothesis, wherein China supports liberalization to enhance market access and attract foreign investment, whereas domestic concerns, particularly in sectors like agriculture and services, have prompted protectionist stances, as seen in CAFTA and AUCFTA.

3.3. Role of concerns about redistribution and recognition

Having evaluated domestic economic factors that could have impacted China decision-making on the international arena, our focus now turns to the socio-political dimension, applying Nel's Perspective. Specifically, the second hypothesis (*H2a*) central to our examination *propose that China's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by its concerns of redistribution and recognition*. Within this context, Nel's rationale enables us to interpret China's pursuit of fairer redistribution as more than a quest for material gains. Instead, it signifies a broader ideational commitment to reshaping the international economic order. Simultaneously, recognition of China goes beyond its economic might, involving an acknowledgment of its unique developmental needs and aspirations (Nel, 2010). In such a wise, one might perceive redistribution and recognition as

interwoven elements forming an integral aspect of a unified concept of justice (Fraser, 1997). For instance, China's active engagement in the Doha Round can be construed as a strategic diplomatic maneuver, managing the dual strategy of sustaining domestic economic growth and advocating for comprehensive global economic reforms in line not only with the interests of developing countries but, crucially, with its specific goals within the framework of a socialist market economy. Therefore, to evaluate given assumption in this section, we will not only scrutinize its logical implications by tracking the negotiation behavior and link it positions of China vis-à-vis its concerns about redistribution and recognition, but also evaluate China's evolving national identity and the norms it has embraced.

First and foremost, the factor of identity formation is important to take into account when determining an actor's interests in order to provide an explanation for the observed transformation in values and the ensuing actions (Auth, 2015, p. 191). This perspective is equally applicable in our case when analyzing motivations behind a country's preferences. China, as posited by David Shambaugh (2013, p. 14), is currently grappling with what can be characterized as an "international identity crisis" due to the country's political discourse being shaped by multiple contrasting ideologies and narratives. This is the reason why China struggles to articulate unified interests (Li, 2012). A challenge accentuated by the difficulties faced by the CCP leadership in adapting to the changing global landscape. The presence of divergent perspectives on reconciling domestic priorities with global role expectations adds to the uncertainty about the most effective approach to managing China's increasing integration into the global system (Gottwald & Duggan, 2011, p.17).

Holsti (1970, p. 243) contends that a state's global standing is molded by its self-perception while being simultaneously influenced and constrained by its international counterparts. In the dynamic realm of the international community, where a state establishes its position, full control over this status is not entirely within its jurisdiction. Consequently, the definition of China's identity and its role in the international system is intricately tied to the specific issue at hand and the group of scholars expressing their opinions. In various research studies, China is ascribed with diverse identities ranging from a socialist nation, a developing country, a rapidly ascending power to a significant regional player in East Asia or a prominent global force (Pu, 2017, p. 139). Moreover, it is frequently perceived as a 'prestige maximizer,' deftly juggling its aspirations for great power status while sidestepping unwelcome responsibilities. For instance, Li and Tu (2018)

argued that China, despite being globally recognized as the largest exporter and second-largest economy, finds itself in a limbo, straddling between a developing and developed status, as reflected in the significant income disparity and the unique contrast between world-class cities and poverty challenges in rural areas. Shambaugh further notes that current developments in China's conduct suggest a blend of insecurity and arrogance, characterizing it as "insecure domestically and arrogant internationally" (Shambaugh, 2013, p. 15). This balancing act extends to handling relationships between the Global North and the Global South, along with adeptly managing the expectations of both domestic and international audiences (Pu, 2017, p. 145).

Chinese scholars express varying views regarding the most salient identity, yet there is consensus on China's overarching goal – the aspiration to regain its former greatness (recognition). The struggle for great-power recognition unfolds as China delicately manages the equilibrium between acceptance and autonomy, compliance and revisionism, power and legitimacy, and globalization and nationalism. Within this framework, "status" encapsulates a state's concerns related to both material well-being and international treatment, with the aim of fostering mutually reinforcing growth (Deng 2008, p. 167). Thus, in the retrospect, the years leading up to the Doha Round marked a transformative period in China's approach to international trade. While at first glance, China seems to initially prioritize economic interests, with a focus on the substantial gains that could be derived from a liberalized global trade regime, it becomes apparent that its ambitions extended well beyond mere economic pragmatism.

As it was mentioned earlier in our research, Shambaugh (2013, p.125) pointed out on China's "moderately revisionist stance," which could be seen as an attempt to optionally modify rules, actors, and the balance of influence primarily within existing institutions, whilst aiming to set up alternative institutions and norms of global governance and redistribute power and resources within the international system. This stance is rooted in its historical context, marked by a determination to overcome past humiliations experienced during the 19th to mid-20th century under imperialistic forces, adds a layer of complexity to China's contemporary stance. The quest for regained national glory serves as a potent motivator, inciting China to assert itself as an independent power, chasing its interests autonomously, regardless of alignment with developing or developed nations (Garver, 1993, p.5). Therefore, throughout the 2000s, Beijing strategically engaged with multilateral institutions, utilizing them as platforms to promote its discourse on

challenges, advocate for peaceful development, and enhance its global prestige and legitimacy (Barnet & Duvall, 2005).

Already in 1986, China, as a developing country, sought, on renewal of its membership in GATT, to obtain treatment on par with other developing contracting parties, namely, "unconditional most-favored-nation treatment", and the elimination of "discriminatory quantitative restrictions and discriminatory anti-dumping and countervailing procedures against China" (GATT 1986, p.16). Building on this aspiration, China undertook more substantial commitments than those of other countries when joined GATT's successor, the WTO, in 2001 to demonstrate its dedication to promoting equitable economic distribution, and championing global norms, which clearly illustrated profound desire to position itself as a responsible and legitimate global player (Lardy 2002, Liang 2002).

For this reason, it pledged to open its markets to competition, along with a restructuring of laws, regulations, procedures, and administrative and judicial institutions across all government levels (Yi, 2011). To be precise, it eliminated, modified, and enacted over 3,000 laws at the central government level and 190,000 at the local government level, establishing a WTO-consistent legal system. In this way, Beijing has fully embraced concepts such as nondiscrimination, transparency, and the rule of law, transcending trade jargon to become commonplace for the general public (Yi, 2011, p.2). Secondly, Beijing made deep tariff commitments for imports, by substantially reducing its average tariff from around 43% to approximately 15%, ultimately fixing its bound tariff under the WTO at 10%, and it agreed to significantly liberalize services (Singh, 2011). China has included 93 sub-sectors in its General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) schedule, which exceeds the average for developing nations and approaches that of developed members. Thirdly, China significantly decreased average agricultural tariffs from 23.1% in 2001 to 15.6% in 2009, surpassing tariffs in countries such as Japan and India, and eliminated agricultural export subsidies (Wang, 2011, p.3). Finally, PRC demonstrated its dedication to robust intellectual property protection and its support for the independent review of all trade-related administrative actions, whether conducted by judicial or administrative tribunals (WT/L/432).

Driven by such significant commitments, China intentionally maintained a low profile during its initial years as a WTO Member. However, as time progressed, it transitioned from being a hesitant participant attempting to avoid WTO litigation to becoming a proactive and influential player that strategically employed the system to safeguard its interests (Shaffer & Gao, 2018).

China began introducing proposals in WTO negotiations and increased its active participation in the extensive network of over seventy councils, committees, working parties, and other groupings within the WTO, encompassing more than 1,000 meetings annually (Hoekman, 2011). Chinese official representatives discovered that the committee system, in conjunction with the WTO's trade policy review, effectively compels policymakers to provide justifications for their policies, thereby acting as a deterrent against the adoption of protectionist measures (Wolfe, 2013).

Simultaneously, China played a notable role as a third party in dispute settlement cases. Between 2003 and 2006, it engaged in nearly every panel established during this period. When faced with opposition, China strategically utilized assertive legal arguments to reinterpret existing rules in its favor, incorporating substantive legal points and adept procedural objections (Gao, 2011, p.15). This demonstrated a comprehensive effort to shape the outcomes of disputes, as evident in cases such as Auto Parts (WT/DS339/R; WT/DS340/R; WT/DS342/R), TRIPS (WT/DS362/R), and Publications and Audiovisual Products (WT/DS363/R). In these instances, China exhibited a proactive stance in defending its position and challenging accusations, reflecting concerns for the recognition of its adherence to WTO obligations and the safeguarding of its trade practices. Following 2008, China sustained its proactive involvement by initiating WTO cases against the United States, specifically targeting purported breaches related to subsidy determination methodologies and the concurrent imposition of anti-dumping and countervailing duties (DS379). This move was aimed at altering established trade rules. Generally, China staunchly endorses the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism, considering it vital for the organization's efficiency. By underlining the need for a credible system to encourage members to fulfill obligations, despite occasional losses, China consistently acknowledges WTO rulings, affirming confidence in their fairness and objectivity (Scorobogataya, 2013).

Almost in every ministerial conference without exception, PRC indicates the imperative of constructing a just global economic order, stressing the importance of tackling the developmental needs of emerging economies and achieving favorable outcomes from the Doha Development Agenda (WT/MIN(03)/ST/12; WT/MIN(09)/ST/113). By championing the concerns of developing nations, China sought to enhance its standing as a leader among the Global South, nurturing diplomatic ties and reinforcing its image as a proponent of equitable global governance. What cannot remain unnoticed is that throughout the whole Doha Round, despite holding the position of the world's second-largest economy, China identifies itself as a developing country,

emphasizing its economic structure, persistent social challenges, and income disparities (Yang, 2023). The designation of developing country status entails material benefits, granting special rights, reduced obligations, increased implementation flexibilities and enhanced access to resources (Viola, 2020, p.19).

Therefore, asserting its entitlement to Special and Differential Treatment (SDT), originally crafted for developing nations, China argues that upholding the WTO's SDT principle is vital for ensuring a fair global trading system (Lee, 2019). This position is explicitly articulated by China's representative, who stated the intention to safeguard the right to leverage provisions outlined in Articles 27.10, 27.11, 27.12, and 27.15 of the SCM Agreement (WT/MIN(01)/3, para 171) in order to shield developing members from countervailing duty investigations, particularly in instances where the value or quantity of subsidized products is deemed minimal, referred to as *de minimis* subsidies. Nevertheless, developed nations have criticized China for what they perceive as circumventing WTO rules by maintaining its self-proclaimed developing status, prompting calls to reconsider the SDT regime for countries accounting for 0.5% or more of global trade (Jose, 2019). China vehemently opposes these demands, particularly those put forth by the United States, which proposed WTO reforms in 2019 aimed at reducing the number of countries eligible for special and differential treatment. In response, a coalition of 52 developing countries, led by China, submitted a document to the WTO defending their developing country status (WT/GC/202). In an interview with Reuters, China's Ambassador to the WTO, Li Chenggang, stressed that despite its economic progress, China still considers itself a developing country due to lingering poverty concerns, but it would seek exceptions in specific areas, such as agriculture and financial services (Farge, 2021).

Although extensive evidence supports the idea that trade contributes to increased economic growth and poverty reduction, it is essential to acknowledge that income distribution is ineluctably impacted. While overall poverty tends to decrease, trade liberalization can lead to short-term effects where certain individuals become poor, and some within the existing impoverished population experience a further decline in their economic conditions. This occurs before broader adjustments take place in the labor markets, ultimately establishing a new general equilibrium (Ingo et al., 2004). China recognizes that global economic disparities persist, with developed nations often reaping the lion's share of economic benefits from international trade. This imbalance raises concerns about the fair distribution of benefits and the perpetuation of global economic

inequalities. Domestically, China faces income disparities between its coastal regions and interior provinces. To address this, it seeks to redistribute economic benefits through trade policies and strategies that can stimulate growth and development in less economically developed regions. Therefore, China often aligns itself with other developing countries (G20, G30) (Gao, 2012), advocating for measures that promote fairer redistribution of trade benefits among nations.

Sector-wise, for instance, in agricultural domain, China urged meaningful reductions in subsidies, support, and tariffs by developed countries during Cancun ministerial conference, what signaled its preoccupation for redistributing benefits more evenly, particularly to benefit developing nations. China also emphasized balanced negotiations across agriculture, industrial goods, and services pillars to picture the centrality of agriculture in resolution of other issues and ensure fair recognition within trade discussions (WT/MIN(03)/ST/12). It leverages SDT benefits for global purposes, securing subsidies and minimal price support for peasant farmers, although its rural development approach involves promoting agribusiness expansion and land transfers to larger-scale production, contributing to observed trends by 2019 (Schneider, 2017; Johnson, 2019). The emphasis on protecting import-competing agricultural products reflects a commitment to bolstering domestic agricultural sectors for employment, poverty alleviation, and broader development goals (Liang, 2013, p.212), aligning with concerns over potential redistribution effects and addresses geographical constraints to sustain rural livelihoods (Li, 2017). In turn, NAMA is a special case for PRC as it holds comparative advantage in this field, prompting prioritization of significant decreases in tariff peaks and the removal of tariff escalation (WT/MIN(03)/ST/12). This aligns with Beijing's ambition to address redistribution concerns, particularly benefiting developing economies. Furthermore, country introduced "Made in China 2025" initiative to achieve global recognition as a leading manufacturing industry by 2049, giving precedence to innovation, quality, and sustainability to reinforce international acknowledgment and global cooperation efforts (Beraud et al., 2022, p. 66463).

In services, China's trade strategy emphasizes reciprocal advantage, diversification, and equitable development to address global economic redistribution concerns. It approaches the issue of services trade imbalance with objectivity and focuses on enhancing export quality and integrating into global value chains to achieve a more balanced distribution of economic gains. China's prioritization of quality over quantity in trade, including acceptance of imports that enhance quality of life and industrial structure, demonstrates a strong desire for international

recognition and legitimacy within the global trading system, further supported by its strategy promoting skilled labor mobility, particularly in Mode 4 services under GATS, stressing opportunities for developing countries to access markets and advocating for equitable commitments and transparent visa procedures to ensure fair implementation of market access agreements (The State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China, 2018; TN/S/W/14). What regards intellectual property, China's proactive endeavors to establish itself as a "leading IP power" and advocate for "IP values with Chinese characteristics" signal a strategic pursuit of recognition and influence within global governance frameworks (Cheng, 2018, p.2). Collaboration with other developing nations to resist initiatives like the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) reflects shared concerns regarding the detrimental impact of stringent IP standards on development agendas, thereby highlighting anxieties over trade distortion and disproportionate redistribution effects within the international IP landscape (WTO, 2010).

Nevertheless, after joining the WTO, for two decades, China faced constraints in pursuing its residual trade objectives through multilateral routes within the Doha talks framework. Hence, Beijing strategically turned its focus toward preferential and regional free trade agreements (PTAs and RTAs) to address various aspects of its evolving trade policy (Mallon and Whalley, 2004). Firstly, China craved international recognition, concretely, attainment of market economy status. Recognizing that this status would be instrumental in safeguarding Chinese exports from arbitrary anti-dumping actions, China made it a non-negotiable precondition for the initiation of PTA negotiations. To set this trend, China concluded its first PTA with industrialized economy New Zealand characterized by economic power asymmetry, prompting other industrialized economies like Australia and Iceland to emulate. (Ravenhill & Jiang, 2009, p.32-33). Secondly, China wanted to secure raw materials access due to its rapid economic growth and import dependency. This approach aimed to position China as a dominant trade player while also addressing biases against Chinese resource investments and seeking most-favored-nation treatment in partner economies (Aaron, 2006, pp.21-22).

Moreover, in pursuit of RTAs, the Chinese government and policymakers endeavored to bolster peaceful regional leadership. The signing of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement (ACFTA) exemplifies a diplomatic move to reassure neighboring countries about economic and geopolitical stability (Salidjanova, 2015, p.29-30). The onset of the USA-China trade war in 2018 (Chen, 2014; Wan, 2021) heightened China's motivation to actively engage in regional economic

establishments, fostering cooperation, and expanding markets to circumvent American restraints or political clashes. Without a shadow of a doubt, China seeks enhanced economic partnerships, advocating for "South-South cooperation to obtain mutually beneficial geographic outcomes and collaborative resolutions (Soong,2014). Meanwhile, Chinese government also aimed to address domestic concerns and mitigate negative impacts on vulnerable sectors like the agricultural industry, as highlighted by the MOA survey and Guangxi Province report, particularly in areas related to tropical produce and raw materials that worried about the heightened competition and the influx of lower-priced imports (Ravenhill & Jiang,2009, p.40). Overall, we may assert that the universe of PTAs and RTAs parallel to the multilateral trading system allowed China to diversify its trading partners, reduce trade barriers, and foster economic cooperation on terms more aligned with its specific trade priorities.

Additionally, due to the deadlock in the ongoing round of WTO negotiations, driven in part by conflicts between developed and developing countries, President Xi Jinping in 2013 introduced ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a far-reaching plan designed to redefine global norms with distinct Chinese characteristics (Johnson et al., 2017). The BRI is structured around five clear goals, namely coordinating policies, enhancing infrastructure connectivity, facilitating unimpeded trade, advancing financial integration, and fostering people-to-people bonds. This initiative strategically positions China to cultivate economic partnerships, promoting both regional and global economic integration while facilitating the redistribution of economic benefits in less developed regions. Beyond its stated objectives, the BRI harbors implicit intentions. By increasing economic reliance on China, it amplifies the nation's political and economic influence in participating countries. China aspires to wield counter-power in BRI regions vis-à-vis the West, employing a multifaceted strategy encompassing political alliances, financial initiatives, migration policies, trade dynamics, and cultural exchange (Pantekoek et al., 2022, p.11).

Taken all factors, in an era marked by dramatic shifts in the global economy and the severe challenges posed to the multilateral trading system due to increasing unilateralism and protectionism, China stands for essential reforms within the WTO. The primary goal is to address the existential crisis confronting the WTO, strengthen its legitimacy and efficacy, stimulate an open world economy, and strive towards the creation of a community with a shared future for humanity (The Office of the Chargé d'Affaires of the PRC in the Republic of Lithuania, 2018). Accordingly, China stresses that the crucial overhaul of the WTO should encompass targeted

measures in four pivotal areas, namely, tackling pressing issues that pose a threat to the WTO's existence; elevating the WTO's role in global economic governance; ameliorating the operational efficiency of the WTO; and cultivating increased inclusivity within the multilateral trading system (WT/GC/W/773, para 2.1). In its proposal, China explicitly stated that the deadlock in the Appellate Body, misuse of national security exceptions, and imposition of unilateral measures violating WTO rules are actions primarily attributable to the United States (WT/GC/W/773, para 1.6). Instead, the WTO reform should fortify the essential role of the multilateral trading system in advancing international trade liberalization and facilitation.

Besides, China has put forth that the necessary reforms must rectify trade rule imbalances and adapt to contemporary developments. It should specifically tackle the prolonged distortion of global agricultural trade caused by excessive subsidies from developed nations and curb the misuse of trade remedy measures, notably addressing the problematic "surrogate country" methodology in anti-dumping investigations. Simultaneously, the reform must ensure the relevance of WTO rules by incorporating modern issues like Investment Facilitation and addressing the concerns of Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises in the 21st century (WT/GC/W/773, para 2.2.3). Emphasizing the importance of "respecting members' development models," China also vocally rejects special and discriminatory disciplines targeting state-owned enterprises under the pretext of WTO reform since they act as crucial policy instruments to ensure "steady" economic growth, foster economic "self-reliance," and safeguard "national security." (MOFCOM 2018; SASAC 2021). Lastly, the reform must preserve special and differential treatment for developing members, and China, as the world's largest developing country, opposes any attempts to eliminate this treatment under the guise of WTO reform while remaining willing to undertake commitments based on its development and economic capacity (WT/GC/W/773, para 2.4.1).

The overall evaluation grounded in Nel's perspective strongly affirms the validity of our hypothesis (*H2a*), ***asserting that China's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by its concerns of redistribution and recognition.*** An analysis of China's behavior and crucial decisions during the Doha Round reveals compelling evidence supporting this assertion. China's pursuit of fairer redistribution transcends mere material gains, exemplifying a strategic diplomatic maneuver to sustain domestic growth and advocate for comprehensive global economic reforms, aiming to reshape the international economic order. Concurrently, China strategically identifies itself as a developing country in the WTO, emphasizing the unique developmental needs and aspirations of

the Global South, showcasing dedication to securing recognition beyond economic prowess, what aligns with Nel's vision. The transition from a tentative participant to a proactive player in the WTO supports seamlessly the hypothesis, indicating China's strategic utilization of the system to safeguard its interests. Additionally, China's assertive engagement in dispute settlement cases, active participation in PTAs and RTAs, and efforts to bridge global economic inequalities through WTO reform and SDT highlight a comprehensive approach in line with its adherence to WTO obligations and the protection of trade practices.

Within designated sectors, China endorses a balanced outcome in the Doha Round that goes beyond addressing the interests of individual developed countries. Instead, China stresses the need for holistic equilibrium that benefits developing countries collectively. Highlighting the global imbalance between rich and poor nations and its adverse impact on economic development, China urges developed countries to assume greater responsibility in the negotiations and facilitate adequate policy flexibility for the development needs of developing countries (WT/MIN(05)/ST/59). Thus, in agriculture, as seen at the Cancun conference for instance, Beijing pushes for reduced subsidies and tariffs, aimed to distribute benefits more fairly, particularly favoring developing nations. In NAMA, China advocates for policies that reinforce its international image of world factory and capitalizes on its strengths to lower tariff barriers, which helps developing economies in addressing concerns about uneven allocation of gains. Similarly, China's services trade strategy presents an impartial perspective on the current sector trade imbalance and emphasizes quality-driven exports and global integration to achieve balanced economic gains while seeking international recognition and facilitation of market access for developing countries through skilled labor mobility and transparent procedures. China's proactive approach to intellectual property underscores its pursuit of recognition and influence within global governance frameworks. Collaborative efforts with other developing nations indicate shared concerns about trade distortions and unequal redistribution effects.

To conclude, this chapter has examined an evolving role of Peoples Republic of China in protracted Doha Round with a particular focus on both internal and external determinants that impact China's trade policy preferences during these negotiations. Addressing the first research question (RQ1a): *What were China's trade policy preferences in the Doha Round?* We outlined exact preferences of the country in each sector of interest such as agriculture, NAMA, services, and intellectual property. Further, we explored driving considerations behind China's preferences

by assessing our suggested hypotheses (H1a, H2a) and tackling the second research question (RQ2a): *What factors explain China's preferences in the Doha Round?* Utilizing Putman's two-level games framework in section 2, we discerned important domestic actors within complex structure of fragmented authoritarianism, highlighting their economic interests and costs that attempted to seemingly affect the final policies on international level. However, these influences often played a subordinate role to CCP broader strategic objectives. Thus, the hypothesis (H1a) was partially validated. Moreover, through Nel's perspective in section 3, we analyzed China's global image and behavior within the WTO, aligning with its rhetoric as a proponent of a fair-trade system characterized by openness, inclusiveness, equity, and shared advantages. China's suggested motivations in hypothesis (H2a) in this regard proved to be driven by concerns regarding recognition and redistribution within the international trade arena.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY: INDIA

The case of the Republic of India is equally intriguing. India, renowned as the world's most populous democratic state, which wields growing influence in global affairs. Particularly evident is its pivotal role in the stalemated Doha Round trade negotiations, where it assumed leadership on behalf of developing nations, intending to reform the WTO framework (Efsthathopoulos, 2016). Thus, the initial section aims to scrutinize India's trade policy preferences and dissect its positions across relevant sectors, addressing the first research question (RQ1b). Following this, the ensuing sections will comprehensively analyse the factors that drive these preferences by testing hypotheses (H1b, H2b) and exploring our second research question (RQ2b). In this regard, the two-level games approach will be utilized in section two to examine the determinants that shape India's trade policy preferences and their underlying concerns. The third section endeavours to verify whether India's trade policy preferences reflect considerations of redistribution and recognition, as framed by Nel's perspective.

4.1. India's preferences

India's *trade policy preferences* are well-delineated in terms of significance, with agriculture, services, and NAMA taking precedence (Conceicao-Heldt, 2013, p. 436). New Delhi also stresses the importance of flexibility in trade commitments, especially concerning TRIPS

(Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) within the Development Round negotiations. However, India remains cautious on the Singapore Issues post-Cancún Ministerial Conference, prioritizing the protection of its policy space and development goals (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7). Given India's expansive and intricate nature, it exhibits both defensive and offensive interests not only across various sectors but even within the same area (Cuts International, 2021). Besides, despite India's ambition to lead the developing world at the WTO through coalitions like G-20, G-33, and NAMA-11, its negotiating positions may not fully align with the interests of all developing nations due to differing economic development paths (Panagariya, 2008), what add complexity to India's stance, warranting careful examination in the following sections. Further we will examine in depth the preferences of this South Asia Emerging Elephant in each sector of priority.

First and foremost, India's top priorities at all ministerial conferences during the Development Round have been centred on major unfinished business, namely, *agriculture*. The India case presents a notable scenario here due to its initial combination of pro-trade (offensive) and anti-trade (defensive) inclinations during the early stages of the DDA. Yet, as the negotiations advanced, India has maintained a protective trade policy, prioritizing defence in this sector (Singh & Gupta, 2016). For instance, India's primary objective has been to enhance access to markets in developed countries for its agricultural products, recognizing the critical role of international agricultural trade in sustaining its population. It has consistently advocated for a substantial reduction in agricultural subsidies offered by developed countries, as these subsidies distort competition in international markets (MoC, 2022). At the same time, India stresses the pressing necessity to diminish high tariffs and non-tariff barriers on products vital for the exports of developing nations, highlighting the significance of upholding special and differential treatment and policy flexibility to tackle developmental needs such as rural development, food security, and livelihood concerns. Additionally, India firmly opposes any suggestions for tariff harmonization in agriculture or mandates to initiate or enlarge tariff rate quotas, advocating instead for alternative joint proposals, alongside twenty other Members, aimed at addressing these issues in a constructive and substantive manner (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7). What is more, India has pursued enhanced support entitlements through price stabilization reserves and advocated for the Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) in the Doha Round which encompasses exemptions for developing nations

from certain market access obligations and measures for poverty alleviation, empowering them to shield their farmers from import surges or abrupt price declines (Guru, 2021).

What concerns *NAMA*, New Dheli closely links these negotiations to agricultural discussions, creating a dynamic akin to a "pass the buck" game. Developing nations, like India, reluctant to commit without agricultural progress while developed countries tie agriculture progress to developing nations' actions in *NAMA*. Amidst these linkages, India's stance in *NAMA* appears protectionist or defensive, possibly excessively so considering its relatively high tariffs and limited bindings (Saggi, 2010, p.20). It contended that market access is not solely determined by tariffs but also by non-tariff barriers (NTBs) like anti-dumping measures and technical standards, which unfairly hinder exports from developing nations. Therefore, India emphasizes that addressing these barriers is vital for meaningful market access in the negotiations and advocates for their reduction or elimination while safeguarding sensitive sectors from abrupt liberalization (WT/MIN(05)/ST/17). Given its economic vulnerability in this sector, India maintains higher bound tariffs compared to developed nations. Consequently, it firmly opposes any alterations to the Swiss formula proposed by the Chairman of the Negotiating Group, asserting that such amendments would undermine the progress achieved thus far (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7).

In contrast to the conventional trajectory of economic development seen in many countries, where progress typically moves from agriculture to industry, India has followed a distinct path: transitioning from agriculture to the *services sector*. India, known today as a global services powerhouse, placed considerable emphasis on liberalizing trade in services during the Doha Round. Within the framework of the Development Round, India supports the liberalization of selected service sectors to stimulate growth in developing nations but urges prudence in sensitive areas (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7). New Dheli's primary objectives revolve around advancing the liberalization of cross-border service delivery, known as Mode 1, and facilitating the movement of individuals across borders, denoted as Mode 4. This includes providing skilled professionals with opportunities for temporary employment abroad and enabling service providers from developing nations, including itself, to access overseas markets, warning that resistance from developed countries could obstruct flexibility in making commitments in sectors of interest to them (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7).

Despite its liberal stance, India exhibits reluctance to entirely liberalize Mode 1 and Mode 3, since it is highly dependent on the FDI flows in services and it wants to prevent foreign banks

from dominating its market (Mukherjee 2012, p. 44). Furthermore, India seeks to preserve policy space for the regulation and support of essential public services such as healthcare, education, and water supply from commitments to liberalization that could undermine their availability. Certain service sectors, such as insurance, aviation, construction, retail, and distribution, encounter considerable protectionist measures. These restrictions encompass foreign capital limits, commercial establishment requirements, as well as complex and expensive licensing procedures (Sally 2011, p. 6). Overall, India predominately adheres to liberalist preferences in services throughout Doha Round by advocating for reforms that aim to enhance market access, promote cross-border supply, and foster personnel mobility while simultaneously safeguarding essential public services important for its development.

As for *TRIPS*, India stands out as one of the toughest major economies worldwide in safeguarding intellectual property rights (Privacy Shield, 2020). However, this stance is complemented by a liberal approach, advocating for substantial changes in WTO regulations to address the developmental needs of developing countries. India prioritizes public health, opposing overly strict IP regulations that could impede access to vital medicines, particularly for marginalized groups. It emphasizes interpretation of TRIPS Agreement provisions with a focus on public health objectives and supports broad interpretations of Article 31 to facilitate compulsory licensing and parallel imports, crucial for medicine accessibility. Furthermore, India advocates for independent interpretations of patent exceptions under Article 30, raises concerns about patenting biological/genetic resources, and calls for clarity on non-violation complaints (IP/C/M/31, p.21-26). India also urges international cooperation to protect traditional knowledge, proposing patent disclosure rules and shared responsibility to prevent exploitation, and addresses developing countries' concerns over bio-piracy by advocating for alterations to the TRIPS agreement (IP/C/W/198). Lastly, India underscores the pressing need for substantial progress in key domains crucial for developing nations, notably highlighting the significance of technology transfer and innovation promotion (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7).

4.2. Domestic economic interests

We have thus far thoroughly scrutinized India's core trade policy preferences in each sector of interest within the WTO, our focus now shifts towards exploration of our hypothesis, *H1b*, which posits *that the trade policy preferences of India in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players*. To assess this hypothesis, we will

adopt the Putnam two-level games framework in order to delve into the complex interplay between domestic politics and international trade dynamics. It will enable us to illuminate which domestic actors hold pivotal roles in India, discern their incentives and constraints and comprehend to which extent domestic economic considerations of these actors shape the nation's trade negotiations inclinations and the overall decision-making process during DDA.

India, as the world's largest democracy, operates through a complex political system that profoundly influences decision-making and policy formulation. This system involves multiple tiers, featuring a federal structure that constitutes a complex web of institutional elements that emanate from the crucial allocation of responsibilities. These elements encompass a wide range of functions, such as organizing elections, setting up administrative machinery at each tier, and establishing regulatory bodies like the Finance Commission, the Inter-State Council, and the National Development Council to effectively manage and regulate the interactions between the central and state governments (Jenkins, 2003, pp. 607-608). The federal structure's unique configuration bestows the central government with substantial authority over the states, enabling actions like dismissing state governments and reconstituting new ones in extreme circumstances. This concept of "holding-together federalism" nurtures cohesion among diverse nationalities and reconciles regional aspirations, particularly evident in trade negotiations. Compensatory fiscal transfers are pivotal in orchestrating political unity and fostering accord amidst competing nationalities within the democratic framework, which emerged from a coalition of groups during the struggle for independence. Despite the challenges posed by India's socio-economic diversity, its experience unveils the functional value of democracy, leading to the world's largest electorate, surpassing North America, Western Europe, and Japan, and defying conventional expectations (Bardhan, 2010, p.3, pp14-16).

In turn, conventional expectations surrounding India's foreign policy analysis have historically adhered to a top-down paradigm, focusing on the power centers within New Delhi and influential figures such as the prime minister, the dominant ruling party, the elite, foreign policy institutions, key opinion shapers, and pertinent bodies. Nevertheless, this perspective disregarded a vital dimension: the substantial influence of domestic forces on India's foreign affairs and its conceptualization of the "national interest"(Acharya, 2014; Buzan, 2011; Sahni, 2007). However, the gradual marginalization of internal factors such as public sentiment, developmental considerations, and competing ideologies occurred due to a realpolitik-oriented strategy. In recent

years, we have witnessed a marked shift catalyzed by regional political elites and other domestic actors, highlighting their capacity to significantly shape and potentially dictate foreign policy directions (Mishra & Miklian, 2016, p.2). Consequently, there arises a compelling need to reevaluate the role of domestic determinants at the level II in influencing India's diplomatic decisions at the level I.

To address this objective, Putnam's two-level game principles offer a suitable framework, in particular to highlight the critical connection between the outcome of international negotiations and the domestic political restrictions faced by negotiating parties. To put it in another way, the effective completion of an international agreement hinges not solely on the foreign policy objectives of the involved parties, but also on diverse internal determinants, including the political system of the entity and the preferences of influential interest groups within the respective countries (Atak, 2022, p.72). In India's democratic setting, elected government representatives must consider the concerns of their constituents, such as bureaucracies, political parties, interest groups, and the media, alongside global counterparts' interests if they want to secure financial support and future electoral success (Conceica-Held, 2013, p.433).

This becomes particularly salient when deciphering the underlying reasons behind government officials' concessions during trade negotiations. The crux of the challenge arises from the diverse array of perspectives inherent in the global context, often leading to complications in the bargaining process. Notwithstanding concerted efforts by Narendra Modi to centralize decision-making, key members of the cabinet still retain veto powers (Oswald & Eckhard, 2023, p.14). Since in the majority of democratic systems, the constitution frequently designates specific powers to the executive or the legislative branches, occasional competition may arise between two or more political parties or coalitions. This results in either shared control or distinct powers held by various domestic actors in the policy-making process (Mansfield et al. 2007, p.405).

Specifically, within the context of the Doha Round, the challenges are exacerbated by the influence exerted by different bureaucracies and interest groups. For example, The Ministry of Commerce (MoC) maintains direct connections with industrial and services lobbying groups (Narlikar 2008 and 2013), reflecting the influence of these non-state actors in shaping trade policy decisions. Conversely, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) embodies a distinctive standpoint. Championing protectionist interests within the agricultural sector, the MoA's engagement in trade negotiations often intersects with concerns connected with food security, rural livelihoods, and

safeguarding the interests of farmers. This dichotomy of interests often translates into contrasting viewpoints during policy formulation, where the MoC, aligned with liberalizing stances, and the MoA, advocating for protective measures, engage in a nuanced tug-of-war, while the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) attempts to balance foreign policy objectives with trade-related matters (Rodrigues-Vieira, 2021, p.8).

Despite these dynamics, the MoC remained the key coordinator, suggesting a preference for liberalizing positions in the national interest. The involvement of non-state actors, particularly industry groups like the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and major industrial federations, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), brought about further complication due to varied interests within different sectors (Rodrigues-Vieira, 2021, p.9). Thus, we may state that India's economic reforms were primarily driven by domestic decisions rather than external pressures. Overall, Indian bureaucrats heed domestic constituencies in forming the national interest for the DDA, yet they do not necessarily comply with all demands (Rodrigues-Vieira, 2021, p.20). Furthermore, evidence indicates that in India, non-state actors and other institutions outside the nodal bureaucracy exert considerable influence on policymaking, potentially contributing to India's reputation for taking a nay-stance and often dissenting in international negotiations (Narlikar & Van Houten, 2010, p.146).

It is important to notice that negotiations occurring concurrently at domestic and international levels are more probable to result in agreement when there is an alignment in win-sets, which refers to the spectrum of agreements feasible internationally and accepted domestically (Putman, 1988 p. 449). In India, the international treaties are ratified as executive acts without parliamentary approval (Ministry of External Affairs of India, 2018, P.5), and the President's treaty actions are not subject to judicial review (Union of India v. Manmull Jain and Ors, 1954), enabling Indian negotiators to focus less on legislative priorities compared to counterparts in for example the EU, leading to a broader win-set. Following this reasoning, we should now look behind the domestic veil and investigate whether the interests of influential domestic actors across sectors align with India's objectives in the Doha Round.

To begin with, the agricultural sector holds immense importance to India, serving as a fundamental pillar of its economy by ensuring food security and livelihoods for over 60% of the country's population (Sharma & Bhogal 2017, p. 2), generating employment opportunities in rural

regions and creating a substantial domestic market growth for industrial goods (Meijerink & Achterbosch, 2009). India's prominence as a global producer of key agricultural commodities like rice, wheat, pulses, sugarcane, fruits, vegetables, coffee, tea, and cotton further underscores the sector's significance (IBEF, 2022a). Over the past two decades, this sector has witnessed remarkable growth, with agricultural exports contributing significantly to the country's economy, reaching \$33.3 billion in 2020 (IBEF, 2022d). Despite notable growth and export achievements, Indian agriculture grapples with formidable challenges such as population pressures, underdeveloped rural infrastructure, arable lands, soil depletion, technological lag, and bureaucratic system marked by low accountability factors (Singh & Kumar, 2021). The sector's reliance on monsoons adds further complexities, even as India remains the world's leading rice exporter after China. The country also imports staple foods like vegetable oil and pulses due to low self-sufficiency levels (OECD, 2022a). Overall, present agricultural methods in India are characterized by both economic and environmental unsustainability, with low yields observed across many agricultural commodities (Mubashir & Bhat, 2021).

These complexities are compounded by disparities between large modern enterprises and small subsistence farms, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable rural development and enhanced support for farmers (The World Bank, 2012). A central dilemma faced by main Indian negotiators during trade talks arises exactly from the fact that overwhelming majority of the populace engages in farming activities. Yet, interestingly, India possesses a unique feature: the absence of cohesive apex farmers' organizations and the diverse interests within the sector which shape India's negotiating stance. Hence, the existing farmers' unions lack comprehensive representativeness, primarily because the most impoverished farmers typically remain unaffiliated. Thus, they hold a dual mantle of defensive and offensive interests. Those corporate farmer groups who advocate for export interests harnessing key government agencies like the Department of Commerce and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, others who focus on domestic market protection rely exclusively on the Ministry of Agriculture (Conceição-Heldt, 2013, p. 439). Intermittently, the Confederation of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA) emerges as a notable voice in lobbying efforts, emphasizing food security and poverty alleviation through market concentration and family-oriented farming. Therefore, CIFA staunchly resists further reduction in agricultural tariff rates (Confederation of Indian Farmers Associations, 2012). Furthermore, the significant electoral clout of farmers and agricultural workers enables

them to exert considerable pressure on the Indian government, primarily advocating for protectionist policies and SDT tailored to developing nations' needs during negotiations.

The next sector NAMA demonstrates a low level of competitiveness, prompting India to adopt fairly protected policies. It encompasses various industries, such as pharmaceuticals, the chemical industry which is the second biggest industrial sector, and textile playing a dominant role in the manufacturing front. Also, India is the world's second-largest producer of coal, it is the country's major source of energy making two-thirds of electricity production (Santander Trade Market, 2021). Despite India's abundant domestic coal reserves, its reliance on imported coal has risen steadily since 2012, revealing challenges with natural fossil scarcity and growing dependence on trade partners for attaining energy needs. Augmenting coal imports are driven by low domestic coal prices and concerns over knavish allocation practices involving businesses and government officials (OECD 2015, p.26).

To bolster manufacturing, India has implemented initiatives like "Make in India" and tax reductions, aiming to attract investments (Ministry of Commerce & Industry, 2022). In 2021, the industry sector was assessed to have provided 25.34% of labor places and made up for about 25.9% of the GDP (Statista 2022). Notwithstanding these attempts, the industry sector still encounters plenty of obstacles such as a deficiency of skilled labor, failing infrastructure, and labor laws impacting job creation and wages (Kundu&Mohan, 2011). India's infrastructure remains below par with underutilized railways and waterways, delayed projects, and overloaded ports, necessitating extensive reforms and investments. Furthermore, manufacturing encounters global demand slowdowns and fierce competition from countries like China, compounded by a complex macroeconomic environment (OECD 2015, p.27).

Given its weak infrastructure and logistics management, two principal industry associations, the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), have historically stood as staunch proponents of protectionism to safeguard the interests of domestic businesses. Nevertheless, they also envisaged a relative degree of openness towards unilateral liberalization measures, reflecting diverse interests including multinational corporations and smaller domestic enterprises (Sally, 2011, p.10). Functioning as intermediaries between the private sector and government, the CII and FICCI effectively transform industry feedback gathered from the sectors they represent into actionable insights that shape policy dialogues (Priyadarshi, 2005). At the other front, Trade Unions,

operating across municipal, state, and federal tiers, championed the enhancement of working conditions and worker rights. Through their concerted efforts to raise consciousness about the myriad challenges confronting employees, they strategically shape the legislative and policy terrain to foster more conducive work environments (Mittl, 2023). Despite representing a minority of workers, Trade Unions advocate vehement protectionist positions within various sectors such as power, energy, and infrastructure. Their stronghold lies in stringent employment regulations, rendering it impractical for companies to hire beyond a specific scale (Sally, 2011, p.9).

In services, India has undergone a profound transformation in its export sector over the course of the last twenty years (Downes, 2009, p. 124), driven by the adoption of outsourcing and offshoring practices that have redirected functions from economically advanced nations to lower-cost destinations like India (Chadee et al., 2011, p.197). This growth has been particularly pronounced in IT, IT-enabled services (ITES), and business process outsourcing (BPO), elevating India to a prominent position in the global market and fostering deep integration with Fortune 500 companies (Chadee et al., 2011, p.198). As India's services export sector expanded, it not only reshaped the nation's economy but also exerted a significant influence on its negotiating strategies during trade rounds in WTO.

Interestingly, despite India's historical opposition to services liberalization, its stance evolved during the Doha Round. The adoption of a proactive and assertive approach towards service trade liberalization by the mid-2000s (Ray & Saha, 2009, p.10) was assumably fueled by the economic interests of key domestic players, especially in the IT and ITES sectors. For instance, companies like Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, and Wipro played pivotal roles in advancing India's technological capabilities and export competitiveness (IBEF, 2022c, p.5). TCS, in particular, reached a significant milestone as India's leading IT company, achieving a market capitalization exceeding US\$100 billion, contributing 9.3% to the country's GDP, and commanding 56% of the global outsourcing market (Exim Mitra, 2022). Besides, more recent players such as Reliance, Mittal, and Bharti have been instrumental in broadened export horizons and overseas production investments (Sally, 2011, p.10).

Services Companies (NASSCOM) IT corporations exemplified by the Manufacturers' Association for Information Technology (MAIT) and the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), have displayed an affinity for open-economy principles, notably, in software and business process outsourcing, recognizing the critical role of services in

driving India's economic growth and employment opportunities. Operating within a less regulated policy environment compared to other sectors, they boast extensive ties with foreign multinationals, propelling robust expansions in both exports and foreign investments. Specifically, NASSCOM stands as a preferred associate of the Indian government, engaging in near-daily interactions with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and contributing to the formulation of negotiating papers pertaining to services liberalization (Lilja, 2012, pp.123-124).

Hence, India's government was motivated to actively pursue binding commitments in Mode 1 (cross-border supply) and Mode 4 (movement of natural persons) as part of a strategic effort to secure market access and regulatory stability for country's firms operating in these sectors. Furthermore, the substantial influx of FDI in telecommunications and financial services, alongside the increasing outward FDI (OFDI) in IT and ITES, underscores the significant economic implications involved. Despite Mode 3 (commercial presence) remaining the dominant mode, constituting 57% of India's services trade, there is a noticeable shift towards Modes 1 and 2 due to expanding consumption abroad and the delivery of services on-site. However, Mode 4 (movement of natural persons) continues to represent a minor segment (1%) of India's services trade due to regulatory limitations dictated by member nations (Ray & Saha, 2009, p.10-11; Das, 2006).

Lastly, to gain a comprehensive understanding of whether India's trade policy preferences regarding intellectual property were influenced by domestic actors, it is essential to trace the progression of this sector both before and during Doha Round. For instance, the Patent Act of 1970 showcases India's patent policy evolution, with strong advocacy from domestic industries, namely the pharmaceutical sector. This law allowed only process patents in pharmaceuticals, enabling domestic companies to develop drugs using alternative and cost-effective methods. Consequently, Indian pharmaceutical firms flourished, dominating bulk drugs and formulations production by the early 1990s (Nair, 2008, pp.432-433). As pressure mounted for patent law reform under international agreements like TRIPS, influential domestic players, including pharmaceutical companies like Cipla and industry groups like the Indian Drug Manufacturers Association (IDMA), mobilized against changes introducing product patents. They joined the National Working Group on Patent Laws, formed in 1988 comprising of experts from diverse industries, to lobby against stricter patent standards citing concerns about increased drug prices, limited healthcare access, and negative impacts on domestic industry. Their efforts successfully influenced government policy to retain existing patent laws (Romanna, 2003, p.5).

In the late 1990s, certain segments of India's industry, including bodies like the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and ASSOCHAM, changed perspective by advocating for product patents to align with TRIPS standards and attract FDI (Romanna, 2003, p. 6). This strategic move aimed to boost India's global trade position and attract foreign investment and technology. However, TRIPS implementation in India in 2005 posed significant challenges for its pharmaceutical sector. Transitioning to product patents caused heightened patent litigation, increased costs, delayed generic drug market entry, and escalated R&D expenses, affecting global competitiveness (Pai, 2023, p.1, p.8). TRIPS also raised medication costs and limited access to affordable generics, impacting public health programs like those combating HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (IBEF, 2023). Therefore, India has enough concerns over traditional knowledge and cultural expression protection inadequacies under TRIPS.

As a result, India has historically advocated for flexibility in enforcing intellectual property laws to guarantee access to essential medicines, foster local innovation, and promote technological advancement within the country (IBEF, 2023, p.5) and this stance was clearly affected by Indian pharmaceuticals. Ranked 12th globally in medical goods exports amounting to \$22.44 billion in the 2021 fiscal year (IBEF, 2023, pp.9-11), India's pharmaceutical sector underscores its economic importance and influence. Furthermore, India's production and export of generics that account for 20% of global exports by volume (IBEF, 2023, p.3), only highlight the substantial economic stakes and strategic interests of these influential domestic actors.

Ultimately, upon analyzing the impact of domestic actors on India's international stance and the factors affecting domestic sectors, we noticed that the country adopted a particularly prudent approach during the conclusion of FTAs. India's primary focus was on gaining market access in goods trade, with subsequent expansion into services and investments, driven by vulnerabilities in different economic segments and institutional capacity constraints, thus displaying a sort of learning-by-doing approach in regional trade. Political directives, including strong support from political parties, trade unions, and business interests, have manifestly influenced such trade policies (Singh, 2015, p.6). For instance, the ASEAN-India agreement of 2010 exhibits a relatively shallow nature due to exceptions for tariff reductions, stringent rules of origin, and the absence of provisions related to competition and government procurement (RTA India-ASEAN, 2010), indicating opposition or resistance from certain domestic actors to deeper integration measures.

India's engagement in FTAs with advanced economies like Japan and South Korea was intended to stimulate increased FDI and leverage its comparative advantage in services, especially in relation to skilled professionals, for deployment in these countries (Singh, 2015, p.5). However, this effort has encountered challenges, such as an "inverted duty structure," wherein final goods face lower duties than their components, contributing to the country's widened trade deficit, exemplified by increased imports from South Korea under the CEPA (Singh, 2014). Concerns over trade deficits with China and the impact on domestic industries limited the acceptability of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement from the outset (Wicaksono, 2021). Organized protests against this FTA led by groups like the Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM), associated with the influential Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), highlights strong political signals to the Modi government regarding the potential costs of antagonizing core constituencies, particularly in key sectors that feared unfair competition and harm to local producers. This also reflects a shift in India's trade policy towards decoupling, with domestic protectionist interests gaining prominence and sabotaging the country's outward-oriented economic visions (Palit, 2019).

In conclusion, the evaluation of hypothesis H1b, asserting that India's trade policy preferences during the Doha Round were driven by the economic interests and costs of key domestic players within the framework of Putnam's two-level games, presents compelling evidence substantiating this proposition. Since India operates under complex political system, defined by federalism and diverse institutions, decision-making processes are influenced by multiple factors. The federal structure allocates significant authority to the central government, headed by the Prime Minister and Cabinet, enabling them to formulate national policies, including those related to trade. This central authority is supported by key ministries like the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Ministry of Commerce (MoC) that are notably accountable to the non-state actors within industry and services as well as farmers, ensuring that the national interest is defined by the needs and preferences of these influential domestic stakeholders.

Thus, the analysis reveals that in the agricultural sector, the MoA pursued protectionist policies to safeguard food security and rural livelihoods, while industry associations such as the CII and the FICCI advocated for protectionism in manufacturing to support domestic businesses what correspond to its protectionist stance on international stage in these sectors. In services, TCS, along with industry bodies like NASSCOM and MAIT, strategically responded to emerging global opportunities by capitalizing on IT-related services trade. They focused on securing market access,

fostering international partnerships, and lobbying for favourable policies to drive India's competitiveness, which results in promotion of mainly liberalist perspective in DDA. Furthermore, the development of India's intellectual property laws, particularly in the pharmaceutical sector, illustrates how domestic industries like pharmaceutical companies and industry groups influenced India's position to ensure access to essential medicines and promote local innovation, leading to a mixed stand internationally. Additionally, India's in FTAs and RTAs represents a strategic approach driven by a careful balance of domestic challenges, institutional constraints, and the influence of diverse political actors within the country. Given the array of domestic perspectives, India's negotiators face constrained bargaining options with international counterparts, focusing on internal factors. This often presents India as an obstructive player in trade negotiations as its policymakers seek to discern what are exact domestic preferences of its sectors of economy and their importance.

4.3. Role of concerns about redistribution and recognition

After examining the influence of domestic economic considerations on India's decision-making in international sphere, we pivot to explore the socio-political factor through Nel's Perspective. This inquiry is anchored in the second hypothesis (*H2b*), suggesting that *India's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by its concerns of redistribution and recognition*. Referring to Nel's framework, India's diplomatic posture is illuminated as deeply rooted in its aspirations for fairer redistribution and recognition within the global political economy. India perceives the existing disparities in wealth and power as glaring injustices and endeavors to address them through dialogue and negotiation, particularly with the industrialized North (Nel, 2010, p.953). Viewed through India's lens, recognition embodies a dual imperative. Firstly, India advocates for the full integration and equitable participation of developing nations in multilateral institutions, aiming to secure respect on the global stage. Secondly, India champions the acknowledgment of the unique developmental needs and yearning of developing countries, challenging the historical marginalization of Third World concerns in international discourse (Nel, 2010, p.955). Hence, this section seeks to thoroughly examine the stated premise, dissecting its logical ramifications by scrutinizing India's negotiation behavior, and aligning it with India's apprehension regarding redistribution and recognition. To complement this context, India's shifting identity and its adherence to evolving norms will be explored.

According to Kumar (2023), states' preferences and actions are rooted in the identities they construct through "social practice". Essentially, foreign policy strategies play a pivotal role in shaping and reshaping one's identity, illuminating the complex interplay between India's global positioning and its evolving state (Krishna, 1999, p.4), therefore it is our starting point. For the past decades, India was clearly facing a challenge with its numerous identities, leading to uncertainty in its foreign policy as they frequently clash and vie for dominance. These changing perceptions, both at home and abroad, shape how policymakers understand the nation's interests, making decision-making more complex. Notions like "emerging great power" or "leader of the developing world" imply diverse interests, requiring policymakers to adeptly manage these complex identity dynamics to reconcile conflicting priorities (Smith, 2012, p.12). While India asserts itself as an emerging power regionally and globally, it still occupies a secondary position compared to China, a dominant rising force (Sally, 2011, p.2). Nevertheless, India's enduring image as the voice of the voiceless dominates, as it continues its endeavors to cultivate alliances with developing nations, extend gestures of cooperation to smaller members, accommodate instances of free-riding, and vigorously advocate for global justice and fairness, occasionally placing these priorities above its own national interests (Narlikar, 2008).

What regards India's ambition to be a custodian of pluralistic global civilization, it is hindered by concerns of 'status anxiety' with respect to China and an unresolved territorial dispute (Pardesi, 2007, p.225). Additionally, India's history of colonization and anti-imperialist sentiment further contributes to its hesitancy to compromise and cooperate with more powerful global actors (Narlikar, 2006, p.72). Consequently, India tends to impede rather than facilitate multilateral negotiations, primarily due to preoccupations surrounding national sovereignty and Third Worldism (Ford, 2002). Accordingly, in trade discussion, India is frequently labelled as a 'troublemaker,' what reflects its longstanding aversion to the global trading system (Efstathopoulos & Kelly, 2014, p.1). India's WTO approach is cautious and defensive, emphasizing reform over maximizing existing benefits, which sometimes contrasts with its self-perception as a growing power within the organization. India mainly employs a 'distributive strategy,' refusing concessions and making threats, rather than integrative approaches. Even with pragmatism elsewhere, India's narrative restricts its flexibility in forming coalitions within the WTO, since it depends on the strength of collective action as much as it does on its own individual leadership to push forward its demands (Narlikar, 2022, p. 156).

Thus, India's engagement in the WTO exemplifies a transformation in its trade identity, transitioning from being seen as the 'protectionist Other' in the previous Rounds to embracing the role of a 'multilateral trader,' a concept identified as 'complex social learning' by Jane Ford (2002, p.115), which aptly reflect India's adaptive response to evolving global dynamics in trade negotiations. Dating back to its inception in the GATT in 1947, India's trajectory in trade negotiations has been characterized by complexity, as it initially championed the interests of developing nations while holding uncertainty about the impact of trade on its development agenda (Srinivasan & Tendulkar 2003). However, the launch of the Uruguay Round in 1986 initiated a new phase, compelling India despite its reluctance and disputes to adjust its trade policies from being inward-oriented and to pledge allegiance to multilateral agreements (Sharma, 2023, p.4). As a result, India's entry into the WTO in 1995 marked a deliberate shift towards embracing multilateral trade disciplines, as demonstrated by independent reforms initiated in 1991 to liberalize its economy and align with the global market.

India's commitments under the WTO, encompassed various fronts, including adjustments in exchange-rate policies, liberalization of foreign investment regulations, and reductions in import tariffs. Within the WTO framework, India committed to significant tariff reductions across numerous sectors, binding approximately 67% of its tariff lines. Nevertheless, despite continuous efforts, the pace of reforms in India has been sluggish. In a bid to defer the removal of its current quantitative restrictions (QRs) on roughly 2,300 tariff lines, predominantly encompassing consumer goods, India resorted to invoking Article XVIII(B) of the GATT, which pertains to the balance of payments provision (Srinivasan & Tendulkar 2003, p.85). Additionally, India made specific commitments under agreements such as the Agreement on Trade-related Investment Measures (TRIMs) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), with the goal of promoting transparency and facilitating a conducive environment for trade and investment (Mattoo & Stern 2003, p. 19). Pressured by the WTO's Dispute Settlement Mechanism (DSM) following a complaint from the United States, India has amended its domestic patent laws to comply with the TRIPS agreement (Srinivasan & Tendulkar 2003, p.85). As part of the Information Technology Agreement, India joined 43 other countries in eliminating tariffs on various information technology-related products by 2005, offering zero duty on 217 information technology-related tariff lines. Despite making significant progress, challenges persist, particularly in sectors like

telecommunications and banking, where restrictions on foreign investment remain (Mattoo & Stern 2003, p.70).

Evidently, India has significantly liberalized its trade policy since 1991, but further efforts were needed to address persistently high tariff barriers and constraints on importing certain consumer goods (Srinivasan, 2001). Hence, wavered to endorse the launch of the new Doha Round due to unaddressed prior commitments and perceived inequities in the global trade regime, India eventually acquiesced, emphasizing the need for inclusivity, and recognizing developmental disparities among nations. At the 2001 Doha ministerial meeting, India vehemently objected to the inclusion of "non-trade" issues, advocating instead for a multilateral trading system that prioritizes the interests of all nations, particularly those in the developing world. India's influence on the Doha work program design is evident, tackling crucial themes for its economic growth, despite opposition to certain issues (Sharma & Bhogal, 2017, pp.7-8). Post-9/11, the geopolitical climate pressured India to shift from its nay-positions towards more active engagement in trade negotiations (Panagariya 2010, p. 112). Notwithstanding criticisms, India's proactive use of international institutions post-Doha indicates a growing understanding of leveraging such platforms (Narlikar, 2007). This exhibits the country's gradual acceptance of the normative principles of the GATT/WTO system as the appropriate framework for international trade governance.

It further observed in WTO DSM where India as a complainant, a respondent and a Third Party actively engaged in approximately 90 cases among the total 480 cases since the establishment of the WTO (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2023). Leveraging agreements such as the Anti-Dumping Agreement (ADA), the Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) agreement, and the Textiles and Clothing agreement, India addresses unfair trade practices impacting developing nations (Turkey, 2019, p.27). In its role as a complainant, New Dheli has raised concerns against high tariff barriers and domestic subsidies in developed countries, highlighting its commitment to addressing redistribution issues within the global trading framework (DS547, DS243, DS233). Conversely, as a respondent, India defends its developmental policies against allegations of unfair trade practices, emphasizing the importance of equitable treatment and recognition of its developmental priorities (DS360, DS430, DS585). Through frequent citation of GATT provisions pertaining to Most Favored Nation status, anti-dumping measures, and national treatment, India underline the necessity of transparency and information

exchange among WTO members to mitigate trade disputes and ensure equitable outcomes (Tirkey, 2019, p.27).

Being aware of prevailing power imbalances between developed and developing nations, New Delhi has proactively taken part in numerous cases involving key trade players like the United States and the European Union, highlighting the pivotal role of the DSS as a structured and rule-based platform for tackling trade disputes. For instance, in cases such as United States — Certain Measures on Steel and Aluminum Products (DS547), India asserted inconsistencies with some of the provisions of WTO agreements and emphasized equitable treatment and recognition of its interests in international trade. Similarly, in India — Export Related Measures (DS541) case India has actively defended its policies aimed at promoting exports against allegations raised by the United States, indicating their role in fostering economic growth and development within the country. Furthermore, in the case European Union and a Member State — Seizure of Generic Drugs in Transit (DS480), India, has challenged the European Union and the Netherlands at the WTO over the confiscation of generic drugs in transit through Europe, highlighting the need for equitable treatment and acknowledgment of India's pharmaceutical sector, as well as the distribution of vital medicines to developing nations. What is more, India's proactive stance in dispute settlement proceedings reflects its preference for negotiated settlements, often demonstrating willingness to settle or withdraw disputes during the consultation stage (Tirkey, 2019, p.28). Advocating for reforms to the DSM, India prioritizes maintaining stability and predictability in the multilateral trading system while safeguarding the interests of developing countries and least developed countries (LDCs). Emphasizing fairness and equity, India promotes a rules-based approach within the WTO framework to manage power imbalances and ensure equal participation among member states (Tirkey, 2019, p.31)

In fact, throughout negotiations, India persistently reiterates the importance of addressing equity and development concerns within the Round. India advocates for adherence to past agreements while actively seeking to overcome prevailing inequalities, insisting that any appeals for enhanced market access must coincide with overarching developmental objectives while refusing to allow the mandate to be manipulated for mercantilist purposes (WT/MIN(09)/ST/35). Recognizing the varying levels of development among nations, India emphasizes the need to prevent equal regulations from unfairly burdening less developed countries. India's mandate is clear: rectifying the 'development deficit' inherited from past Rounds and contributing to a rules-

based global order that promotes both free trade and equity. Development is not solely peripheral but central to India's vision of the global trading system, aiming to provide access to basic necessities and dignity for all individuals. India's participation in the WTO is guided by a commitment to respecting the development strategies of fellow developing nations while acknowledging the significance of allowing each country to pursue its own path to development. India vehemently opposes trade commitments that worsen poverty and unemployment, asserting that the aspirations of the majority must not be overshadowed by the ambitions of a minority (WT/MIN(05)/ST/17).

For this reason, the provisions for *special and differential treatment* constitute the rightful prerogative of developing WTO member states, enabling them to safeguard their developmental interests. Under the SDT principle, developing countries are accorded extended timelines for the reduction of domestic support and export subsidies. The Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures explicitly designates India as one of the countries entitled to SDT (WTO, 1995, p. 272). Identifying itself as a developing nation, India has progressively aligned its domestic trade policies with WTO stipulations. This strategic approach has been pursued to alleviate poverty and foster integration into the multilateral trading framework while retaining the necessary policy flexibility to support sustainable economic advancement. In 2010, India successfully met the WTO's prescribed criteria, culminating in the conclusion of the eight-year transitional period following the attainment of export competitiveness (WTO, 2011). Consequently, during the eleventh WTO conference in 2017, the U.S. Trade Representative Lighthizer urged developing countries, India included, to relinquish its developing country status (WT/MIN(17)/ST/128). However, India staunchly defended its position, underscoring that it continues to significantly lag developed economies, as substantiated by an array of economic and trade metrics (WT/GC/W/765/Rev.2, para 1.1). Furthermore, it emphasized the undeniable fact that more than 600 million individuals in India still grapple with poverty (Pandit, 2019).

Nowadays, India finds itself under mounting political pressure, not only from the United States but also from the European Union. The EU argues that India, as a major developing economy, should not benefit from the SDT privileges typically reserved for smaller developing and least developed nations. Consequently, the EU proposed introducing a 'differentiation' mechanism among developing countries within the WTO, aimed at distinguishing between them based on economic size and level of development, what triggered India's response (Jose, 2019).

India has shown a commitment to engaging in WTO reforms and upholding the WTO's role in promoting structured global trade (Financial Express, 2021). However, it also emphasizes the importance of considering disparities in economic development levels and the limited capacities of developing WTO member nations, consistent with its longstanding trade policy preferences. For example, New Delhi highlights the necessity of adopting a sector-specific approach to SDT within the WTO, since developing countries like India transition from being net exporters to importers of certain goods (Khatri & Singhal, 2020). This is evident in the period between 2013 and 2017, where exports decreased from \$43 billion to \$33 billion, and imports rose from \$15 billion to \$25 billion (The Economist Times, 2017).

Thus, in practically every ministerial conference of the WTO, India's concerns regarding redistribution and recognition were prominently emphasized, especially for agricultural sector. In Cancún, India asserted the critical importance of addressing the disparity in subsidies provided to farmers in developed countries, underscoring the need for fairness in trade negotiations and the adverse impact on the livelihoods of farmers in developing nations (WT/MIN(03)/ST/7). Similarly, in Hong Kong, India stressed the urgency of addressing the "development deficit", advocating fair treatment and proposing measures like Special Products and a Special Safeguard to protect vulnerable sectors (WT/MIN(05)/ST/17). This agricultural protective stance mirrors India's concern for redistribution, aiming to promote fair competition in global trade. Besides, during the ninth ministerial conference, New Delhi emphasized the necessity of a comprehensive and fair Bali package, expressing dissatisfaction with the present agricultural package and lingering trade facilitation matters. Criticizing draft texts for their lack of binding commitments from developed nations, particularly regarding cotton subsidies, export competition, and duty-free quota-free provisions, India demonstrates the imperative of rectifying historical trade imbalances and uphold the development mandate of the Doha Round, especially concerning food security and rural development. Highlighting the non-negotiable nature of food security, India called for backing the G-33 proposal to secure a lasting solution and ensure strong protection against challenges to WTO rules (WT/MIN(13)/ST/22).

Likewise, in the services sector, India accentuates its role in propelling economic growth and alleviating poverty. By advocating for liberalization in professional services trade, India seeks acknowledgment of the value of its skilled workforce and strives to secure greater access to overseas markets (WTO, 2015, para 16), thus fostering redistribution of opportunities and

resources to bolster its economy. In NAMA negotiations, India's stance reveals concerns regarding both recognition and redistribution. India draws attention to the disparities in proposed tariff cuts, which disproportionately affect developing countries, indicating a need for equitable treatment and recognition of the importance of fair outcomes in trade agreements. Additionally, India addresses intellectual property issues, highlighting the imbalance in the TRIPs Agreement and its impact on traditional knowledge and community rights. By advocating for negotiations on the relationship between TRIPs and the Convention on Bio-Diversity, India aims to ensure recognition of the significance of safeguarding its intellectual heritage and addressing issues of bio-piracy, hence promoting a more equitable distribution of benefits from intellectual property rights (WT/MIN(05)/ST/17).

Nonetheless, although India has historically advocated for multilateral liberalization efforts, the sluggish progress and limited outcomes of the Doha Round prompted it to pursue RTAs and PTAs as alternative avenues for economic integration (Ramdasi, 2010, p.6). This quest was motivated by India's acknowledgment of the need to accelerate its economic growth and reinforce its integration with the global economy, particularly under its 'Look East Policy' framework (Singh, 2015, p.4). The country's engagement in bilateral and regional trade negotiations around South Asia and Southeast Asia exemplifies a strategic three-pronged PTA approach aiming to offset losses in the goods sector by capitalizing on gains in services or within goods, mitigate sectoral losses due to tariff reduction through improved market access in areas of potential advantage, or detect India's peculiar interests in partner countries, be they commercial, regional development, or political in nature (Chaisse et al., 2011, p.415). Additionally, India employs distributive hard balancing tactic to expand its influence beyond South Asia, positioning itself as a key player in the wider Asian region (Nel, 2010, p.959).

For example, India's proactive negotiation of comprehensive FTAs with East Asian counterparts like Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia, and Japan, stresses its aspiration to attract foreign investment, technology transfers, and skilled manpower, while integrating into East Asian production networks in manufacturing (Karmakar, 2013, pp.4-5). Another evidence is India's participation in agreements such as the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement (AIFTA) and the India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) where it demonstrates its strategic objective to enhance international recognition by deepening economic ties with core partners (Singh, 2015). These agreements not only signal India's commitment to global trade

integration but also reflect its concerns regarding redistribution. Efforts to address socio-economic disparities and safeguard domestic industries, as seen in agreements like the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISLFTA) and the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), underscore India's commitment to fortifying market access possibilities and balancing trade liberalization with inclusive growth and equitable distribution of benefits (Faisal & Purna, 2012).

Considered every aspect, India, as a founding member of the WTO, stands firmly committed to driving reforms within the organization to set up a fairer global trading system. Recognizing the critical importance of trade in advancing the economic development aspirations of developing nations and LDCs, India espouses prioritization of development-centric reforms within the WTO framework, while simultaneously emphasizing the imperative of preserving the WTO's pivotal position in shaping global trade amidst the increasing impact of free trade agreements (WT/TPR/M/403). This commitment extends to rectifying imbalances in trade rules and bolstering SDT provisions to better accommodate the needs of developing Members and LDCs. Additionally, India highlights the significance of enforcing laws and regulations aligned with WTO rules, maintaining consensus-based decision-making, respecting the principles outlined in Art II, III, IX, and X of the Marrakesh Agreement, safeguarding the core structure of the WTO against alterations by Joint Statement Initiatives (JSIs) (WT/GC/W/778/Rev.3). A paramount objective for India is the urgent reinstatement of the WTO's Appellate Body, essential for preserving a fair and efficient dispute settlement mechanism. Moreover, India stresses the necessity for immediate action to address vulnerabilities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes championing a temporary TRIPS waiver to facilitate equitable access to COVID-19 treatments, acknowledging the critical need for swift and affordable solutions during this global crisis. India demonstrates its dedication to inclusive globalization by supporting LDCs through market access schemes and capacity-building initiatives within the WTO framework (WT/GC/W/778/Rev.3).

Conclusively, the comprehensive assessment in this section, firmly anchored in Nel's perspective, unequivocally corroborates the validity of our hypothesis (H2b), positing that India's trade policy preferences in the Doha Round were driven by its concerns regarding redistribution and recognition. Examining India's negotiation behavior and involvement in the WTO, along with its sectoral preferences and evolving identity, reveals a clear commitment to addressing historical injustices against developing nations (The Hindu, 2021). This sentiment reverberates strongly in

India's vocal stance during WTO ministerial conferences, demonstrating a resolute effort to rectify disparities through an assertive distributive hard balancing approach and advocacy for developmental agenda. India's overarching objective is to alter the treatment of developing countries within the global community, viewing this as fundamental to the redistribution of wealth and power (Nel, 2010, p.973).

As observed, in the agricultural sector, India consistently champions equitable treatment, addressing disparities in subsidies and trade practices impacting farmers in developing nations. Likewise, during services negotiations, India endeavors to gain recognition for its skilled workforce and secure access to international markets, facilitating the redistribution of opportunities and resources. In discussions regarding NAMA and TRIPS, India's focus remains on securing fair treatment and recognition of its developmental priorities, underlining the significance of equitable outcomes in trade agreements and intellectual property rights. Moreover, India's vigorous engagement in WTO dispute settlement cases, particularly in defending itself against allegations of unfair trade practices, alongside its defense of special and differential treatment provisions, and its pursuit of regional trade agreements further support the hypothesis. India's consistent acknowledgment of WTO rulings manifest its trust in the fairness and impartiality of the DSM, stressing India's dedication to upholding a rules-based international trading system.

In summary, this chapter has provided a comprehensive analysis of India's role in the stalemated Doha Round, exploring its trade foreign policy stance and the underlying factors that shaped its decisions and behavior throughout this period of negotiations. Responding to the first research question (RQ1b): *What were India's trade policy preferences in the Doha Round?* We indicated exact preferences of the country across sectors such as agriculture, NAMA, services and intellectual property. Then we delved deeper into the factors driving India's preferences by testing our proposed hypotheses (H1b, H2b) and exploring the second research question (RQ2b): *What factors explain India's preferences in the Doha Round?* By applying Putman's two-level games approach, we detected key domestic players and their economic interests and costs that indeed affect India's trade policy, thus, highlighting the interplay between domestic and international levels. Additionally, leveraging Nel's perspective, we uncovered that India's international image and associated aspirations within the WTO, aiming to address historical injustices and promote a more equitable global trading system, were fundamentally rooted in its concerns regarding redistribution and recognition.

CONCLUSION

The present thesis explored the role, preferences, interests, and foreign economic strategies of India and China within the context of the WTO, with a specific focus on their participation in the Doha Round negotiations spanning from 2001 to 2021. Our study was guided by the aim to understand the evolving dynamics of global economic governance amid the rise of these two prominent emerging powers. To fulfill this objective, we opted for the case study method due to its inherent suitability in conducting rigorous empirical examinations of specific events. We pledged to identify trade policy preferences of each country during Doha Round and attempted to determine which factors explains these preferences. We drew our research on the theoretical framework encompassing key concepts from liberalism and constructivism. Specifically, to address our second research question, we elaborated 2 hypotheses leveraging Putnam's two-level games approach and Nel's interdisciplinary perspective on redistribution and recognition.

The first chapter laid the foundation for our research, we have examined the trajectory of India and China within the WTO over the past two decades, highlighting their pivotal roles in shaping international trade policy amidst their expanding economic prowess and global aspirations. We discovered that emerging traders have disrupted the unipolar world by insisting on the recognition of developing countries as equal partners in global decision-making. Both countries proved to be actively engaged within the WTO framework to advance their national interests. Next, in our analytical chapters 3 and 4 we directed our attention to RQ1 and uncovered significant insights into the trade policy preferences of India and China during the Doha Round.

Through an examination of ministerial conference statements in 3.1 and 4.1, we observed that both countries' trade policy preferences reflected a complex blend of offensive and defensive stances across sectors of interests, namely, agriculture, NAMA, services, and intellectual property. For instance, in agriculture, China emphasized liberalization from developed nations while supporting protectionist measures for developing countries. It sought tariff-cutting measures beneficial to its self-interest but with specific coefficients for developed versus developing countries in NAMA. Initially opposing sectoral agreements for services and viewing certain issues negatively in alignment with its defensive self-interest, Beijing later acknowledged the increasing significance of the tertiary sector and shifted towards favoring a gradual liberalization while maintaining the status quo. In terms of TRIPS, China prioritized intellectual property protection, enforcement against counterfeiting, and international cooperation while advocating for reforms in

in related policies and for flexibility in TRIPS provisions to ensure accessibility of essential medicines for developing countries.

Meanwhile, India has retained a protective trade policy, prioritizing defence in this sector. It voted for market access in developed countries and special treatment for developing nations through SSM, advocated strongly for the reduction of agricultural subsidies offered by developed nations in agricultural field. Its stance in NAMA negotiations was defensive due to concerns about non-tariff barriers hindering exports from developing nations. New Delhi firmly opposed alterations to proposed tariff formulas, asserting that such changes could undermine progress achieved in negotiations. In services, India advocated for reforms and liberalization to stimulate growth while safeguarding essential public services. Its primary objectives included advancing cross-border service delivery (Mode 1) and facilitating the movement of skilled professionals across borders (Mode 4). Regarding TRIPS, India took a tough stance on intellectual property rights to protect public health interests, advocating for changes to TRIPS regulations to facilitate access to medicines and promote technology transfer for developing nations.

Following this phase, we aimed to explore factors explaining our findings and address RQ2 by examining socio-political considerations for a fair and balanced global trading system, echoing concerns about recognition and redistribution, alongside domestic economic factors like the needs, interests, and costs of domestic agents. Hypothesizing that China and India's trade policy preferences were influenced by domestic players' economic benefits and costs (sections 3.2 and 4.2), we applied Putnam's two-level game model, focusing on internal dynamics to assess if domestic actors exerted pressure on the government to align policies with their interests. We divided the hypothesis into H1a (China) and H1b (India). For the China case, we analyzed the country's political structure and identified key domestic actors shaping trade policy and affecting decision-making process, including bureaucracies like MOFCOM, NDRC, SOEs, and influential figures within the Chinese Communist Party. We then examined domestic economic interests and costs in agriculture, NAMA, services, and intellectual property sectors to understand drivers behind China's trade policies. Our goal was to assess the extent to which China's trade policies reflect desirable outcomes of these domestic sectors/players (Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, & Smith, 1999). As supporting evidence, the RTAs and PTAs were analyzed to track the interaction between domestic and international levels.

It was found that the central role of the CCP in decision-making within China's authoritarian structure led to nuanced international positions, despite significant influence from bureaucracies and SOEs. Reconciling conflicting domestic interests was shaped by ministry power and the government's focus on 'economic security' over 'liberalization', aligned with CCP objectives of regime stability, territorial integrity, and strategic interests. In agriculture, the MOA advocated for protective measures benefiting developing countries, driven by concerns about domestic social stability tied to rural economies. However, certain international positions, such as advocating for agricultural liberalization by developed countries, did not align neatly with specific domestic constituencies, suggesting potential misalignments between international preferences and domestic economic motivations. Likewise, in the services sector, Beijing's evolving international positions towards gradual liberalization recognized sector importance but didn't fully address domestic concerns from service providers about competitiveness and market access in international negotiations, revealing conflicts of interest between domestic economic priorities and broader CCP objectives. The evaluation of TRIPS showed China's emphasis on IP protection in line with fostering innovation and growth. While stance may be formally correct, considering China's substantial violations of these rights, we must acknowledge that China's preferences might be at odds with its actual behavior regarding IPRs. Despite concerns from the NDRC, China's focus on market access in NAMA and FTAs reflected support for liberalization while balancing domestic interests, as evident in agreements like CAFTA and AUCFTA. This analysis partly approved the hypothesis and highlighted the interconnection between China's domestic economic interests, CCP decision-making, and broader strategic goals in shaping trade policy preferences during the DDA.

Proceeding with the India case, we utilized the same approach. Initially, we concisely studied political structure of the country following the identification and analysis of the stakeholders within India involved in trade policy formulation and implementation. This includes government ministries (e.g., Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Agriculture), industry associations (e.g., CII, FICCI, NASSCOM), and influential companies (e.g., TCS, pharmaceutical firms) which function in "holding-together federalism" environment (Bardhan, 2010, p.3, p. 14). Then examined each sector of interest to detect the motivations of these domestic actors and the degree to which their preferences reflected in the international arena. As a result, the H1b was approved due to the ensuing evidence.

It was discovered that in agricultural sector, MoA advocated for protectionist policies to safeguard food security and rural livelihoods, reflecting the interests of farmers and addressing concerns related to agricultural productivity, self-sufficiency, and rural development. In NAMA, industry associations like the CII and the FICCI supported protectionist measures to safeguard domestic businesses from international competition, emphasizing the need for infrastructure development and skilled labor. In services, companies in the IT and ITES industry, such as TCS and industry bodies like NASSCOM, lobbied for market access and regulatory stability to capitalize on global outsourcing opportunities, driving India's competitiveness in service trade. Domestic pharmaceutical companies and industry groups influenced India's stance on intellectual property laws to ensure access to essential medicines, promote local innovation, and balance the interests of public health with industry competitiveness.

Subsequently, we sought to validate whether India's and China's preferences in the Doha Round were in fact driven by their concerns regarding redistribution and recognition, drawing on Nel's interdisciplinary perspective in sections 3.3. and 4.3. Guided by constructivist principles, we explored the multiple identities held by these emerging powers that shape their behavior and preferences as they pave the path within global economic governance. We then traced China's WTO commitments and India's prior engagements, along with their participation in dispute settlement cases to understand the rules and norms shaping their self-perceptions (Jackson & Sorensen, 2013, p. 216). This process aimed to reveal their pursuit of recognition and redistribution, characterized by "self-reinforcing regularities" and alignment or misalignment with societal standards (Hoffmann, 2010). Furthermore, we analyzed various sources including media, official websites, initiatives, strategies, proposed reforms, and interests in FTAs, exploring the conditions under which they were willing to engage. Overall analysis sought to assess the extent to which our hypothesis aligned with the countries' concerns regarding redistribution and recognition as a quest for justice. Specifically, we aimed to understand their desire to be acknowledged by other global powers (Ricoeur, 2005) and achieve fair redistribution of power and wealth through adequate representation and involvement in accessing benefits and influence within the existing international order (Schrim, 2019, p. 116).

As a result of the analysis, China's behavior during the Doha Round reveals compelling evidence supporting the assertion H2a. China's pursuit of fairer redistribution of trade benefits was not just about material gains but represented a strategic diplomatic effort to sustain domestic

growth and advocate for global economic reforms, aiming to reshape the international economic order. China's identification as a developing country within the WTO aligns with Nel's vision, emphasizing unique developmental needs and aspirations of the Global South beyond economic prowess (Nel, 2010). However occasionally, it also presented demands contrasting developing countries positions. The quest for regained national glory, motivated by historical humiliations, has incited China to assert itself as an independent power autonomously pursuing its interests, irrespective of alignment with developing or developed nations (Garver, 1993, p.5).

The transition from a tentative participant to a proactive player in the WTO shows China's strategic use of the system to safeguard its interests. For instance, China asserts that maintaining the WTO's principle SDT is essential for fostering a fair global trading system (Lee, 2019). Additionally, China's engagement in dispute settlement cases, participation in trade agreements, and efforts to bridge global economic inequalities through WTO reform reflect a comprehensive approach in line with its obligations. Specifically, China's advocacy for reduced subsidies and tariffs in agriculture and non-agricultural market access aimed to benefit developing nations. China's services trade strategy emphasized quality-driven exports and global integration, facilitating market access for developing countries. Moreover, China's proactive stance on intellectual property stressed its pursuit of recognition and influence within global governance frameworks, addressing trade distortions and unequal redistribution effects.

As for India, analysis of H2b proved strong validity. New Delhi's commitment to its concerns regarding redistribution and recognition was prominently demonstrated through India's vocal and assertive stance during WTO ministerial conferences. It reflected a determined effort to address disparities through a distributive hard balancing approach and advocacy for a developmental agenda. India's overarching objective is to reshape the treatment of developing countries in the global arena, viewing this transformation as essential for a more equitable redistribution of wealth and power (Nel, 2010, p. 973). From championing equitable treatment in agriculture to seeking recognition for its skilled workforce in services, India consistently emphasizes the importance of fair outcomes and recognition of developmental priorities in international trade agreements. Moreover, India's active engagement in WTO dispute settlement cases and pursuit of regional trade agreements further underscores its commitment to addressing issues of redistribution and recognition within the global trading system.

To conclude, the global political landscape is undergoing a significant transformation, shifting increasingly from west to east. China and India, as the world's most populous nations, demonstrate a commitment to multilateralism while also exploring alternative approaches like preferential bilateral agreements or regional accords to balance their internal and external determinants influencing trade strategies. Both countries are actively seeking to enhance their international reputation, aiming to assert themselves not only regionally but also as major global players, advancing strategic goals and national interests in the process. China and India are not merely objects but subjects of globalization processes, shaping and expanding them with their unique characteristics, and striving to establish their own norms and rules of the game. Emerging economies advocate for a different vision of global governance, centered on cooperation and mutual benefit, emphasizing the importance of respecting all nations' rights to chart their own development paths (Ly, 2021, p. 4). Consequently, globalization and the ascent of China and India mutually reinforce and accelerate each other's trajectories.

Thus, our findings shed light on the complexities inherent in international negotiations and the sophisticated interrelations between domestic and international factors influencing state behavior. The rise of India and China within the WTO highlights the need for the organization to adapt to evolving global trade dynamics by accommodating diverse interests, particularly those of emerging economies seeking greater recognition and redistribution. The WTO's effectiveness will depend on its ability to address developmental concerns while ensuring equitable treatment and a level playing field for all members. Moreover, India and China's assertive engagement signifies broader transformations in world politics, reflecting the growing influence of non-Western powers in shaping global economic norms. This shift necessitates a reevaluation of traditional power structures and diplomatic strategies, with implications for international cooperation and competition in the 21st century. Moving forward, continued research in this area will be essential for comprehending the evolving dynamics of global economic governance and the impact of emerging powers on the international economic system.

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**FACULTY
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MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT

**India and China in the world economic governance:
the case of the WTO**

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INTRODUCTION

One of the pivotal factors determining the development dynamics of international relations system at the present stage is the entry of "The Emerging Asian Giants", India and China, into "the world politics proscenium". Rapid and sustainable economic growth allows these states to systematically strengthen their influence in the international arena through an active foreign policy, both at the regional and global levels.

Within the framework of the Doha Round of the WTO, India and China are taking an active position in the block of developing economies on issues of reducing the level of state support for agriculture by developed countries, cutting the level of tariff protection in the agricultural market, the possibility of obtaining tariff-free and quota-free access for their goods on the markets of developed countries, etc.

Negotiations on the liberalization of global agricultural products have been going on for 20 years due to the problem of non-agricultural market access (NAMA). Developed countries want more access to the industrial sector of developing countries, and the latter, in turn, fear that this may lead to a decrease in economic growth.

The relevance of the research lies in the duration of the Doha round of multilateral trade negotiations, where India and China play a major role in protecting the interests of countries with emerging economies.

RESEARCH AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION

The aim of the research is to study the emerging economies of India and China, their trade preferences in the Doha Round negotiations within WTO and provide insight into the possible political implications of the rise of emerging economies for a liberal world order.

The following research questions are addressed: 1. What were the trade policy preferences of India and China in the Doha Round? and 2. What explains the preferences of India and China in the Doha Round?

LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Currently, there is a huge amount of literature on the role of emerging economies, their participation in the WTO and beyond, and their ability to influence global economic governance, which can serve as a theoretical and conceptual basis for this study. In our review, we highlight the most relevant to our master's thesis works of Barnett M. and Duvall R. (2005); Lake, David A. (2009); Moravcsik, A. (1997); Nel P. (2010); Odell, J. S. (2011); Parizek M. (2019); Putnam

Robert D. (1988); Wendt (1994), Michalopoulos C (2014), Polaski S. (2006), Grinin L (2013), Narlikar (2006), Scrivivasan T. (2006), He X. (2016) and others.

To begin with, Barnett M. and Duvall R. are convinced that the current changes taking place in the institutions of global economic governance are a reflection of structural changes in the distribution of economic power between states (Barnett M. and Duvall R. 2005). Scholars argue that international institutions are created by great powers to promote and defend their interests and advantageous positions while regulating trade. In examining the global trade regime and the failed Doha round on trade liberalization, we point out that in the area of multilateral cooperation, the interests of states are the main contribution to the political system of global governance. Thus, Michal Parizek in his work speculates about the extent to which the WTO as a political system is able to ensure: the interests' reflection of the member states; aggregation of member states interests; and timely decision making (Michal Parizek, 2019). In assessing the strength of the international market, David A. Lake stresses that states which benefit from trade liberalization, enter into tough bargaining with the purpose of opening up industrialized countries' markets and are ready to venture negotiating failure in order to maximize their leverages. He argues that none of the states could influence international supply and demand, emphasizing that tariffs do not have to be optimal to have a profound impact not only on those who decide to apply them, but also on the objectives of the policy. The political scholar also recognizes that open economy politics is the most recent expression of two traditional approaches to trade policy associated with IR liberalism - interest-based social approaches based on the economic interests of domestic actors and institutional, state-oriented approaches with a focus on the influence of domestic institutions on trade policy (Lake, David A. 2009).

With regard to the problems that power and negotiations pose, Moravscik depicts divergent preferences of states as an avid desire in specific area to affect international outcomes. He believes that "interdependent states preferences inflict a binding constraint on state behaviour" (Moravscik), conditioning importance to understand what is behind of these preferences and how exactly they change behaviour. Therefore, "what states want is determinant of what they do"(Moravscik). Nevertheless, actors' preferences are viewed either as zero-sum or as a deadlock that is to say, authorities from different states encounter bargaining game with certain mutual gains and feasibility of external pressure due to the fact that leading social groups

in one state advocating their positions through state action inflict some costs on leading social groups in other states.

When examining the Doha Round negotiations, we will rely on Odell, who portrays negotiations as a consequent interaction between two or more participants who tackle divergent arguments, proposals, ideas, stances with the ultimate objective of concluding an agreement (Odell 2013). However, what is more crucial than agreement is the outcome alluding to the distribution of gains and losses among the parties involved. Within WTO, due to a great number of members, countries may form coalitions with a menace to freeze the decision if it does not meet their preferences and postpone negotiations, as rational decision-maker India demonstrates concerning its protectionists positions in agricultural sector. Additionally, he highlights those negotiations are not constrained to compromise and win-win situations what illustrates Doha Round predicament.

In exploring how states come to recognition of their interests, we turn to the theory of constructivism, whose proponents argue that social norms and identity shape state behavior and affect the vector of their interests (Wendt, 1994). Wendt highlights corporate and social identity. The corporate identity of the state gives rise to four major interests: physical security; ontological security in relationships with the world, which cause the desire for a stable social identity; recognition as an actor by others; development for a better life on a collective level. Social identity is the cognitive and structural phenomenon that allow the actor to define “who I am/ we are” in the social role structure of shared understandings and expectations. “Social identity and interests are always in interaction,” says Wendt (Wendt, 1994). According to this vision, we will consider China's participation in the WTO through the interconnection of national interests with a special set of values, norms and perceptions of status, which justifies the correctness of its behaviour on the world arena.

The literature on the emerging states of India and China provides a rich valuable information about the rapid economic rise of these states and considers whether they will be supporters or opponents of the existing international economic order. Thus, Michalopoulos C. draws attention to the fact that “the international community missed the opportunity to consolidate the ongoing liberalization when it was unable to reach an agreement after ten years of negotiations on the Doha Round and that China and India became key players in the WTO, therefore declared themselves as new analogues of the "old powers" (Michalopoulos C. 2014). The essence of the Doha Round trade negotiations were revealed by Sandra Polaski in her book, describing it as a

confrontation between developed and developing countries where the sectoral preferences considerably diverged. The most contentious issues are subject to maintenance of protectionist measures in sensible agricultural field as well as preservation of trade barriers "to nurture fledgling domestic manufacturing and service sectors" what created a deadlock in the Doha Round and posed challenges to future bargaining rounds (Polaski S. 2006). In attempts to analyse the feasible outcomes of negotiations focusing on particular preferences, the scholar applies Carnegie model which is the cutting-edge tool for projecting possible scenarios, concretely, scenarios for Doha Round negotiations. Consequently, the obtained results shows that concessions in some fields have their limits alluding to India conservatism whereas identifying China as the greatest gainer.

Investigating the participation of India and China in the WTO, we will focus on studies that draw attention to the preferences of the “emerging states” towards the Doha Round. Grinin L. analyzes the development models of India and China: lists the factors of a possible deceleration of Chinese economic growth, indicates the significant features of the Indian economy, notes common and different features of the two Asian giants and gives the author's forecast of their prospects in the 21st century (Grinin L., 2013).

A globally recognized advocate of equal treatment, India is distinguished among other developing countries by its defensive nay-saying stance in multilateral negotiations withing WTO, that is, the ‘strict distributive strategy’ and its requirements for unconditional concessions in specific areas (Narlikar A. 2006). The author draws the examples of Like-Minded Group (LMG) and G10 coalitions where India performed as a leading blocking actor, thereby supporting her argument. In addition, she elaborates 4 hypotheses which are nature and composition of Indian bureaucracies, domestic political economy, regional security imperatives, ideas and political culture to test rationality of India's decisions. The fact that India, as the leader of coalitions of developing countries, protects their interests in the field of agriculture and the industrial sector, are outlined in their works by Srinivasan, T. N. (2006); Conceicao-Heldt, Eugénia da (2013); Hopewell Kristen (2014).

Assessing China's rise as the world's most important economic power, Xingqiang He focuses on domestic players and internal factors that affect China’s behaviour and performance in negotiation in the WTO since 2001. Due to internal restrictive standpoint in global trade governance, the state lacked capability to move forward in negotiations, nevertheless, pointing out on the excessive commitments China was ready to made, the author asserts that Doha Round is an

opportunity for China to approximate its preferences from regional to global level which will allow it to occupy dominant role and strengthen its positions in global economy (He X. 2016). Consequently, in several years, having stabilized its economic growth, China exercised its rule-making ability and active positions in negotiations, thereby bringing particular resistance in tariff reductions in terms of concessions in the sectors of agriculture, NAMA and services. Describing the economic benefits of China in the WTO, Boden G. concludes that China's accession to the WTO in 2001 gave a significant impetus to both the economic development of China itself and world trade in general (Boden G. 2012). Reducing tariffs and barriers to trade, a larger inflow of foreign direct investment stimulated China's export markets. The author of "China's Accession to the WTO: Economic Benefits" notes that with an astonishing increase in exports, Chinese farmers faced significant competition from agricultural imports from the United States, leading China to defend its position in the Doha Round.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Exploring the role of India and China in global economic governance through their participation in the WTO, we will focus on two specific questions: 1) What were the preferences of India and China in the Doha Round? 2) What explains the preference of India and China in the Doha Round? To explain the preferences of the two largest Asian states (India and China), we will base on Putnam R. two-level game theory, which assumes the economic benefits of domestic players, and turn to a constructivist theory that reveals the concerns of the emerging states about recognition and redistribution. (Nel P. 2010).

Putnam portrays the politics of many international negotiations as a two-level game: Level I, which encompasses an interim negotiated agreement between international negotiators, and Level II, where national groups decide to ratify or reject an agreement. The fact that a Level I agreement needs to be ratified at Level II means that there are intrinsically linked (Putnam R. 1988). During international negotiations, state representatives must take into account the interests of their colleagues at the international level (level I) and at the same time take into account the interests of their voters, namely, bureaucracy, interest groups and the media at the domestic level (level II). Therefore, we may argue that foreign policy reflects the preferences of domestic players.

The theoretical objective of the two-level game is to explain international negotiations from the standpoint of the main negotiator (president or prime minister, party leader, bureaucrat) who

simultaneously participates in two different levels aimed at reconciling domestic and international interests through negotiations without pursuing their own claims or preferences. On the one hand, it is significant for politicians to achieve domestic policy goals while maintaining international bargaining power. On the other hand, international negotiations must also comply with domestic restrictions.

Putnam stresses the important role of a negotiating mechanism that is present at all stages of negotiations, and it can be characterized as efficiency or distribution. In the case of effective negotiations, agreements are mutually beneficial, leading to cooperation between the parties. The distributional aspect arises when one side wins more than the other. According to the author's conviction, the set of victories depends on the preferences and coalition of level I; level II political institutions (the process of domestic ratification of international agreements); and the strategy of level I negotiators. Putnam claims that international agreements will only succeed if they lead to domestic benefits. Based on Putnam's theory, we could propose the following hypothesis:

H1. The preferences of India and China in the Doha Round were driven by the economic benefits and costs of important domestic players.

Following the Putnam two-level game approach, we will analyse how China has achieved transitional period to reduce tariffs and export subsidies and, accordingly, reduce tariffs for its exports to WTO countries. We will also try to clarify that trade policy preferences in India reflect the demands of influential industry interest groups.

Further in the theoretical chapter will be given the main provisions of constructivism, which studies the role of intangible, ideological, spiritual factors in international relations. Philip Nel, in his article "Redistribution and Recognition: What Developing Powers Want", describes the underlying reasons for states' behaviour, their goals, concerns about unequal distribution of wealth, and the desire for global recognition that states can achieve through institutions created by society for a specific purpose (Nel 2010). He focuses on the fact that the policy of these states is aimed at obtaining a relative gains, trying to change the distribution of benefits created by the world economy, to a greater extent in favour of developing countries, to bring them closer to what they consider to be optimal conditions for internal and global promotion of the developing world.

Nel sees recognition not just as an adjunct to redistribution, but as a logically and ethically basic concept. He is convinced that the redistribution of relative benefits - power, prestige, and wealth - is a necessary but by no means a sufficient condition for gaining recognition. For him,

"recognition" means a communicative process in the international community of states, through which states mutually recognize their status and show public respect. Nel explains that recognition and respect are indivisible benefits for developing countries, as they, based on their respect as equal and full members of the international community, will have the rights and privileges associated with the membership of states. The self-esteem of developing countries depends on such recognition. And this reflects the growing confidence in their ability to advance their plans on the world stage. Nel's reasoning leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: India and China's preferences in the Doha Round were driven by their concerns of redistribution and recognition.

The second hypothesis is assessed through constructivist theoretical lenses that shed light on how states see themselves and perceive other states (ally, belligerent, enemy, neutral party, aggressor, democratic or autocratic state, etc.), while taking into account historical subjectivity, ethnicity, cultural peculiarities, omnipresent norms and values, interest and preferences formed by ideas, the nature of domestic and foreign policies. Paying special attention to social structure and identity, this theory reveals a change of power in global economic governance, justifying it by the vertiginous economic growth of the developing states, in particular, India and China, thereby demonstrating the desire of these states to recognize their status, preferences and power not only regionally, but also internationally, and explains why they continue to negotiate with each other in the Doha Round on contentious issues leading to mutually beneficial outcomes in anarchical world.

After presenting the relevant theories and hypotheses, the third chapter provides a basic empirical analysis of this thesis.

EMPIRICAL DATA AND ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUE

The two largest Asian states, India and China, were selected for this research, since they differ in a number of features, namely, divergent paths of economic growth, approaches to global economic governance, preferences in multilateral negotiations within Doha Round, attitude to the WTO, etc. that are relevant to the present research. In the empirical section, we will try to analyse whether the positions of the two countries reflect specific domestic economic interests, concerns about redistribution and recognition, or both, or none of them. Based on this, we elaborated the following variables: dependent variable (DV) - preferences of India and China and independent

Variables (IVs): 1) economic benefits and costs of important domestic players, 2) Indian and Chinese concerns about redistribution and recognition.

Empirical data will be compiled from the following sources: available WTO regulations, especially those related to the 2003 Cancun Ministerial Conference; from researches by political scholars studying the Doha Round and WTO; from media materials on the current situation in the Doha Round. In addition, for our master's thesis, materials of regular ministerial conferences from 2001 to 2021, annual reports of the WTO on world trade, multilateral trade agreements, bilateral trade agreements that constitute the legal basis of the WTO's activities will be considered as well as international treaties and preferential agreements. Some of the information obtained from these sources is going to be transformed into graphs, tables and illustrations elaborated by the author.

The master's thesis examines the period of the Doha round of trade negotiations (from 2001 to 2021), where the main players are India and China on the main issues - agriculture, NAMA, services, protecting the interests of developing countries.

METHODS

In our research, qualitative case study method will be used. A case study, according to one of the outstanding theorists of the method, is "an in-depth study of a single situation limited in time frame in order to understand a wider range of (similar) cases" (Gerring J 2004). The case study is intended primarily for generating hypotheses or testing the plausibility of a hypothesis, and the task of the researcher is to establish what causal connections in principle exist in the phenomenon under study, and to identify variables that can then be studied within the framework of more serious research (George A., Bennett A. 2004).

Based on the case study method, first in our theses we will look at what India and China wanted to achieve in the Doha Round, focusing on the main areas (industrial goods, agriculture, services). We then analyse the economic interests of each country and the corresponding political preferences. Next, we will look at outcomes of the negotiations which may improve the redistribution of economic benefits in favour of India and China, and which may improve the legitimacy of the WTO from the view of the two countries. In our study, the operationalization of data will lead us to understand the preferences and intentions of the "emerging states" in regulating their respective sectors in international trade negotiations.

CONCLUSIONS

In this project, the topic of the master's thesis is determined, the objectives of the research are outlined, research questions are formulated, a review of the scientific literature is made, the conceptual and theoretical framework of the research are considered, the methods of empirical research are briefly described and an approximate structure of the master's thesis is proposed.

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

1. Rising powers and the WTO with the focus on India and China
 2. Theoretical and methodological framework
 - 2.1. Liberal analysis
 - 2.2. Constructivist analysis
 - 2.3. Method
 3. Case study: China
 - 3.1. China's preferences
 - 3.2. Domestic economic interests
 - 3.3. Role of concerns about redistribution and legitimacy
 4. Case study: India
 - 4.1. India's preferences
 - 4.2. Domestic economic interests
 - 4.3. Role of concerns about redistribution and legitimacy
- Conclusion

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