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Assessing India's Business Regulatory Environment: A Decade-Long Analysis of the Ease of Doing Business Rankings

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ABSTRACT

The Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) Index, developed by the World Bank, is a globally recognized benchmark that measures the regulatory environment for business activity across 190 economies. This study examines India's performance in the EoDB Index from 2009 to 2019, focusing on ranking trends, the contribution of individual regulatory indicators, and correlations among these parameters. Using secondary data from World Bank Doing Business reports, DIPP, NITI Aayog, the Economic Survey of India, and other national and international sources, the study applies descriptive and inferential statistical tools, including correlation analysis and paired t-tests, to evaluate regulatory progress. Findings reveal a significant improvement in India's overall ranking, rising from 142nd in 2015 to 77th in 2019, driven largely by gains in construction permits, trading across borders, resolving insolvency, and getting credit. Getting credit and starting a business emerged as the indicators contributing most to India's overall score, while enforcing contracts and registering property remained comparatively weak areas. The results highlight the positive influence of reforms such as GST implementation, insolvency law changes, and simplified business entry procedures on India's investment attractiveness. The study concludes that sustained regulatory reform and state-level analysis are essential for India to further strengthen its position as a competitive, business-friendly economy on the global stage.

Introduction

The Doing Business project provides objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement across 190 economies and selected cities at the subnational and regional level. The Doing Business project, launched through their life cycle. The Doing Business report presents results for two aggregate measures: the ease of doing business score (formerly called the distance to frontier score) and the ease of doing business ranking, which is based on the ease of doing business score. The ease of doing business ranking compares economies with one another; the ease of doing business score benchmarks economies with respect to regulatory best practice, showing the absolute distance to the best regulatory performance on each Doing Business indicator. When compared across years, the ease of doing business score shows how much the regulatory environment for local entrepreneurs in an economy has changed over time in absolute terms, while the ease of doing business ranking can show only how much

the regulatory environment has changed relative to that in other economies. What is Ease of Doing Business? The ease of doing business index is an index created by Simeon Djankov at the World Bank Group. It is based on an annual report called Doing Business, first published by World bank in 2003 that is an independent objective assessment of business regulation across 190 economies covering entire lifecycle of a business. The index is based on the study of laws and regulations, with the input and verification by more than 9,600 government officials, lawyers, business consultants, accountants, and other professionals in 185 economies who routinely advise on or administer legal and regulatory requirements.
The current status and progress of India in EoDB:

India jumped up 30 notches into the top 100 rankings on the World Bank's "case of doing business index, thanks to major improvements in indicators such as insolvency. paying taxes, protecting minority investors, and getting credit. "The vital jump this year could be a results of the Indian government's consistent efforts over the past few years and India's endeavor to strengthen its position as the most popular place to try and do business," Annette Dixon, (VP) Vice President, South Asia region at the discharge of 'Doing Business regulatory in nature, and i bases itself on the ground in two cities per nation (Mumbai and Delhi in our case). For each criterion, it then ascertains the "distance from the frontier", which in other words means how far a country's ranking is from the country with the best global practice in that field. The overall ranking is the summation of such "distances" for the 10 criteria. After just improving one rank last year to 131 in the world, this year India's score rose from 56.05 to 60.76, the highest jump of all countries
The parameters that are taken into consideration to rank countries as per their ease of doing business are given in the table below:

Table1.1 Parameters of Ease of Doing Business Index

Starting a business	The ease of the procedures to start a new venture along with the time, cost and minimum capital required are also considered
Dealing with construction permits	How easy is it to get permission to build a warehouse
Getting electricity	The ease of obtaining a permanent connection for electricity in a newly constructed warehouse.
Registering property	How easy and uncomplicated is the process of registering commercial real estate
Getting credit	The depth of credit information index, as well as strength of legal rights index, is studied
Protecting investors	Various indices on the extent of disclosure and ease of shareholder suits are taken into consideration
Paying taxes	Studies the number of taxes paid, hours per annum spent on filing tax returns and the total tax payable as a share of gross profit
Trading across borders	Includes the process of export and import of products are in the country.
Enforcing contracts	It involves studying the time, cost and effort required to enforce a debt contract
Resolving insolvency	Checks the time, cost and percentage recovery rate under a bankruptcy proceeding.

Source: World Bank's report

Benefits of Ease of Doing Business Rank:

The rank a country secures under EODB rank by World Bank brings a lot of benefits along. These benefits are given in the points below:

- The image of the country in the global market improves. Government of India has implemented as many as 37 reforms in the reference period and wants to evaluate the

effectiveness of these reforms
- The government is taking steps to liberalize the business and these reforms are working
- The rankings are expected to act as a guide to investors to take/make decisions. Hence better the ranking in the report more the favorability.
- The performance of GOI in terms of implementation of GST and will provide an answer with the question of how business-friendly this reform is (GST was not considered for last year's ranking and this year's ranking too could not fully account for GST as the deadline for tax-related reforms was 31st December and it had been just six months into the implementation of GST)
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The growth in industries has been averaging around 7% in the 90s and increased to 7.4% in the last decade. At the end of it the manufacturing, export sectors came under pressure because of the global financial crisis. The government through better regulatory environment aims to attract domestic and foreign investments into the manufacturing sector. Objective of the study are To analyze the performance of India in Ease of Doing Business Index. To analyze the State wise scenario of Ease of Doing Business in India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Coase (1937) began to question the notion of costless transactions. He argued that negotiations during business transactions incur costs such as carrying out inspections or writing up contracts. These costs were determinant in whether a transaction would take place or not. At a later point in his life, he went on to succinctly say that "Business men in deciding on their ways of doing business and on what to produce consider transaction costs. Batra, Kaufmann, and Stone (2003) concluded that a country's investment climate is synonymous with a country's ease of doing business climate. They go on to argue that a conducive business environment is considered to create the right incentive for individuals to engage in productive investments that cause higher economic activity.

Rodrik, Subramanian, and Trebbi (2004) have also discussed the importance of investment climate in determining the extent to which there is economic growth. Other studies including those have specifically explored the positive relationship that exists between the ease of doing business climate and firm growth while studies by shown the same positive correlation in relation to FDI and the increased economic activity that comes because of it. D. Jankov et al. (2006) found that there is a negative relationship between regulation that reduce investment climate and various measures pertaining to macroeconomic performance. This is because a worthwhile investment climate is associated to reducing risks and increasing the conduciveness of doing business. D. Jankov (2007) talked about the various new emerging norms measuring a successful enterprise as well as its environment (Adlani & Asih, 2025; Alhempi et al., 2021; Barigye et al., 2024).

Also gives the degrees of freedom of several parameters like investment, employment, product variation etc. He also provides the vision of future business environment; it can be tested against the real time data in any region or country like India. It shall provide a theoretical base for analysis of various parameters through ease of doing business angle. Ardagna and Lusardi (2010) concluded from an analysis of survey data of more than 470 thousand entrepreneurs who are at the initial stages of running a business from developed and developing countries that entry regulation diminishes the benefits of business skills in running a business; and reduces the propensity of individuals with business skills to start a business. Jayasuriya (2011) has seen the positive relationship in EODB and FDI inflow for the average country. However, when the sample is restricted to developing countries, the results suggest an improved ranking has, on average, been insignificant. The paper discusses about the factors which are extra commercial and cannot be related to purely business environment. It is a useful literature in Indian case where there is so many intermingling of various commercial and noncommercial issues. Branstetter et al (2013) empirically analyzed the case of Portugal's firm entry deregulation program and concluded that less entry costs do increase firm entry; but only among firms that are small, operating with low technology, and are unlikely to survive within their first few years. Bruhn and McKenzie (2013), concluded that only a few firms in the informal sector are attracted into the formal sector by easing the requirements of starting a business. **Singh economies P. G. (2015)** In this study, Singh investigated the relationship between the foreign direct investment and six variables (Starting a business cost, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity cost, registering property cost, paying taxes, and enforcing contract cost). He concluded that there is a long run relationship between FDI & variable under the study. **Rajat, Bhawna (2017)** specifically developed the EODB index consisting of ten categories3 that improve a country's business environment. The organization intended to use these dimensions as a prescription for country's striving to reach higher economic growth and measure their steps taken (Agustina et al., 2024; Fermana et al., 2024; Iskamto et al., 2024; Lathiifa & Chaerudin, 2022).

Method

The report was a bench his study focused on secondary data. It was collected from the World Bank Doing business reports, DIPP, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India, NITI Aayog, Economic survey of India, various states/UTs and central ministries of India, various international (International Journal of Humanities & Social science) and national level articles from various reputed economists, professional and academicians and others. It also collected from various websites and E-resources relating to study. This study period of research was 2009 to 2019. The survey consisted of a questionnaire designed by the Doing Business team with the assistance of academic advisers. Data surveys of over 12,500 expert contributors (lawyers, accountants, etc.) in 190 countries who deal with business regulations in their day-to-day work. Methodology:

This study used both descriptive and inferential statistical tools used. Descriptive statistics were used analysis of data for summarizing data in a meaningful way of interpretation of correlation-tables, charts, and average. Inferential statistical tools used such as paired t test and correlation analysis for testing hypotheses of the study.

$$r = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \sum (y_i - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Growth rate-

- Growth rate can be defined as the increase in growth per unit time.
- Increase in total growth of two organs or organisms is measured and comparison of total growth per unit time is called absolute growth.

$$\text{CAGR} = \left(\frac{V_{\text{final}}}{V_{\text{begin}}}\right)^{1/t} - 1$$

CAGR = compound annual growth rate
V_{begin} = beginning value
V_{final} = final value
t = time in years

Result and Discussion

Interpretation is evident and therefore it needs to be done properly. Data is likely to arrive from multiple sources and tends to enter the analysis process with haphazard ordering. Data analysis tends to be extremely subjective. That is to say, the nature and goal of interpretation will vary from business to business, correlating to the type of data being analyzed. While there are several distinct types of processes that are implemented based on individual data nature, the two broadest and most common categories are “quantitative analysis” and “qualitative analysis.” key difference between qualitative and quantitative analysis is clearly noticeable in the interpretation stage. Qualitative data, as it is widely open to interpretation, must be “coded” to facilitate the grouping and labeling of data into identifiable themes.

TABLE 3: India’s Decades long Journey in the EODB ranking

PARAMETERS	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Ease of starting a business	169	165	166	173	179	158	155	155	156	137	136
Dealing with constrictions permits	175	177	181	182	182	184	183	185	181	52	27
Getting electricity	-	-	98	105	111	137	70	26	29	24	22
Registering your property	93	94	97	94	92	121	138	138	154	166	154
Getting credit for your business	30	32	40	23	28	36	42	44	29	22	25
Protecting minority investee	41	44	46	49	34	7	8	13	4	7	13
Paying taxes	169	164	147	152	158	156	157	172	119	121	115
Trading across borders	94	100	109	127	132	126	133	143	146	80	68
Enforcing contracts	182	182	182	184	186	186	178	172	164	163	163
Resolving insolvency	138	134	128	116	121	137	136	103	103	108	52

Source: Doing Business Database World bank

s India leapfrogs towards a five trillion-dollar economy by 2024-25, simplifying and maintaining a business-friendly regulatory environment is essential. To ease the constraints and gaps in the regulatory processes involved in doing business, it is necessary to assess the country’s progress vis-à-vis other leading economies on various parameters. 6.2 India has made substantial gains in the World Bank’s Doing Business rankings from 142 in 2014 to 63 in 2019. It has progressed on seven out of the 10 parameters.

Table: 4 Contribution of Indicators of Ease of Doing Business Index

Indicators of Ease of Doing Business	**Percentage**

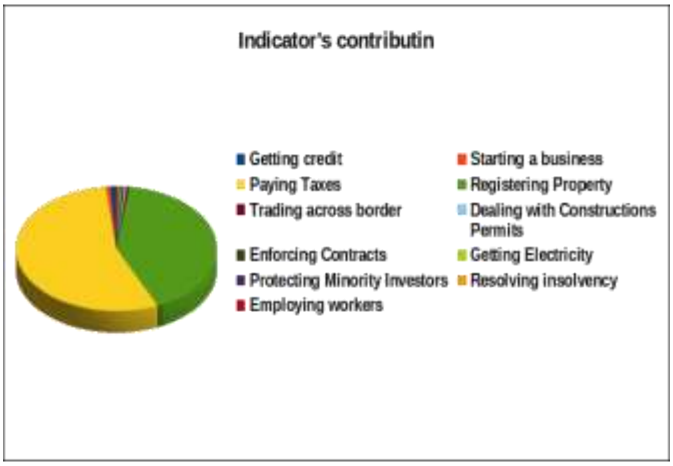
Getting credit	21%
Starting a business	16%
Paying Taxes	12
Registering Property	9
Trading across border	9%
Dealing with Constructions Permits	8%
Enforcing Contracts	7%
Getting Electricity	6%
Protecting Minority Investors	6%
Resolving insolvency	5%
Employing workers	3%

Source: Doing Business Database World bank

This table 4 shows the contribution of different indicators in Ease of Doing Business Index. The highest sharemen.

Chart: Reforms Tracked by Doing Business 2009 to 2019
Source: Own calculation

In this chart shows the figures prominently in the academic literature as a source of data and as a subject for research. There is an academic literature on the nature and influence of DB indicators overall and lines of research in relation to individual areas tracked by DB. Overall, the academic literature credits DB indicators with influencing the regulatory reform efforts of development institutions and governments. At the same time, DB is faulted for excessive formalism, limited



scope, and problems in ranking and aggregation practices (Besley 2015; Doshi, Kelly, and Simmons 2019; Haidar 2012; Marechal and Arlet 2020; Yackee 2016; McCormack 2018; Tang 2017; World Bank 2008, 2015).3.6 In each of its main topic areas of focus, the DB team has tracked the relevant literature from top journals (table 3.2). According to this database, starting a business, trading across borders, port DB acting minority investors, enforcing contracts, and resolving insolvency are leading areas of focus of the academic literature on DB.

Table5 : Correlation Between Economics core for Doing Business Parameters

	Dealing with Constructi on permits	Geeti ng Elect ricity	Registe ring Propert y	Geetin g Credit	Protectin g minority Investors	Payin g Taxe s	Tradin g Across Borde rs	Enforc ing Contra cts	Resol ving insolv ency
Starting a business	0.49	0.51	0.4	0.51	0.58	0.54	0.42	0.38	0.94
dealing with construction permit		0.63	0.48	0.41	0.46	0.46	0.51	0.39	0.41
Getting electricity			0.5	0.45	0.52	0.57	0.63	0.51	0.56
Registering property				0.47	0.53	0.51	0.51	0.61	0.53
Getting credit					0.56	0.43	0.42	0.58	0.53
Protecting minority investors						0.48	0.42	0.47	0.61
Paying taxes							0.55	0.5	0.44
Trending across Borders								0.5	0.55
Enforcing Constrict									0.46

Source: own calculation

In this table 5 all values are statistically significant at 5% level of significancy. Table 3.4: India's Ranks in EODB from 2009 to 2019. The ranking shows a generally positive trend from 2009 to 2019. In 2009, the rank was 122 and increased slightly to 133 in 2010 and 134 in 2011. It then remained relatively stable at 132 in 2012 and 2013 before declining to 134 in 2014 and reaching 142 in 2015, indicating a temporary deterioration in ranking. However, the ranking improved substantially thereafter, reaching 130 in 2016 and 2017, 100 in 2018, and finally 77 in 2019. Overall, the data indicate a significant improvement in ranking, particularly during the 2017–2019 period.

This table shows the Rank of India in Ease of Doing Business Index from 2009 to 2019.The highest rank is 142 rank in 2015. And the lowest rank is 77 in 2019. By that it can be easily understand that India is doing best year by year in Ease of Doing Business Index ranking. India drew $28 billion (about $86 per person in the US) foreign direct investment (FDI) in 2013 against $24 billion (about $74 per person in the US) in the previous year, shows a report for 2014 by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. However, its ranking in terms of most-favored FDI destination slipped by a notch compared to the one given in the report for 2013. The World Investment Report, 2014 showed that policy uncertainty on allowing international supermarket chains kept investors on tenterhooks. As such, it suggested India should look at the option of non-equity flows in multi-brand retailing to avoid friction between local and foreign companies.

Chart: India's Rank in EODB Index

Source: Own calculation

This chart shows the Rank of India in Ease of Doing Business Index from 2009 to 2019.The highest rank is 142 rank in 2015. And the lowest rank is 77 in 2019. By that it can be easily understand that India is doing best year by year in Ease of Doing Business Index ranking.

Though in terms of its ranking in drawing FDI inflows improved a notch to 14th in 2013 compared to 2012, its position in terms of the most-favored FDI destination took a beating to the fourth in the report for 2014 against third in the 2013 report. An Unctad report shows a survey of companies ranking countries in terms of most-favored FDI destination for three years. As such, the report for 2014 shows the ranking for 2014-16 and the one for 2013 shows the ranking for 2013-15. The survey in the 2014 report was based on the responses of 164 companies

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Table 6: Growth rate of India's rank in EODB Index

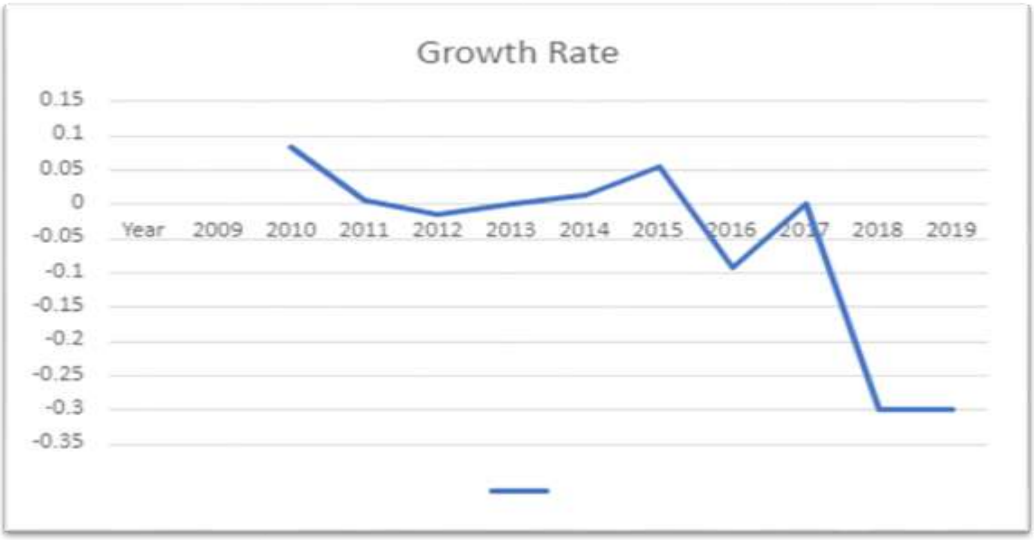
Year	Rank	Growth Rate
2009	122	
2010	133	0.082706767

2011	134	0.007462687
2012	132	-0.015151515
2013	132	0
2014	134	0.014925373
2015	142	0.056338028
2016	130	-0.092307692
2017	130	0
2018	100	-0.3
2019	77	-0.298701299

Source: Own calculation

This table 6 shows the growth rate of India's rank in Ease of Doing Business Index from 2009 to 2019. So, the Zero growth is in 2013 and 2017. The highest growth rate is 0.08 in 2010.And the highest negative growth rate in –0.29 in 2019. India is among the fastest emerging economies in the world. In 2019, India ranked 77th in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business EODB Report out of 190 countries, leapfrogging by 23 ranks from the previous year. While international EODB rankings are provided by the World Bank, state level rankings in India for EODB (BRAP Ranking) are provided by the Department for Promotion of Industry and International Trade (DPIIT).

Chart: Growth rate of India's rank in EODB Index



Source: Own calculation

In this chart shows that the Growth Rate of India in Ease of Doing Business Index from 2009 to 2019. So, the Zero growth is in 2013 and 2017. The highest growth rate is 0.08 in 2010.And the highest negative growth rate in –0.29 in 2019.

India is among the fastest emerging economies in the world. The government has launched various policies that are targeted to boost growth of the industry. One such reform was GST, which aimed to make tax compliance easy and more cost effective through e-filling and by bringing the nation under a uniform indirect tax system.

Table 7: Analysis of top 10 Global Economies in EODB

COUNTRYS	RANK OF 2019	SCORE
NEWZEALAND	1	86.59
SINGAPUR	2	85.24
DENMARK	3	84.64
CHINIA	4	84.22
KORIA	5	84.14
GEOGIA	6	83.28
US	8	82.75
SWEDEN	12	81.27
AUS	18	80.13
INDIA	77	67.23

Source: Doing Business Database World bank

This table shows the top 10 global economies ranks in ease of doing business index the first rank country in 2019 is New Zealand with rank 1st get score 86.59. And in top 10 the 5th country is Korea in 2019 with the score 84.14 in the India get 77th rank in 2019 with score 82.75. Singapore is the second-best country in is of doing business index rank SN developing country India is on the best place in 2019 on 77 rank as we can see in 2019 India was on the rank 122 India's growth is extremely fast as a developing country according to the rank of ease of doing business index. India's improvement in ease of doing business index shows that India's business is happening easy by year to year. New Zealand topped the list of 190 countries in ease of doing business, followed by Singapore, Denmark, and Hong Kong. The report also recognizes India and Djibouti as the only economies to be top 10 improvers in this year’s assessment, for the second successive time. Moreover, India is the only large country this year to have achieved such a significant shift. India has improved its rank in 6 out of 10 indicators and has moved closer to international best practices (Distance to Frontier score) on 7 out of the 10 indicators. The most dramatic improvements have been registered in the indicators related to 'Construction Permits' and 'Trading across Borders'. In grant of construction permits, India's rank improved from 181 in 2017 to 52 in 2018, an improvement of 129 ranks in a single year. In 'Trading across Borders', India's rank improved by 66 positions moving from 146 in 2017 to 80 in 2018.

In 2018 report, India had leapfrogged by 30 places to move into the top 100 rankings among 190 countries.

Table 8: Best Indicators Behind the India's higher rank in the EODB

INDICATORS	**2017**	**2018**	**CHANGE**
CONSTRUCTION PERMITS	181	52	+129
TRANDING ACREOS BORDERS	146	80	+66
STARTING A BUSINESS	156	137	+19
GEETING CREDIT	29	22	+7
GEETING ELECTRICITY	29	24	+5
INFORCESING CONSTRUCTS	164	163	+1
OVERALL RANK	100	77	+23

Source: Doing Business Database World bank

The World Bank released its latest Doing Business Report (DBR, 2019) today in New Delhi. India has recorded a jump of 23 positions against its rank of 100 in 2017 to be placed now at 77thrank among 190 countries assessed by the World Bank. India's leap of23 ranks in the Ease of Doing Business ranking is significant considering that last year India had improved its rank by 30 places, a rare feat for any large and diverse country of the size of India. As a result of continued efforts by the Government, India has improved its rank by 53 positions in last two years and 65positions in last four years. The Doing Business assessment provides objective measures of business regulations and their enforcement across 190 economies on ten parameters affecting a business through its life cycle. The DBR ranks countries based on Distance to Frontier (DTF), a score that shows the gap of an economy to the global best practice. This year, India's DTF score improved to 67.23 from 60.76 in the previous year. India has improved its rank in 6 out of 10 indicators and has moved closer to international best practices (Distance to Frontier score) on 7 out of the 10 indicators. But, the most dramatic improvements have been registered in the indicators related to 'Construction Permits' and 'Trading across Borders'. In grant of construction permits, India's rank improved from 181 in 2017 to 52in 2018, an improvement of 129 ranks in a single year. In 'Trading across Borders', India's rank improved by 66 positions moving from 146 in 2017 to 80in 2018. The changes in six indicators where India improved its rank.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide substantive insight into India's regulatory transformation over the 2009–2019 period and reaffirm several theoretical propositions advanced in the existing literature on the relationship between regulatory quality and economic performance.

Trajectory of Improvement

India's ranking trajectory—from 122nd in 2009 to a peak low of 142nd in 2015, followed by a sharp recovery to 77th in 2019—illustrates a non-linear but ultimately upward reform pattern. The stagnation observed between 2009 and 2015, during which India's rank fluctuated between 122 and 142, suggests that early regulatory efforts were either insufficiently targeted or were offset by improvements made by competing economies. This is consistent with Jayasuriya's (2011) observation that in developing countries, incremental ranking improvements often fail to produce statistically significant gains until reforms reach a critical mass. The dramatic acceleration after 2015—particularly the 30-rank jump into the top 100 and the subsequent 23-rank improvement to 77th in 2019—corresponds closely with the intensification of flagship government initiatives such as Make in India, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), and the Goods and Services Tax (GST). This pattern supports Batra, Kaufmann, and Stone's (2003) argument that a conducive investment climate is not the product of isolated reforms but of a cumulative and coordinated policy push.

Indicator-Level Analysis

The indicator-level data (Table 3.7) reveal that India's overall ranking improvement was not uniform across all ten parameters but was disproportionately driven by a small number of high-impact reforms. The 129-rank improvement in "Dealing with Construction Permits" (from 181 in 2017 to 52 in 2018) and the 66-rank gain in "Trading Across Borders" stand out as the most consequential shifts, together accounting for a substantial share of India's overall rank movement. This finding aligns with Table 3.2, which shows that "Getting Credit" (21%) and "Starting a Business" (16%) contributed the largest shares to the overall EoDB score, together accounting for over a third of the index's composition. The prominence of credit-related reforms is consistent with D. Djankov et al.'s (2006) finding that regulatory burdens reducing access to credit have an outsized negative effect on investment climate, implying that reforms targeting credit information systems and collateral law yield disproportionately high returns in ranking terms.

Conversely, "Enforcing Contracts" remained persistently weak throughout the study period (182 in 2009 to 163 in 2019), improving by only 19 ranks over a decade despite broader gains elsewhere. This stagnation reflects a structural bottleneck—judicial and contract-enforcement inefficiencies—that is less amenable to administrative reform than procedural simplifications like construction permitting or business registration. This corroborates Branstetter et al.'s (2013) conclusion that deregulation tends to benefit firms unevenly, with entry-related reforms yielding faster results than reforms requiring institutional or judicial capacity building.

Correlation Among Indicators

The correlation analysis (Table 3.3) indicates statistically significant positive relationships among nearly all indicator pairs, with the strongest correlation observed between "Starting a Business" and "Resolving Insolvency" (0.94). This suggests that reforms are not fully independent of one another; rather, improvements in business entry conditions tend to move in tandem with improvements in exit mechanisms, possibly reflecting a broader institutional or administrative reform culture rather than indicator-specific policy interventions. This systemic interdependence supports Singh's (2015) finding of long-run relationships between regulatory variables and FDI, suggesting that policymakers should approach reform holistically rather than targeting indicators in isolation.

Growth Rate Volatility and Policy Implications

The growth rate analysis (Table 3.5) reveals considerable year-to-year volatility, with zero growth in 2013 and 2017 followed by sharp negative growth rates (i.e., ranking improvement) of –0.30 and –0.29 in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This pattern indicates that reform impacts are often delayed, materializing in rankings only after a lag—likely reflecting the time required for regulatory changes to be verified and reflected in the World Bank's assessment methodology. This has an important implication for policymakers: the absence of immediate ranking improvement following a reform should not be interpreted as reform failure, as benefits may only be captured in subsequent assessment cycles.

India in Global Context

When benchmarked against the top-performing economies (Table 3.6), India's 2019 score of 67.23 remains substantially below that of New Zealand (86.59), Singapore (85.24), and other frontier economies, indicating that despite significant relative improvement, an absolute gap in regulatory best practice persists. This distinction—between relative ranking improvement and absolute distance-to-frontier—echoes the report's own methodological emphasis and reinforces the critique raised by Doshi, Kelley, and Simmons (2019) that rankings alone can overstate genuine regulatory convergence if not read alongside the underlying DTF scores.

Broader Implications

Taken together, these findings suggest that India's EoDB improvement has been substantively real but unevenly distributed across regulatory domains, driven by a concentrated set of high-visibility reforms (credit access, business registration, construction permitting, and cross-border trade) rather than uniform institutional strengthening. The persistent weakness in contract enforcement and property registration points to deeper structural constraints—judicial capacity and land administration—that are less responsive to executive-level policy reform and may require longer-term institutional investment. This resonates with the concluding observation that ease-of-doing-business analysis is most meaningful when disaggregated to the sub-national level, given the considerable variation in implementation capacity across Indian states, as reflected in the DPIIT's Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) rankings.

Conclusion:

There is a general opinion that the international ranking in ease of doing business should be improved. The opinions expressed by the different studies indicate towards this opinion at various degrees. This requires the multi-faceted roles by the law makers, executive action, general mind set and education among the common citizens and confidence in the efforts what they do. Though minority of the study has also expressed some grey areas of such ranking exercises but this does not at all counters the need of the betterment. In the Indian context there should be no doubt that the continuous efforts towards improving the rankings in EODB is the need of the hour, it is quite observable in the recent efforts like implementation of GST, disinvestment of PSUs, reforms in labour laws, efforts to remodeling of bureaucracy Positive approach creates positivity about future. The inherent observations out of discussions in this paper may be summarized below: In general scale of Ease of Doing Business shows positive correlation with the investment environment as it includes various facts of administration, legal system, HRD policy etc. EODB is self-propelling. In 2016 India was at the 130th rank in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. Within a few years India has climbed up to the 63rd place which indicates an improvement of 67 ranks a result of the improvement made by the Government in its policies launched under the Make in India campaign that targets creating more than 100 million jobs by the year 2022, making India a manufacturing hub and raising the contribution of manufacturing sector's share to GDP to 25%.

In fact, despite all level indicators whatever they may be on paper, the de facto implications of their several variables on ground or say at micro level have much to conclude about the ease of doing business in those economies. In other words, it is more prudent to analyze and study them at sub economy level. This feature cuts across all and particularly developing economies.

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