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**Political Communication during COVID-19 in India: Study of
Public Support**

Master Thesis

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Declaration of Authorship

I, HARSHVARDHAN, thereby declare that the current thesis titled "*Political Communication During COVID-19 in India- Study of Public Support*" is submitted to the master's program of Society, Media and Communication at Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic. Furthermore, I declare that this thesis depicts my thoughts and ideas in my own words. I have sufficiently referenced and cited the original sources. Moreover, I also affirm that I have adhered to all the rules and regulations of academic integrity and honesty, therefore, not fabricating, or misinterpreting any data/idea in my thesis submission, henceforth, representing my own ideas and research.

Date: 27th July 2021

Sign:

Acknowledgment

The entire procedure of thesis writing at master's level can be an extensive task. It is a wholesome process requiring intensive hard-work, focus, organization, and diligence. Irrespective of the ongoing pandemic, I was able to conduct and administer my research meticulously. In my opinion, I have given my best of my efforts in carrying out this research. I would fondly like to express my gratitude to my seniors, without their guidance I would not have been able to successfully complete my thesis.

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Abstract

The research explored the public support towards the political communication carried out during COVID-19 in India. Through the means of a structured questionnaire based on Easton's dimensions of public support, responses were collected from 200 respondents, 100 each from the academic background of journalism and psychology. To determine the support towards the government performance during the crisis times based on the political communication done by the current regime in India. The results suggested that the public support is quite less from the respondents of journalism background. However, the psychology respondents showed relatively high support towards the political communication done by the Indian government in the COVID-19. It suggests that the public support is not one but scattered and also the academic background could play a major role in one's understanding of the political communication and lending of the support. The research demonstrated how respondents from different backgrounds show almost the opposite support towards political communication in the times of crisis. This gives out a good comparison and also concludes the public support.

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, political communication, crisis communication, public support, India.

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Chapter -1: Introduction

Political communication is an integral part of any government around the world, especially in the democratic countries. The role of political communication is not just delivering the information to the voters but also a constant practice to know the needs and the mood of the voters in order to strategically plan to keep up with the popularity of the government. Political communication operates in two main areas, i.e., first one is during the elections and the second one is when the government is in power to influence the way public vote and how political decisions are taken (Alfani, 2015).

Political communication can be defined as the exchange and creation of opinions as well as ideas among government officials, political bodies, the general public, and related entities like the media. It encompasses political debate/discourse throughout the political processes in state, national, international, and local political systems along with the way information is exploited to attain political goals or other political gains (Borgebund,2019). It can also be understood as a systematic communication between the citizens, political entities, the media, and political organizations. It is an integrative field and an amalgamation of strategic communication and media studies with government and politics (Haider, McLoughlin, Scott,2015). It is through these strategies and techniques of political communication that campaign executives, speechwriters, political marketers, etc produce, form, and disperse information that can impact the political issues. The research will study the public support through the spectrum of political communication and the leading question that will be answered in the research is whether the political communication in India during the Covid-19 crisis has support of the people, how much the public liked the policy adopted by the government or not. To gather more insight into the above-mentioned questions participants' political support will be compared in three dimensions, i.e., the support of the specific policy, the evaluation of the specific policy and the overall support of the regime (Easton,1975).

1.1. Background

In the present times, new media technology has almost touched every aspect of human lives and thus politics is no exception. The distribution of news is no longer a one-way channel because of the coming of the new media technologies. The new media had enabled the viewers to be the active participants in the news consumption and to accept or reject the news as per them and not what is being fed to them. Politicians are no more just visible to the voters during the voting period in rallies but are now present on the social media sites and the voters can anytime engage with them, praise or criticize them for any specific policy or decisions taken by the political parties. This emergence of a new type of dynamic communication channel has changed the way political communication is done (Owen, 2019).

Political communication is a year-round task wherein the political party and the politicians are constantly engaging with the voters as to be relevant in the public domain and people remember them for good when the election time hits. The online presence of the political parties and the politicians have given the birth to the online competition amongst the different parties and the voters are always keen to know which political parties has best to cater to their needs and this affects the election results, thus the politicians are always on their toes to communicate in the best possible ways so as to not disappoint the voters, which is one of the main pillar of democracy (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017). In India the current elected political party is Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) led by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. PM Modi's following on social media sites is huge, with 70M following on Twitter, 57.1M following on Instagram and 46M following on Facebook makes him as one of the most followed political leaders in the world and being the Prime Minister of the largest democracy in the world, the responsibility of political communication increases manifold.

Bigger the nation the more issues politicians have to face be it from the citizens, opposition, administrative issues or dealing with the crisis situation. Political communication plays a major role in addressing the people and assuring them of their safety or to introduce a policy to overcome the crisis situation. In a sudden crisis

situation, the citizens are clueless about a lot of the things and ask for their safety and assurance from their elected leaders and thus political communication through any forms of channel becomes the key factor to which all the citizens look up to and political communication done through the crisis times are also crucial as it can turn the population for or against the political leader very easily (White,2007).

1.2. Crisis Communication and Public Support

Crisis communication in the most direct words means “the collection, processing and dissemination of information required to address the crisis situation” communication during the times of crisis by the political parties and the government should be directed at managing people’s views, giving assurance and reducing the impact of crisis. The regular political communication differs with the crisis communication, the regular political communication aims mainly at gaining the positive attention from the voters, the politicians put out their best possible image to be in the good books of the citizens, building the voters perception and it is framed by the political parties and the government, whereas, the crisis communication is about taking care or handling the unexpected and the negative situation. The main steps are to reduce the negativity around the crisis, inform the public clearly, restoring confidence and coping up with the public’s perception (Pustjens, 2020)

In this research the attention is given to the public support towards the political communication during the Covid-19 crisis in India. The World Health Organization (WHO) on the 22nd of January 2020 reported that the outbreak of corona, Covid-19, took place in the Wuhan province of China (WHO 2020b). On 30th January WHO declared Corona as the Public Health Emergency of International Concern, and on March 11 a global pandemic (WHO 2020c, WHO 2020d). During all this time the WHO has also suggested various measures to deal with the virus and many countries were on it and following it (WHO, 2020a). The emergence of Covid-19 shook the entire world and India was no exception to it, considering the vast population, crisis communication by the PM Modi led government was one of the biggest tasks. India has around 84 million people living under poverty, so to reach the extreme population, political communication just

through the online forums is not sufficient, the government had to adopt all the possible ways, through television, radio, newspapers, banners and online platforms to reach the as many people as possible and to provide them the assurance of safety through the crisis communication and bring people out of the shock because of the Corona crisis

Crisis communication in a real form is an all-inclusive way of addressing the public and giving them assurance and hope. During the covid times many leaders have been criticized and praised for their crisis communication. In the Current Column by Burni, Aline / Frauke Domgörgen titled 'Why Female Leaders Stand Out on Their Political Communication During the Pandemic' they talk about the female world leaders who have successfully tackled the situation of corona than their male counterparts. it mentions that there is no one specific successful model of crisis communication. Moreover, when the leader shows empathy, the communication shall be a balance between science, rationality and emotions simultaneously. European leader Angela Merkel adopted the more science-based approach of communication, whereas, the New Zealand leader Jacinda Ardern adopted a more emotional approach, whereas, the head of Government in Finland Sanna Marin, adopted a quick and persuasive form of communication. All the above stated women world leader adopted the measures and the style of communication which helped their countries to come at ease with the covid situation (Aline, Domgörgen, 2021)

Political communication as already stated above is done strategically by the political parties or a politician to maintain the positive image, influence the voters and provide information to the citizens to serve a purpose. Any form of communication is a waste without the proper cooperation or support and political communication is no exception to it. Political communication is aimed directly at the public and thus garnering public support constitutes the main part of it.

Public opinion polls play an integral part of political communication, it constitutes the main input for the politicians and their spokesperson. As per the election climate and the public opinion the political parties very delicately plan out the communication to change the opinion if it's against them or to make it more welcoming if the opinion is for them.

Public support and political communication go hand in hand. In the crisis time the public opinion might totally change towards the government or become more stronger depending on the policies adopted and measures taken to lift the citizens out of the crisis situation be it natural or man-made (Ang, Nobel, Reeves, 2021)

1.3. Research Questions

The research is designed to achieve more insight about the public support towards the political communication carried out by the PM Modi led government during the Covid-19 pandemic. This will be determined by making use of the analysis of the response to the questionnaire based on Easton's framework of specific support and diffuse support into three sub-dimensions: policy support, performance support and regime support (Easton, 1965). The policy selected is the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy, adopted by PM Modi during the covid crisis to make India self-reliant and produce goods locally. Therefore, the following research question have been structured for the research:

1. *Has political communication on the specific policy (Atmanirbhar policy) succeeded during the crisis times?*

In respect to answering this research question, a set of five questions have been framed under the category 'the support of the specific policy'. The answers to these questions would give the perfect insight as to whether the respondents are in favour of the policy or not and also the political communication around the policy was successful or not. This would be quite interesting to study as it would give research a compelling approach and would make it a gripping read for the readers. The second research question is:

2. *How positive or negative is the public support towards the government during the covid-19 crisis?*

This research question would be answered by the following ten questions in the questionnaire that are related with 'the evaluation of government performance' and 'the overall support of the regime'. Response to these questions would determine the general mood of the public toward the regime during the crisis and also the overall

support. Political communication cannot always have a positive impact especially in times of crisis as the public is already in panic with the crisis so any communication from the government can turn against them if not for.

This particular research question would be quite insightful as with the covid crisis being relatively new and still prevalent around the world, so not many studies have been conducted around the public support towards the regime during the covid crisis on the basis of the political communication. The final research question is:

3. *Is there any difference in the responses between the respondents of journalism background vis-à-vis psychology background?*

This research question focuses on the responses from the respondents of the journalism and psychology background. It will be interesting to know the difference in the responses from these two backgrounds and also which field of respondents would be for the political communication and the support of the government than another field. A comparison will be drawn from each section of the questionnaire to best answer this research question.

The result of this particular research question would make the research wholesome by not focusing on one group of the respondents but dividing them into two to give a better understanding of the topic and making the study more inclusive.

1.4. Research Approach

The purpose of the research is to evaluate the support towards the political communication during the Covid-19 in India, it explores the impact of the political communication carried out by the India government led by PM Modi. It studies the public support towards the political communication carried out during the corona crisis and towards the particular policy adopted during the crisis times and thus the overall support of the government. It is an explorative research as Covid-19 is an ongoing pandemic and not many studies have been conducted, especially, with the public support towards political communication. As political communication is very essential in

any form of government, the citizens react differently as its main purpose is to have a positive impact on the voters. But the dynamics changes with the political communication that has to be carried out in the crisis situation, so it becomes important to study the public support towards the political communication in the biggest democracy in the world. Therefore, the aim of the research is to see the public support for the government and the regime as per the political communication during the covid crisis and also to study the difference if any in the response between the respondents of journalism and psychology respectively. The research is quantitative research as it uses a structured questionnaire using the Likert scale. The responses are represented graphically and the analysis will be conducted. The respondents are either the graduate students or the already graduated students of journalism and psychology to give the varied views and insight on the topic of the research.

1.5. Reading Guide

With respect to answer the research questions conducted for this research, a particular structure is given to the thesis. In the following chapter, the political communication scenario in India is provided as the contextual background to understand the brief past of the political communication done in India and the relevance of political communication and the associated elements. The next chapter is the methodology, it will explain the methods used in the research and their importance in accordance with the research conducted. The following chapter will present results and findings, it will graphically represent the responses gathered through the questionnaire and the findings would be derived. The final chapter will be the conclusion which would conclude the research in accordance with the findings, followed by the discussion and the recommendations.

Chapter -2: Political Communication Scenario in India

Political communication in India has undergone several changes since independence in 1947. In the beginning the political communication was addressing the rallies from place to place and distributing the pamphlets in the rallies or from the plane to influence the voters. India has seen three paradigm shifts in political communication, i.e., the Nehruvian Socialism in the 1960s, the hard lined discipline of Indira Gandhi and the economic liberation in the 1990s (Essays, 2018).

The freedom of the Indian economy has changed the ways of communication, varying from cable television to telecommunication and then the eventual change to online platforms. In the early times the majority of the communication between the politician and the voters used to take place in the rallies and a lot was dependent on the interpersonal skills of the politicians. But the importance of the digital era was soon realized by the politicians to connect with the youth of the country.

The political parties saw a lot of potential in the digital technology as the youth is going to be the digital natives and will be present with their true identities on the digital platforms. This requires the political parties to adopt new methods to be connected with the voters digitally. During the elections nowadays all the parties hire the Ad and Media agency for their brand image (Zuniga, Chen, 2019)

2.1. Grasping the Know how's of Political Communication

Political communication is a sub-field of communication and political science. It is the connection between the political leaders and the voters, generation and distribution of the message through media channels and interpersonally. This combines the using of different Media channels, speeches by politicians to influence the voters and also includes the formal and informal dialogue in the public.

The study of political communication consists of three main sections.

1. The political party

2. The voters
3. The medium of communication

2.1.1.The Political Party

As per the Ace Electoral Network, A political party is defined as an organised group of people with at least roughly similar political aims and opinions, that seeks to influence public policy by getting its candidates elected to public office.

Political parties perform some of the important tasks in a democratic society such as, collecting and communicating requirements and issues recognised by the supporters and the members, understanding the voters demands and turning them into the electoral policies, motivating and mobilizing the voters into participating in political decisions and converting that into the policy option, conducting public opinion from citizens to government and teaching the citizens and the voters about the political system and generating political values.

To perform the above-mentioned tasks the political party should convey and communicate their agendas concisely to the voters. There has been an increase in the communication mediums and the consistency shall be maintained in communicating the objectives. Brand positioning of the party derives the communication objective that the party wants to present to the general public. Political marketing and political advertising play an integral part as it positions the party in the electoral market (CliffsNotes, 2020)

2.1.2.The Voter

The main agenda of any form of communication is to influence the targeted audience. Like an advertisement aims to target the people to buy the products, the same ways political party marketing is done to target the voters and broaden the horizon of their reach. But there is a difference between the conventional marketing and the political marketing with respect to the voters.

Lock and Harris (1996) identify four main differences between mainstream and political marketing:

- All voters vote on the same day, everyone makes choice as per their own methods or requirements
- There is no cost attached to casting a mandate for a particular party, therefore no cost when considered from an individual point of view but a very huge cost from a society's point of view.
- Even though you must have voted for a particular party, even though it's not elected, you will have to live with it.
- There is no choice to vote for a political party or the candidate, basically the service given is unbundled. The candidate and the political party both are generally taken into consideration while making the choice.

Public Relations plays an integral part in politics to enhance the image of the candidate or the political party. All the parties during the political campaign engage in PR activities and constantly engage with the voters to have a consistent positive image of the party which increases the chances of winning. Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) successfully ran the PR campaign in the 2014 elections with slogans such as "This time around, a Modi government" and "Let's go with Modi " made a nation-wide impact. The Indian voter on an average is exposed to at least three mediums in a day, i.e., print, television and digital. It is important to maintain the consistency in the messages across the mediums and the political communication and PR activities shall be clear and concise for voters to remember (Choudhary, Varma, Gadgil, 2014)

2.1.3. The Medium

India is the biggest democracy in the world and the medium of communication is the most important way a political party reaches out to the people. Events, speeches, rallies are all part of the communication. Specific political activity of a party or a hate speech all are covered and distributed across the people through different channels of communication. The print medium covers the rallies and unfolds the issues, whereas, the television conducts the interviews, panel discussions and shows the general mood of the voters. In India movie stars become a part of the politics and thus movies become

an important part of the political communication. All this is a part through which political marketing takes place (Voltmer, K, Beck, 2006)

In the present times, the online media the digital media has gotten so big that it cannot be ignored by any political party. Social media posts, blogs, vlogs, websites etc. has brought in the shift in the paradigm in which political communication takes place and the political parties represent themselves In Front of the people. The print and the television medium are mostly active during the period of elections, covering the elections campaigns and the related news, however, the digital platform is active all around the year (Cook, 1998).

2.2. The Digital Era

Not very long-ago print, television and radio were the main channels of information and communication. Marketing of any kind commercial or political were done through these mediums. The inception of the internet in the late 90s has now become big and with the digital channels the reach has become global. For example, in a few markets, a famous website can reach a large part of the society. The big social media platforms are not the only ones commanding the digital sphere. Perez Hilton the wen king reaches a staggering five million people daily through his blog (Narasimhan, 2018).

The main feature of the digital media is the mass reach but this is not just it, it can also be used for the singular interactions with the digital channel consumers. This is one of the outstanding features of the new media. Commercial and political marketing can be done in exceptionally personalized ways, such as sending emails, SMSs which could be tailor made catering to the needs of the individual. Different mails and SMSs could be sent to the individuals depending on their likes and dislikes. During the elections in India the political parties sent the personalized SMSs and the voice note talking about the policies of the government to influence the voters.

New digital media is essentially social wherein every content can be replied to by all. Viral content is a unique feature of the new media and the content can be easily shared and replicated. Digital marketing can be distinguished into two main types, i.e., pull

strategy and the push strategy. In the pull strategy to attract the consumers to the specific blog, video on YouTube or to a website. In the pull strategy the consumers are pulled to a specific digital platform, in this type of strategy the competition is greater and also a substantial budget is required for the planning and the execution of the content. However, the push strategy, unlike the pull strategy, is more personalized as it involves sending emails and SMSs to the target group of people. It is something not of global relevance but aims at a particular group of people. For example, the state government sends SMS to the people of the region affected by an earthquake or floods (Holoubek, 2019).

2.3. Employing the Internet for Political Communication

Unlike the old forms of political communication, the internet has surely helped in reaching to the end voter and addressing the problems from one place to another without being present in person or going outside from the comfort of the home. The Internet acts as the one stop for the citizens to interact with the politician and address the problems. In India the basic problem was that the citizens could not get in touch with the politicians if it is not the election period but the emergence of the internet has broken all such bonds and the people can be in touch and share their problems and views all around the year. Still, internet has not been completely used to its potential, it still remains the channel to spread knowledge and awareness about the politician and the political party (Williams, 1998)

Before the inception of the internet, the people would go to the administration for the solution to the problem but the new media has brought the politicians and the political parties close to the people, the physical boundary does not exist anymore and one device from home has connected the two. This would increase the transparency between the political leaders and the voters and the people believe it would increase if the politicians use the new media well and cater to the voters. The Internet as a tool would be best if it is effectively used for dialogue over monologue.

In today's times multiple online tools are available for use of political communication. These online tools are widely used by the users for the networking and the

entertainment purposes. The tools consist of websites, social networking sites, blogs, vlogs, video streaming sites, etc. These online tools can be greatly used for political communication. These tools can be used by the political parties to get the attention of the voters and communicate their ideas and views and also is a great platform to inform the public about the crisis and how to effectively manage it and to introduce new measures to curb the crisis situation and maintain peace and order. The internet is easily accessible to the public as it is an open system. The internet cannot just be used on the computers but is also easily available and can be used on the new smart phones. Thus, the impact of the online tools is great and can cater immensely to the political communication (Dahlgren, 2005)

Chapter-3: Literature Review

In the present research the focus is on the public support to the political communication during the covid in India. Political communication is a strategic form of communication from the political parties or the politician to influence the voters and maintain the positive image (Christian 2016). Political communication has changed a lot with the turn of the century and the coming of new media technologies. Earlier maximum communication from the political parties to the voters was done during the voting period but this notion has changed completely in the present times. The politicians are on the social media sites and required to maintain a healthy relationship with the followers. Unlike the previous times, the followers can anytime ask for help or criticise the leader if not happy. This has made the political communication even more important and the politicians are regularly trying to keep with their image. The effective political communication can influence the people but not to forget that the voters are no more passive consumers of the information provided to them by the political parties. They are the active consumers and they only accept the information they think is best suitable (McNair 2011). The following research will also see the respondent's support towards the political communication carried out during the covid crisis in India.

Crisis communication in the simplest way is 'the collection, processing and disseminating information required to address a crisis situation' (NDI 2020). In a crisis, clear and concise communication is required. It is different from normal political communication as in the times of crisis the politicians and the political parties do not have time to plan and the communication should be done sensitively. The political leaders are expected to be empathetic and give out a trustworthy response. As in the crisis times the citizens want to know what is actually going on, what are the measures taken by the government for improving the crisis situation and what steps and precautions are required to be taken by the people. The entire scenario changes when the crisis occurs, so it becomes important for the regime to take swift and honest communication plans to make people safe and then take the required adequate steps.

The responsibilities of the political leaders during the crisis times are overwhelming, but the government should be transparent with the citizens as the people can only think in a certain way through the crisis if they would know the real gravity of the situation. A guiding tool provided by the government to the people helps as it tells the way in which the people should behave in order to minimize the effects of the crisis situation and it gets easy for both the government and for the citizens. But if the political leaders take the other way and give out the false information in order to just maintain the positive image of the government, the crisis situation can get worse and the people would turn against the regime. So, transparency and empathy are the main key to lead a successful political communication or a crisis communication (Pustjens 2020). The section below will look at the researchers done on different political/crisis communication and look at the interesting perspectives from them.

The notion of politics-as-process is seen as an important framework in the research of political communication. Based upon this, the field of political communication has been clearly expressed as the study of political processes and its institutions which includes campaigns, elections, governmental bodies, citizens, and so on. Therefore, the early research in the fields of political science, mass communication, and social psychology has led to the emergence of a series of terms that, to date continue to dictate boundaries of the field of political communication which are the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, the media effects, and politics as a process. It is these terms that beseech research that aim to examine the impact of mass media on beliefs, attitudes, and opinions within the political process (Hart & Shae,2001). However, these boundaries are generally flexible. But there are times, when the hierarchy of research values are produced by these boundaries. History has also shown that research that is done outside of these boundaries rarely gets rewarded or valued in contrast to the studies and research that accepts these essential terms of this field. Probably, it is because of this that scholars carrying research out of these boundaries seldom see themselves as performing research in the area of political communication (Niel,1996).

As a product of social psychology, political communication is primarily influenced by a systematic interest in quantitative data pertaining to attitudes, opinions, and beliefs. But

there is no second thought that such data did not exist before the 1930's. Furthermore, the methodological individualism inherent in this stance frequently results in ignorance of external factors (like the historical context) that might form an individual's cognitive patterns (cf. Gitlin, 1979; Ricci, 1984). Politics as a process is viewed as an imperishable game of group interests whereby participants aim to optimize the competition with other interests (Mutz, D., & Martin, P. 2001). Research in mass communication contributes to the language of 'influences' and 'effects' to the central aspect of research. Built on this language, scholars make vague assumptions about the ways in which media affects attitudes, beliefs and opinions of the individuals (White, H. 1979). There is wide evidence showing the part played by an 'administrative' mind-set in political research and communication. The political actors developed techniques and strategies to manoeuvre the attitudes of the public, throughout the twentieth century (Swidler, A. 1986). It was also observed that governments were also ready to pay the researchers to design tools and methods in order to manipulate the citizens. However, there were analysts of political communication that analysed the effects of mass media on government and politics. They raised the question of 'what are the media doing to us?' in order to answer such questions, political communication research favoured immediate questions rather than that of historical concern. Another drawback is related to the boundaries set long ago, which does not cater to the new needs.

In the research paper 'The role of social media in crisis communication from the democratic perspective' by Marleen Bakx (2012) researches about the fire in Moerdijk and the shooting incident in Alphen aan den Rijn in 2011 carries out the qualitative study. The research is quite interesting as it deals with the man-made crisis and the role of social media in crisis communication. The research paper gives a broader idea about the analysis. Several pieces of communication done by the politicians and the people around the crisis were studied and the conclusion was formed. The research deeply studies the role of social media in democracy and the role it plays in the times of the crisis. It gives detailed insight about the effects of crisis responses strategies. The research also finds out the relevance of twitter in these cases as thousands of tweets were done on the case, and thus, it shows the role of twitter in crisis communication. The concerned authorities of Moerdijk did not pay much attention to the social media,

whereas, the authorities of Alphen aan den Rijk did pay attention to it. It concludes that how the concerned and affected people by the crisis can make use of social media and the concerned authorities shall pay attention to it as they would know the best course of action to help people.

The research paper 'Political communication in Disaster: a question of Relationship' by Hamish McLean and Jacqui Ewert (2015) they discuss the politics of disasters and to explore the relationships with different political actors from the viewpoint of emergency managers. The research conducts interviews with the emergency agencies in Norway, Germany, the UK and Australia. The research very interestingly examines when and what a politician shall communicate during the crisis/disaster and the research also further offers six principles involving the political actors in the disaster communication, where life and property is at risk. The paper concludes that the politicians should stop themselves from getting involved in the disaster tours as the resources are needed to save lives and the properties. However, the politicians should be able to participate actively in the recovery phases. The study also argues that the political messaging shall be outlined using a supportive narrative and not the operational narrative. This study perfectly outlines the responsibilities a politician shall engage in that would also be appreciated by the people and especially the one stuck in the disaster as they do not need the condolences but help from the authorities.

In the research paper 'Alternative framing: The effects of the internet on political support in authoritarian China' by Min Tang and Narisong Huhe (2013) the study aimed at studying the public support through the influence of internet in the authoritarian China, where the alternative piece of information is censored by the state. The study uses Easton's dimensions of public support. The study used the university students as the population for answering the questionnaire and the analysis and results were derived. The result concluded that the respondents who have access to the alternative online framing hold low support of public policy and also rate the performance of the government negatively. The study also concludes that though there is a strict restrictive measure from the state on the information, but with the internet's diffusion capabilities, the support towards the authoritarian regime can shake. It is quite interesting to note

that even in the strict authoritarian regime the people not only have the access to the alternative online framing but are also very skeptical about the functioning of the government and this thus supports that given the right tools and freedom of speech the citizens have more power and they can anytime tell the regime where they are going wrong using various different platforms like the new media. Such capabilities are with the democratic countries unlike China and in the present research the Easton's dimensions of public support is used to find out the support towards the political communication during the Covid-19 in India.

The research article 'US political leadership and crisis communication during the COVID-19' by Daryl V. Watkins and Aaron D. Clevenger (2021) gives an interesting insight in the US leadership and crisis communication in the covid times. The research uses the political discourse analysis to transcripts from the press briefings of the then US President Trump, along with the governors. It was concluded from the research that the then President Trump and the governors are endangered for the political fallout for their control of the covid situation. The research gives out an intensive insight as to how discourse analysis could be used to predict and analyze political behavior and crisis response. It could be understood from the research that effective crisis communication is essential otherwise even in the world's superpower the politicians might fail and the crisis communication can crash. The citizens want to know the truth and thus the political leadership is tested best in the difficult crisis times as it becomes clearer the stand of the government towards the betterment of the citizens.

In a similar research as above 'A failure of Political communication not a failure of Bureaucracy: The Danger of Presidential Misinformation during the COVID-19 pandemic' by William Hatcher (2020) is another research focusing on political communication in the US. The research analyzes the statements by the then President Trump. It was found out that the communications done by the President were misleading and dangerous. The lack of leadership during the covid crisis restricts the country's response to the crisis. The spread of incorrect information just makes the already bad situation worse. The research suggested that the administration shall adopt

the centered approach to the crisis and the leaders should show empathy, transparency and compassion in the communication.

Political communication is the lifeline of democracies. In times where democracy is unstable or in times of crisis, political communication plays an important role. For instance, the Premier of the State of Queensland (Australia), Anna Bligh was praised for her political communication skills and leadership during the 2010 floods (de Bussy, Martin and Paterson 2012). Additionally, Rudy Giuliani (Mayor of New York) was also lauded for his communication skills post 9/11 attacks. On the other hand, political leaders were criticized for their poor political communication during Hurricane Katrina (Cole and Fellows 2008, Olson and Gawronski 2010). Moreover, in a book titled 'ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA on Political Communication and Civic Engagement in Uganda' gives out the detailed analysis and the study of the social media and the political communication carried out during the conflict. The impact of social media vis-à-vis traditional media was deeply analysed along with its effects on political communication and other important related factors. It was found out that social media has played a greater role in the conflict and has been more helpful than the traditional media. It was found out that social media has also extensively affected political communication as the political leaders could not ignore the views in the social media and thus the communication was sensitively decided to cater to the citizens (Kamp, 2016, p. 31-53).

Yet, in another study led by Rune Ottosen (2002) to analyse the importance of political communication during a crisis or any other national calamities, he observed that the public looked up to their leaders as their first response to the crisis. He administered a survey of close-ended questions on 200 participants from west Norway. One of the major breakthroughs he found out was that more than half of the participants opted in favour of information/instructions given by political leaders in times of crisis. On the contrary, the remaining participants opted for following their own guidance, stating that the government actions are not always effective. Many Researches have also shown that, in catastrophic times, the way the information is delineated to the public by the

government officials plays an important role in efficiently controlling the consequences of the disaster (Olson 2000, and Gawronski 2010, Kelman 2012).

Presently, the SARS covid-19 crisis is seen as a unique predicament in terms of the global dimension and coordination of its disaster management (Neil,2020). The importance of political communication during this crisis has, therefore, become an important aspect of the study. Even though there is scarce literature review on this topic, nevertheless, an article written by Marco Mazzetti (2020) and published by Wiley Library beautifully discusses the covid-19 situation, political communication, and public health with a transactional analysis perspective. In this article, the author uses examples to express how political communication seems to be guided by hidden motivations that cater to the needs of the power of a few political representatives instead of the common good. This, in turn, has negative effects on the health of the citizens. Further, the author places emphasis on straightforward communication to promote transactional analysis as well as to address the indirect and direct outcomes of the pandemic on the health of the public (Marco Mazzetti,2020).

When the pandemic was at its peak, many political leaders misled the public for their own needs, therefore, misusing the power of political communication. For instance, the President of the USA, Donald Trump falsely, communicated that drinking toxic substances like bleach would help prevent coronavirus. This shows that his priorities were different than fighting the pandemic. Many researchers claim that it was because of the election year, and he did not want to damage the economy which would definitely have happened if severe restrictions were in place and obviously, the dwindling economy would have resulted in his loss in elections (Anna,2020). So, consequently, he deliberately delayed the lockdown and then emphasized to reopen everything as soon as possible. Moreover, the misinformation he communicated to the public about intravenous substances curing coronavirus, led to the death of many people.

Furthermore, in a recent study conducted by Altman (2020), he found out that the fear of the virus was maliciously expanded by public communication in many countries, making it a social disease, having damaging capabilities more than the virus itself.

Thus, it is very important for political leaders to effectively communicate to the public during the time of crisis. In India, states like Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, and Kerala, leaders were able to successfully control the pandemic primarily because of effective political communication. They constantly communicated to the public through press conferences in which they excellently played the role of the educator by explaining terms such as quarantine and social distancing to the general public in lucid language along with demonstrating the ways to remain safe during the pandemic, for instance, Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee paid visits to the markets weekly to ensure that social distancing is maintained (Sharma, 2020). Furthermore, the chief ministers of all the states repeatedly communicated with the lower echelon of the hospital authorities as well as administration, ensuring them that all the needful hospital commodities would be delivered to them. Not only this, the Prime Minister of India, often addressed the nation assuring them that everything would eventually fall into place.

Chapter- 4: Methodology

The present research will find out the public support towards the political communication during Covid-19 in India, the public support and the support to the specific policy adopted during the crisis times. In order to give the answer to the above stated statements a questionnaire is made as per the Easton's framework (1975) of specific support and diffuse support into three sub-dimensions: policy support, performance support and regime support. This chapter will describe the methods used in the research, data collection and how the data is analysed in order to give the answer to the research questions. For the data analysis, it will explain how the data will be used and analysed to provide the answers to the research questions.

4.1. Research Design

The research will explore the result of political communication in India during the corona crisis on people and their support towards the government and the specific policy adopted during the crisis times. This research field is new with the relation of the Covid-19 situation, as the covid pandemic is still an ongoing phenomenon and the countries are dealing with it as per their best suited ways. It was interesting to study the public support towards the government in the largest democracy in the world in the crisis situation with relation to the political communication carried out. The research is also descriptive in nature as the questions are designed in manner to reveal the support of the public and would describe the people's perception, if they are for or against the measures taken and the political communication done during the crisis period.

The research can also be categorised as the evaluation research as not just the public support would be studied but also the comparison between the responses of the people from journalism vis-à-vis psychology background would be made. The comparison would make the research more interesting and inclusive as we would not just know the general public support towards the political communication but also which background of the respondents are more in favour of the government as compared to the other. Besides other factors the research is a quantitative research as it will use the

questionnaire measured on the number of statements developed with respect to the topic, and respondents can strongly agree, agree, be neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree with the statements. Each response option is weighted, and each subject's responses are added to produce a single score on a topic. It will be further analysed which would be discussed in the further section of methodology.

4.2.Data Collection

4.2.1.Policy Selection

In times of crisis, the government of India has adopted multiple policies in order to cater to the citizens of India considering the vast geographical and demographic factors. The task is not an easy one, yet multiple steps on the big scale have been adopted. For the research the policy that I selected is the "Atmanirbhar Bharat", also known as "self-reliant India" or "self-sufficient India". I select this policy for the following reasons. First, the policy caters to the small and big business as many small scale industries and companies have suffered due to the crisis which led to the increase in the unemployment rate, secondly, the policy aims at making India bigger and more important part of the global economy, thirdly, the policy appeals to every strata of society and majority of the population younger or older are affected by it as it brought in many changes in how the banks grants loans by making the process more efficient. It will be best suited for the research as the appeal of the policy is pan India and so the political communication and advertising done around the policy would have caught people's attention, so it would be nice to get their views on one of the main policies adopted during the times of crisis. Lastly, it would be very interesting to research on how the respondents, which are a young group of people from the journalism and psychology background, respond to the policy as India has the highest population of youth in the world.

4.2.2.Respondent Selection

The research has incorporated the method of questionnaire and for that purpose the respondents are the main element to answer the questions. For the research 200

respondents 100 each from the journalism and 100 from the psychology background have been selected. The respondents are either university students or graduated from the two respective fields of study. The questionnaire was sent online.

The journalism and psychology students and graduates are selected for the research as the youth represent the nation and have a keen interest in the political functioning of the country and the journalism students even study in their curriculum and have a sharp eye of news and the political communication done around a specific thing. Keeping the difficult times in mind for conducting the research, it best suited to go with the option readily available to timely finish the research in the best possible way and thus I choose psychology as the other field of student for the questionnaire as because of the availability and also because just like the journalism students they too represent the youth of the nation. It would be quite interesting to find out the difference in their support towards the political communication during the covid crisis India if any. Also, all the respondents are active on social media sites and have complete access to the political communication through the online media by the political leaders.

4.2.3. Setting Interview Questions

This research is a quantitative form of research using the structured questionnaire to get the responses, which would be analyzed into numbers and the result would be derived. Quantitative research is the one that would be incorporated in the study, quantitative research involves several methods of data collection, such as telephone surveys, mail surveys, and Internet surveys. In these methods, the questioning is static or standardized; all respondents are asked the same questions and there is no opportunity for follow-up questions. Quantitative research requires that the variables under consideration be measured. This form of research is concerned with how often a variable is present and generally uses numbers to communicate this amount. Quantitative research has certain advantages. One is that the use of numbers allows greater precision in reporting results (Wimmer, Dominick 2014). This all makes it perfect to carry out the current research as it would give the standardized responses, that would be easy and more efficient to measure.

With the intent of the research to study the impact of the political communication during covid-19 crisis in India, has the political communication being liked or not and the support to the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy. I plan to compare participants political support in three dimensions:

1. The support for the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat).
2. The evaluation of government performance.
3. The overall support for the regime

I will be using the Easton (1965, 1975) framework of specific and diffuse support in three sub-dimensions, i.e., policy support, performance support and the diffuse regime support.

To measure the policy support of Atmanirbhar Bharat by asking the participants to answer the questions such as “to what extent do you support the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy?” the answers would range as per the Likert scale. To evaluate the performance of the government during the crisis, the areas that will be used to analyse the participants response, i.e., covid related activities, ensuring citizen’s well-being, maintain communal harmony and lockdown implementation. Each section of the questionnaire contains five questions each. The respondents will rate the performance of the government on the scale of five, ranging from definitely true to definitely false. The diffuse political support can be measured by the participants response to the statements such as, “I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in the crisis times”, “there might be some loopholes in the functioning of the political system but it is best suited for the situation of India” the responses will be recorded on the range of strongly agree to strongly disagree. The middle value would be derived from the final sum of each question so it would be studied that what sum values represents the high support vis-à-vis low support.

A schematic presentation of the operationalization of the research questions is presented in the table on the following page. The interview questions are framed to be best suited for the analysis and the results answering the research questions. Five

questions under each category of Easton’s framework have been developed to give out the best possible result in the uncomplicated manner.

4.2.4. Operationalization of the Research Questions

Research questions	Concepts	Interview questions
<p>Has political communication on the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat) succeeded during the crisis times?</p>	<p>Atmanirbhar Bharat policy, the political communication around it.</p>	<p>1. Do you agree with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy?</p>
		<p>2. Do you think the Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy has been successful yet?</p>
		<p>3. Do you think political communication around the policy was strong enough to motivate people to use India-made goods?</p>
		<p>4. The term Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy has been used in relation to making India “a bigger and more important part of the global economy”. How far do you agree with the statement?</p>
		<p>5. To what extent do you agree with the “Vocal for Local” initiative?</p>
<p>How positive or negative is the public support towards the government during the covid-19 crisis?</p>	<p>PM political communication, the Janta curfew testing, political communication around the vaccine, communal harmony.</p>	<p>6. PM Modi political communication was on point as he addressed the nation several times during the pandemic and assured the citizens.</p>
		<p>7. Janta curfew was a good political communication strategy to test waters before implementing the lockdown.</p>
		<p>8. Political communication during covid-19 in India is carried out strategically and responsibly.</p>

		<p>9. PM Modi first tried covid vaccine on himself was an effective political communication to motivate the citizens and building trust around India made vaccine</p>
<p>Is there any difference in the responses between the respondents of media background vis-à-vis psychology background?</p>	<p>Political communication for the betterment of the country, success of the political communication, overall support.</p>	<p>10. The government effectively promoted communal harmony among different ethnic groups during the pandemic.</p>
		<p>11. I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in crisis times.</p>
		<p>12. There might be some loopholes in the functioning of the political system but political communication was delicately done to be best suited for the situation of India.</p>
		<p>13. The political communication carried out during the crisis not only acted as a stress reliever to the citizens but also reinstated the citizen's belief in the government.</p>
		<p>14. The Indian government-led political communication was successful and done in the best possible way to keep Covid 19 in mind.</p>
		<p>15. Overall support the current regime for their developmental work in India.</p>

4.3. Data Analysis

The research questions would be answered as per the responses collected from the interview. The first research question ‘Has political communication on the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat) succeeded during the crisis times?’ will be answered in the first

section of the questionnaire, that is the support of the specific policy and in this research case it is the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' policy. The five questions are aligned to give the insight to the research question that if it has succeeded or not as the questions are structured and the number is given to each option and the total sum would define if it has succeeded or not. By answering this particular research question, it would give out the information that the participants are satisfied with the political communication done around the policy or not. Also, it would be interesting to compare the responses of the journalism respondents with that of the psychology respondents.

The second research question 'How positive or negative is the public support towards the government during the covid-19 crisis?' would be analyzed through the second and the third part of the questionnaire that is the evaluation of government performance and the overall support of the regime. The main focus would be given to the second part of the questionnaire as it deals with the questions related to the political communication undertaken during the corona crisis in India with respect to the political communication around the Janta curfew and the vaccination, that was one of the most important things to care about during the pandemic. The second section of the questionnaire as specified in the table above is well equipped to answer this particular research question along with the support of the third section of the questionnaire as it deals with the overall support of the regime and would be interesting to know if the people have faith in the existing government amid the covid situation or they are negative about it.

The third and the last research question 'Is there any difference in the responses between the respondents of media background vis-à-vis psychology background?' will be studied from the entire three sections of the questionnaire and a detailed analysis would be provided if the journalism respondents are more in favor of the policy or the government in comparison with the psychology respondents. This would make the research more inclusive as not one but two ideas and findings would be derived and the comparison would add the additional character to the study.

The answers from the questionnaire would be computed on the excel sheet and the score would be given to each option based on the Likert scale. Point 5 will be given to

the strongly agree/Definitely true and conversely point 1 would be given to strongly disagree/definitely false and respectively the score 2,3 and 4 would be given to agree/somewhat true, neutral and disagree/somewhat false. Then the total sum would be calculated per question separately of journalism and psychology respondents respectively. The middle value would be derived from the final sum of each question so it would be analyzed that what sum values represents the high support vis-à-vis low support. The data then would be presented in a bar graph with the total sum. The bar is selected to make the analyses and result less complicated and reader friendly. Per section of the questionnaire two bar graphs would be presented of journalism and psychology respondents and then the analysis would be made in accordance with the findings and the research questions.

Chapter- 5: Results and Findings

The present section presents qualitative data analysis for the research. The responses to the questionnaire are tallied in the total numbers and in (%) as per the marking allocated to each response, which will be depicted in the tables, there will be three tables divided between the three dimensions, i.e., public policy, performance support and diffuse regime. As per that the sum was added in the excel sheet and the total sum is derived with (%) for each question separately for the journalism responses and the psychology responses, 100 each. The total sum is then turned into a bar graph for better understanding.

The median is derived from the total sum of the responses from each section of the questionnaire and per that the values are assigned to understand the support, the median values being the neutral support, values higher than the median showing high support, subsequently, value lesser than the median represents the low support. The table for the first section is below:

Table 1: Key for analyzing the support			
	Value (public support)	Value (performance support)	Value (overall regime support)
High support	>375 (10.1)	>382 (10.4%)	>377 (9.8%)
Neutral (Median value)	375 (10.1%)	382 (10.4%)	377 (9.8%)
Low support	<375 (10.1)	<382 (10.4%)	<377 (9.8%)

The following table depicts the total sum, the marking to each option and the question from the **first section** of the questionnaire **‘The support of the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat)** of both journalism and psychology students.

Table 2: The total sum of the questions with (%) related to the public policy				
Questions	Options to questions A to E	Option marking	Total sum of each question	
			journalism	psychology
Do you agree with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy? (A)	Strongly agree	5	357	428
			(9.7%)	(11.6%)
Do you think the Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy has been successful yet? (B)	Agree	4	290	374
			(7.8%)	(10%)
Do you think political communication around the policy was strong enough to motivate people to use India-made goods? (C)	Neutral	3	326	375
			(8.8%)	(10.1%)
The term Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy has been used in relation to making India “a bigger and more important part of the global economy”. How far do you agree with the statement? (D)	Disagree	2	312	403
			(8.4%)	(10.9%)
To what extent do you agree with the “Vocal for Local” initiative? (E)	Strongly disagree	1	384	431
			(10.4%)	(11.8%)

The following bar graphs graphically represents the table above, journalism and psychology responses separately.

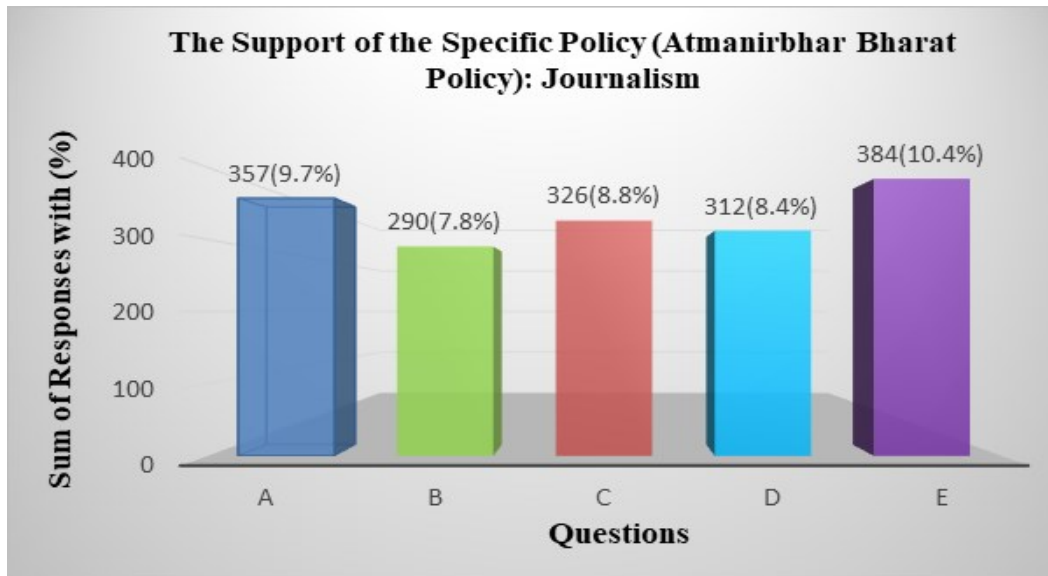


Figure 1: the graphical representation of the total sum of the responses with (%) of the journalism respondents to the first part of the questionnaire concerning the support of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy.

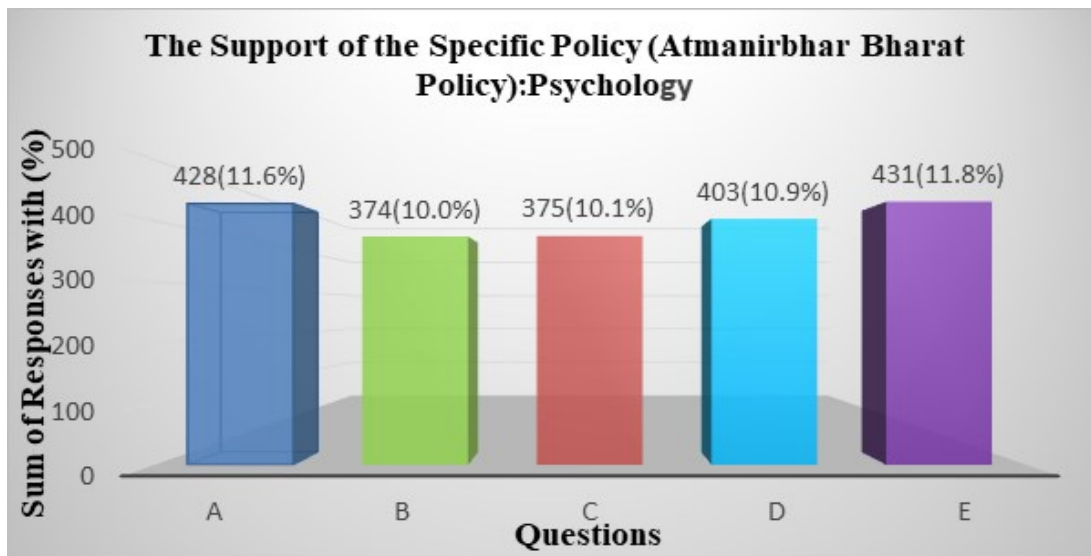


Figure 2: the graphical representation of the total sum of the responses with (%) of the psychology respondents to the first part of the questionnaire concerning the support of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy.

Figure-1: represents the total sum of the responses with (%) from the respondents of the journalism background. Whereas the A, B, C, D and E are the questions as specified in table 2. It can be inferred through the bar graph that the total sum to the questions is 357, 290, 326, 312 and 384 respectively. Referring to table 1, it can be seen that the maximum support from the journalism respondents is towards the question E, i.e., 'to what extent do you agree with the vocal for local initiative?' with the total sum of 384 (10.4%). The lowest support is received by question B, i.e., 'do you think Atmanirbhar Bharat policy has been successful yet?' with the total sum of 290 (7.8%), this shows that the confidence in the success of the Atmanirbhar Bharat from the journalism respondents is way below the average sum. The question C that deals with the political communication around the policy got the sum of 326 (8.8%) which is still below the median score but still better than the sum of question B. This shows that the journalism respondents are not in support of the policy, where the success, political communication and the outcome of the policy is concerned. The total sum clearly shows that the respondents are more critical towards not just the policy but also the political communication done around the policy. However, there is a support not directly towards the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy but to the undertaking initiative by it that is the vocal for local initiative.

Linking the results to the first research question '*Has political communication on the specific policy succeeded during the crisis times?*' It can be interpreted that the political communication around the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy has failed for the respondents of the journalism background. The lowest sum has been received by questions B and C that asks about the success and the support towards the political communication around the policy and it clearly seemed to have failed concerning the journalism respondents. With four total sums below than the neutral sum, clearly indicates that the journalism background respondents do not just agree with the success of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy but they also have severe doubts towards the political communication done around the policy.

It is quite interesting to note that the only positive support received from the respondents is not the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy directly but a branch of it which

encourages people to be vocal for the locally produced goods and products. The respondents see more capability in that particular initiative and not the actual policy itself.

Figure - 2 represents the total sum of the responses with (%) from the respondents of the psychology background. Whereas the A, B, C, D and E are the questions as specified in table 2. It can be inferred from the graph that the total sum to the questions is 428, 374, 375, 403 and 431 respectively. Referring to table 1 it can be seen that the maximum support is given to question E, i.e., 'to what extent do you agree with the vocal for local initiative??' by the psychology respondents with the sum of 431 (11.8%). The lowest support is given to question B, i.e., 'do you think Atmanirbhar Bharat policy has been successful yet?' with the total sum of 374 (10.0%). This shows that the support is very positive for the vocal for local initiative and almost neutral support towards the success of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy. The responses are quite positive by the psychology respondents for the questions A and D, with the total sums of 428 (11.6%) and 403 (10.9%) respectively, this shows that the psychology respondents are totally agree with the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy and also believes that it is a good policy for making India a bigger part in the world economy. The response to question C is neutral with the sum of 375 (10.1%), this shows that the psychology respondents are neither positive nor negative when it comes to the political communication done around the policy.

Linking the result with the first research question '*Has political communication on the specific policy succeeded during the crisis times?*' It can be devised that the responses are quite positive towards the questions pertaining to the Atmanirbhar policy from the psychology background unlike the responses from the journalism respondents. Out of the five questions three are high support, which concerns with the agreeing with the policy, making India a nigger world economy and the potential in the vocal for local initiative. However, the support is neutral concerning the political communication around the policy and a slightly low support concerning the success of the policy, which is in common with the journalism respondents and both have given the lowest score to the policy keeping the success in mind.

It is interesting to note the high differences in the ratings and support from the respondents of journalism and psychology. The one thing in common is that their highest and the lowest support is on the same questions, B and E respectively. For the psychology respondents the policy is a success but for the political communication around the policy they are neutral, neither positive nor negative.

The following table depicts the total sum, the marking to each option and the statements from the **second section** of the questionnaire ‘**The evaluation of government performance**’ of both journalism and psychology students.

Table- 3: The total sum of the statements with (%) related to the performance support				
Questions	Options to questions A to E	Option marking	Total sum of each question	
			Journalism	psychology
PM Modi political communication was on point as he addressed the nation several times during the pandemic and assuring the citizens. (A)	Definitely true	5	239	424
			(6.5%)	(11.5%)
Janta curfew was a good political communication strategy to test waters before implementing the lockdown. (B)	Somewhat true	4	375	445
			(10.2%)	(12.1%)
Political communication during covid-19 in India is carried out strategically and responsibly (C)	Neutral	3	354	401
			(9.6%)	(10.9%)
PM Modi first tried covid vaccine on himself was an effective political communication to motivate	Somewhat false	2	391	413

the citizens and building trust around India made vaccine. (D)			(10.6%)	(11.2%)
The government effectively promoted communal harmony among different ethnic groups during the pandemic. (E)	Definitely false	1	309	318
			(8.4%)	(8.6%)

The following bar graphs graphically represents the table above, journalism and psychology responses separately.

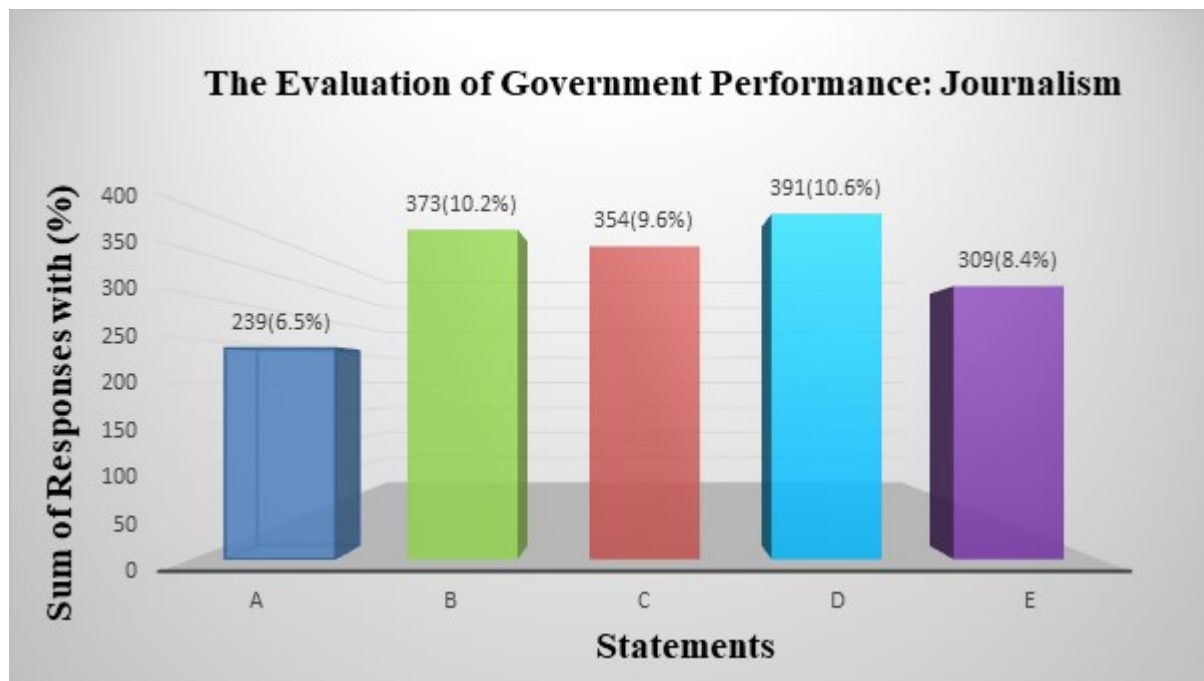


Figure 3: the graphical representation of the total sum of the responses with (%) of the journalism respondents to the second part of the questionnaire concerning the performance support.

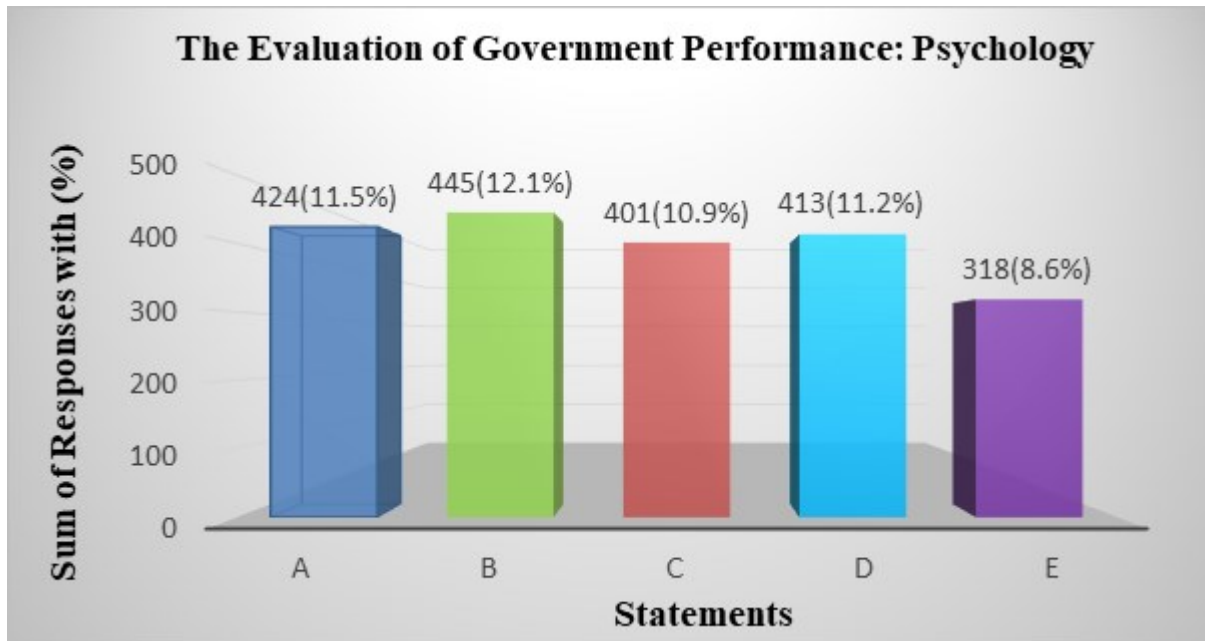


Figure- 4: the graphical representation of the total sum of the responses with (%) of the psychology respondents to the second part of the questionnaire concerning the performance support.

Figure-3 represents the total sum of the responses with (%) from the respondents of the journalism background. The A, B, C, D and E are the statements as specified in table 3. It can be inferred through the bar graph that the total sum of the statements is 239, 374, 354, 391 and 309 respectively. Referring to table 1, it can be understood that the highest support from the journalism respondents is towards the statement D, i.e., 'PM Modi first tried covid vaccine on himself as an effective political communication to motivate the citizens and building trust around India made vaccine.' With the total sum of 391(10.6%), subsequently, the lowest support is for the statement A, i.e., 'PM Modi political communication was on point as he addressed the nation several times during the pandemic and assuring the citizens.' With 239(6.5%) as the total sum. This reflects that respondent's confidence in the political communication carried out during the covid crisis in India is very low, however, the support is great for the action taken by the Indian PM Modi on trying the Indian made vaccine on himself first which instilled the confidence in people to take the vaccine without any harm. The journalism respondents were close to the neutral sum, i.e., 373(10.2%) and 354(9.6%) for statements B and C

against the neutral sum of 382(10.4%). It shows that the respondent's do not fully support the political communication done around the Janta curfew in relation with the lockdown, also they are not highly convinced by the political communication during the Covid-19 in India if done strategically and responsibly. This clearly reflected in the responses as the sum value was 28 less than the neutral value.

Linking the result of the journalism responses with the research question '*How positive/high or negative/low is the public support towards the government during the Covid-19 in India*' it can be seen that the support is not high four out of five total sum if the statements are below the median value, clearly stating the mood of the respondents. The journalism respondents seemed enthusiastic in PM Modi trying the first Indian made vaccine, and somewhat the political communication done around the lockdown and with how strategically or responsible the political communication was carried out during the crisis times. However, they totally reject the statement that if the PM Modi political communication was on point considering the covid situation. Also, the total sum was quite low for the statement E, wherein, did the government effectively promote communal harmony among different groups in the country as India is culturally diverse country, but the total sum is just 309(8.4%), therefore majority of the journalism respondents not agreeing to it.

Figure- 4 represents the total sum of the responses with (%) from the respondents of the psychology background. The A, B, C, D and E are the statements as specified in table 3. It can be inferred through the bar graph that the total sum of the statements is 424, 445, 401, 413 and 318 respectively. Referring to table 1, it can be concluded that the A statement, i.e., 'PM Modi political communication was on point as he addressed the nation several times during the pandemic and assuring the citizens.' Receives the highest support with the total sum of 424(11.5%), however, statement E, i.e., 'The government effectively promoted communal harmony among different ethnic groups during the pandemic' receives the lowest support with the total sum of 318(8.6%) against the neutral value of 382(10.4%) (table 1). It can be understood that the respondents of the psychology background believes that the political communication carried out by the India PM Modi during the pandemic was assuring. Moreover, they

showed less support to the government’s action of promoting communal harmony in the country. The psychology respondents were also in support of the statements B, C and D, which is about the political communication around the lockdown. Also, the political communication during the covid-19 is carried out strategically and responsibly also the support is shown in the PM Modi taking the first India made covid vaccine.

Relating the support of the psychology respondents with the research question ‘How positive/high or negative/low is the public support towards the government during the Covid-19 in India’ it can be clearly seen from the total sum of the statements that they are in support of the government and its political communication carried out during the crisis times in India. Out of the five statements only statement E’s sum is below the average, this is a similarity with the responses from the journalism background. This reflects that though the psychology respondents are in favour of the government and the way they conducted the political communication yet as per them the government failed to keep up with the communal harmony amongst the different ethnic groups in India. The responses are almost the opposite to that of the journalism responses as the journalism had high support in only one statement, i.e., E, whereas, in the psychology responses all were high support except for one. This opposite result in the responses from the two different backgrounds respondents almost of the same age group is interesting to discuss as it’s a revelation that the differences could be extreme and studied.

The following table depicts the total sum, the marking to each option and the statements from the **third section** of the questionnaire ‘**The overall support of the regime**’ of both journalism and psychology students.

Table- 4: The total sum of the statements with (%) related to the overall support of the regime				
Questions	Options to questions A to E	Option marking	Total sum of each question	
			Journalism	psychology

I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in crisis times. (A)	Strongly agree	5	416	485
			(10.90%)	(12.70%)
There might be some loopholes in the functioning of the political system but political communication was delicately done to be best suited for the situation of India. (B)	Agree	4	327	342
			(8.60%)	(9.00%)
The political communication carried out during the crisis not only acted as stress reliever to the citizens but also reinstated the citizen's belief in the government. (C)	Neutral	3	353	402
			(9.20%)	(10.50%)
The Indian government-led political communication was successful and done in the best possible way to keep Covid 19 in mind. (D)	Disagree	2	315	409
			(8.20%)	(10.70%)
Overall support the current regime for their developmental work in India. (E)	Strongly disagree	1	349	401
			(9.10%)	(10.50%)

The following bar graphs graphically represents the table above, journalism and psychology responses separately.

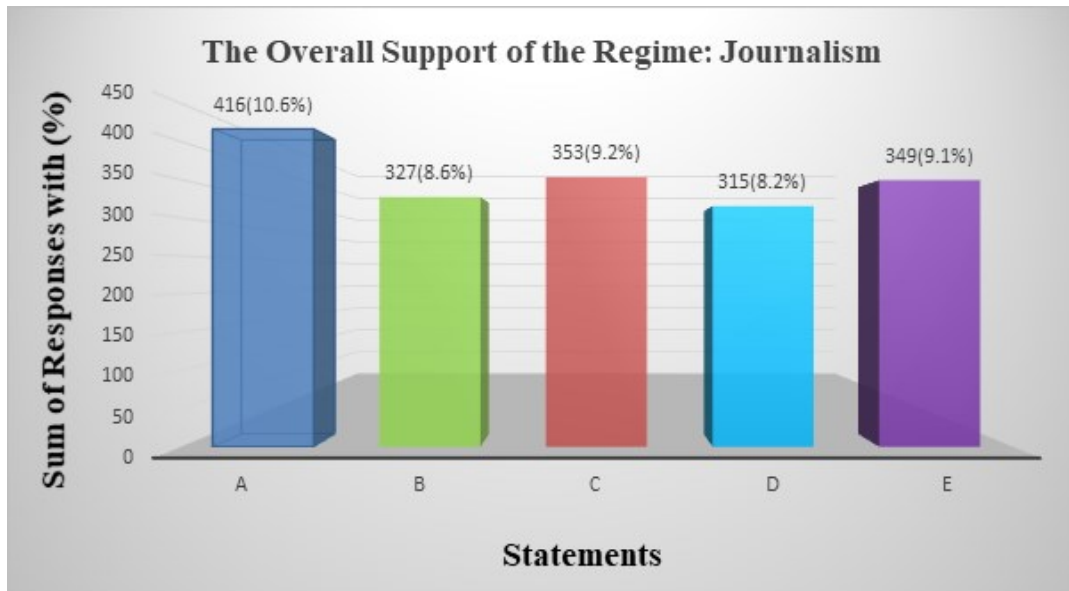


Figure-5: the graphical representation of the total sum of the responses with (%) of the journalism respondents to the third part of the questionnaire concerning the overall support of the regime.

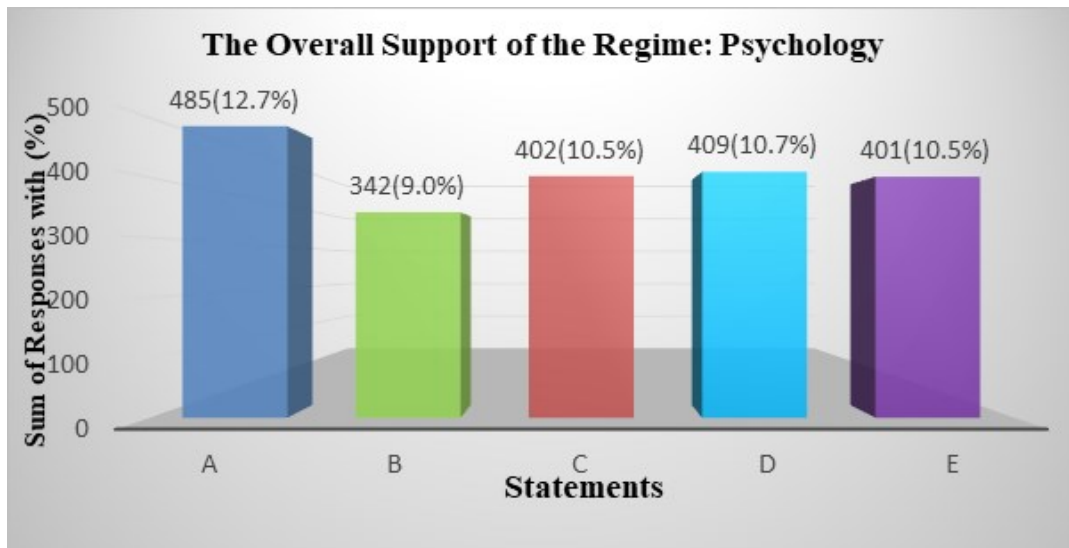


Figure 6: the graphical representation of the total sum of the responses with (%) of the psychology respondents to the third part of the questionnaire concerning the overall support of the regime.

Figure - 5 represents the total sum of the responses with (%) from the respondents of the journalism background. The A, B, C, D and E are the statements as specified in table 4. It can be inferred through the bar graph that the total sum of the statements is 416, 327, 353, 315 and 349 respectively. Referring to table 1, it can be inferred that the highest support is received by the statement A, i.e., 'I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in crisis times' with the total sum of 416(10.9%) and the lowest support is obtained by the statement D, i.e., 'The Indian government-led political communication was successful and done in the best possible way to keep Covid 19 in mind' its total sum is 315(8.2%) against the average neutral sum of 377(9.8%) (table 1). It can be concluded that the journalism respondents have a high support toward the government that they are working for the benefit of the people in the corona crisis times in India. However, they have a low support towards the political communication done by the Indian government keeping the crisis in mind. So, it is inferred that the journalism respondents support the government but quash its political communication and consider it unsuccessful in the corona crisis. The statements B, C and E have also received below the neutral support value. These statements concern with the political system, as there might be some negatives in the functioning but the political communication was done to best for the citizens, subsequently, political communication during the covid times reinstated the people's belief in the government and that if they overall support the regime for their developmental work or not. These have received the low support from the journalism respondents, thus directly in stating that they are not in favor of the political communication done for any purpose during the crisis times in India. Also, they lack support in the overall support of the regime but reflect poorly on the government of India from the journalism respondents point of view.

The research questions '*How positive/high or negative/low is the public support towards the government during the Covid-19 in India?*' and '*Is there any difference in the responses between the respondents of journalism background vis-s-vis psychology background?*' it can be clearly seen the respondents of the journalism background are in low support towards the government during the Covid-19 in India as for the last research question is concerned it can be seen from the first two sections of the

questionnaire that the psychology respondents are more in support of the political communication carried out by the government as compared to that of the journalism which is more critical of the government performance and the political communication carried out during the covid times in India and in the below section it will become more clear the difference in the responses between the respondents of the journalism and psychology background.

Figure-6 represents the total sum of the responses with (%) from the respondents of the psychology background. The A, B, C, D and E are the statements as specified in table 4. It can be inferred through the bar graph that the total sum of the statements is 485, 342, 402, 409 and 401 respectively. Referring to table 1, it can be resulted that the highest support is to the statement A, i.e., 'I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in crisis times' with the total sum of 485(12.7%), against, the lowest support for the statement B, i.e., 'There might be some loopholes in the functioning of the political system but political communication was delicately done to be best suited for the situation of India' with the total sum of 342(9.0%) against the neutral support value of 377 (9.8%) (table 1). It can be seen that just like the journalism respondents the psychology respondents also showed the maximum support to statement A as they believe that the current government in the crisis times is working for the goodwill of the people.

However, the psychology respondents have shown that political communication is done delicately for the best for the crisis situation in India despite some loopholes in the functioning, the responses clearly states that it is not best suited for the situation. The psychology respondents have also shown the high support to the statements C, D and E. They support the political communication done during the crisis times as a stress reliever for the citizens, also the political communication was best done successfully and in a best way keeping the Covid-19 situation in mind in India. Moreover, they also overall support the current regime for their developmental work in India. The research questions, questions '*How positive/high or negative/low is the public support towards the government during the Covid-19 in India?*' and '*Is there any difference in the responses between the respondents of journalism background vis-s-vis psychology*

background? It can be seen clearly that the psychology background respondents are for the support of the government during the covid 19 in India. The difference in the responses is also clearly seen between the respondents of psychology as compared to that of journalism, as journalism is more critical than the psychology responses.

Chapter- 6: Discussion

6.1. Discussion

This research study examines the public support towards the political communication carried out around the Covid-19 crisis in India. The structured questionnaire was developed based on the Easton framework of specific and the diffuse support in the three sub dimensions, i.e., policy support, performance support and the regime support. This was selected as it would give out the inclusive analysis on the research. The respondents are selected from two different academic backgrounds, i.e., journalism and psychology, they are either university students or graduates and have active presence on social media. The comparison of the result was more diverse and the vast opinion was derived on the research question which would be further discussed below. In this section, the essential findings, interpretation and the conclusion.

The questions are formed best to answer the research questions and get as much possible insight on the issue. The first research question '*Has political communication on the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat policy) succeeded during the crisis times?*' It can be seen from the first section of the questionnaire that deals with the policy support and this research it is the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy that was adopted by the government in the covid times in India. The support from the journalism respondents is not great as they've shown their high support in only one question, i.e., 'to what extent do you agree with the vocal for local initiative?'. This clearly shows that the journalism respondents are too critical about the policy, nor do they just have shown the low support to the agreement of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy but also have shown the low support to the political communication done around the policy to motivate people for using the India made goods. With the total sum of 384(10.4%) they have a high support for the vocal for local initiative with is a branch of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy, this clearly brings out the point that the journalism respondents' attention is more towards the branch initiative and they see more potential in that than the policy itself. It is a unique feature of the free and the democratic country and especially with the educated masses that they do not leave anything but critically take and interpret the information

given to them. Also, the journalism respondents do not see the capability of the policy to make India a bigger name in the world economy as they have shown a low support of 312(8.4%) against the neutral value of 375(10.1). This again gives out the interesting insight that the respondents have no confidence in the policy that could cater to the overall economy of the country and thus have shun it. Subsequently, there low support for the success of the policy also gives out the information that no matter on how grand scale a policy is introduced and in the most difficult times still there is no guarantee of it support and people not just take or absorb whatever is given to them but they also put their time behind it and then decide if they have to be in support or not. However, the psychology respondents do not seem to be agreeing with the responses of the journalism respondents and have shown quite a positive support towards the agreement of the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy and they also see the potential in the policy to be able to make a greater world economy. Moreover, the psychology respondents seem to be neutral around the political communication done around the policy and also, they are 50-50 for the success of the policy. Though they have high support for the policy but not the same confidence in the success of the policy.

The almost opposing responses from the journalism and the psychology background tells a lot about how an individual reads and intercepts the news. As it is believed that the journalism students are more critical of the news as they have been taught the same in college, the principle of news writing, biases in the news and how to critically evaluate the news and the entire course is devoted towards political communication. So their understanding is much deeper and thus they critically evaluate any piece of information especially if it is coming from the political agent, political party or from an individual politician. In crisis times as big as Corona and in the largest democracy with the second highest population in the world India, the things are easy to settle as the population is huge and on top of that the majority are living in rural India and the rates of illiteracy and poverty is quite high.

In such a situation is can be easily assumed that the political parties can take the advantage of the citizens for their own benefit as they would not question their decisions, but then the educated mass are equally taking care of such discrepancies

and critically evaluate the steps taken by the government, and with the new media no view is can be curbed or hidden and thus we can see that on the same policy two different academic background of respondents have such varied responses and the support towards the policy. Political communication is also not just done through television and radio but largely on the social media sites, i.e., twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc. and people give out their opinions in the comment section, this helps to keep democracy in check and the literate population also represents the voice of the grassroot people and they do not support every political communication but selectively trust some and rejects the others.

The second research question *'How positive/high or negative/low is the public support towards the government during the Covid-19 crisis in India?* This research question could be answered and inferred from the second and the third section of the questionnaire that are statement based, i.e., performance support and the overall regime support with the special attention given to the political communication. For the journalism respondents it can be analyzed that much like the first section they are not in favor of the performance of the government as the support is low for four statements out of five. Contrary to the neutral sum of 382(10.4%), four statements have received it below that and only one statement got the total sum more than 382, that is 391(10.6%) for 'PM Modi first tried covid vaccine on himself was an effective political communication to motivate the citizens and building trust around the India made vaccine'. This shows that the journalism respondents are for the India made vaccine and in favor of the political communication done around it. This again explains that they are watching and reading everything but accepting and rejecting on the basis of rational practical thinking, what is good for the people of the country and what is not. On the other hand, they have shown a considerable low support for the PM Modi political communication during the pandemic from the point of view of assuring the citizens. This means that they are not satisfied by the political communication to comfort the people as per their responses it did not assure them of the crisis situation.

The journalism respondents are also critical for the last section of the questionnaire. Much like the first two previous sections they have in this section also just shown the

high support to one statement, i.e., 'I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens, with the high score of 416(10.9%) against the neutral sum of 377(9.8%). This explains that though the journalism respondents are critical of the political communication around the covid crisis and the policy of Atmanirbhar Bharat policy but they still believe that the current regime is working for the benefit of the citizens. This gives out the interesting perspective, that selective linking for the regime. This shows that though the journalism respondents are not fully in favor of the government for the work and the communication in the pandemic times but still they have a belief in the government that their intentions are not wrong and they are working no matter perfectly or not but for the people of the country. As per the support to the regime is concerned the journalism respondents have given quite a low support to the Indian government led political communication's success to be best suiting keeping covid in mind. This rein firms the findings though different questions and statements that the journalism respondents are not in favor of the political communication of the Indian government around the corona situation is concerned or otherwise. They were only in favor of the political communication done around the Indian produced Covid vaccine and that the PM Modi took the first injection.

The journalism respondents have totally quashed the political communication done in and around the covid crisis times in India by the Indian government. Their support is very little when it comes to political communication. However, the responses from the psychology background tell the different story. The psychology respondents are seemed quite favorable for the government performance support. For the evaluation of government performance, the total sum of four statements out of five is above the neutral sum, meaning that the support is high. The only statement with the low support is 'The government effectively promoted communal harmony among different ethnic group during the pandemic' this indicated that the psychology respondents are not in much favor when it comes to the government handling different ethnic group and maintaining the communal harmony. The other statements have relatively high support, as the psychology respondents unlike the journalism respondents have shown the support to the political communication done by the PM Modi during the pandemic time and assuring the people. Also, they believe that the political communication done

around the implementation of lockdown was done well and that the political communication was carried out effectively and responsibly. Much like the support from the journalism respondents the psychology respondents also believe that the political communication done around PM Modi taking the first jab of the Indian made vaccine was done well as it instilled the confidence in the citizens for the Indian made covid vaccine.

The psychology background much like the second section have shown the equal positive support to the third section of the questionnaire. It is interesting to see that the psychology and journalism respondents both have shown the high support to the same sentence among others for the psychology respondents, i.e., 'I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in crisis times' the positive support from respondents of both the background reinstates that the government performance overall for the crisis situation is being appreciated. This gives out a very unique outcome to the research that though the respondents as discussed above and also in the result and analysis section differ too much but they both collectively believe in the government that despite the odds the Indian regime is working for the betterment of the people considering the crisis situation. The psychology respondents have also shown the high support to the political communication carried out by the regime during the corona crisis that it acted as the stress reliever to the citizens and have reinstated citizens' belief in the government. Also, they support the political communication that was done in the best possible way keeping Covid-19 in mind and finally they overall support the current regime for their developmental work in India, unlike the low support from the journalism respondents.

In the paper by Julian McDougall (2019) where the researcher talks about media literacy versus the fake news. The paper gives quite an insight into how a media literate is able to well distinguish the fake news from the one with no media literacy. It also talks about critical thinking and that the media background students are more critical in thinking when it comes to news and engagement and also how the media studies shall include the study more incorporating. This study can in some ways be related with the present research as we can also see that the journalism respondents are more critical

than the respondents of the psychology background. Though in the present research we are not discussing the fake news, still it proved an example on how media literacy affects the consumption of news which would be directly related to also what the politicians are saying in the form of political communication and what they are actually doing it.

The final research question *'is there any difference between the responses between the respondents of journalism background vis-à-vis psychology background?'* Through the analysis and from the above section it is pretty clear that the range in the responses between the journalism and the psychology background are quite different. Through the responses to the questionnaire, it can be inferred for the journalism responses are overall not in the support of the political communication done during the Covid-19 crisis in India by the current government as the total sum of the four statements out of five in the last two dimensions of the questionnaire that concerns with the evaluation of government performance and the overall support of the regime is below the neutral value of 382(10.4%) and 377(9.8%) respectively, which means that the support is low. Thus, the support is negative/low towards the government during the Covid-19 crisis which is the second research question. The support to the first dimension of the questionnaire that deals with questions on the specific policy also received low support from the journalism respondents as like the last two dimensions, this one also received low support to four questions against five. Subsequently, this clearly tells that the support is low towards the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy and the political communication around it, thus proving the first research question as not succeeded. As the first research question was concerned around if the political communication around the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat) succeeded or not? And as for the last research question it can be clearly seen that there are a lot of differences when it comes to the responses between the journalism vis-à-vis psychology background. It is almost the opposite response, whereas, the journalism responses showed the high support to only three questions/statements in the entire questionnaire, the psychology showed the low support to only three questions/statements in the questionnaire. This clearly states the differences in the responses from the respondents from two different background.

The psychology respondents have agreed with both the first two research questions, i.e., *'has political communication on the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat) succeeded during the crisis times?'* and *'How positive or negative is the public support towards the government during the covid-19 crisis in India?'* The responses were quite high as four responses from each dimension of the questionnaire are higher than the neutral value, i.e., 375(10.1%), 382(10.4%) and 377(9.8%) respectively.

It is understood that the journalism respondents are more critical of the political communication done in different areas, i.e., assuring citizens, responsibly, covid crisis, Atmanirbhar Bharat, etc. and thus have shown low support. Though they have a high support that the current government is working for the betterment of the citizens in the crisis times, however, they do not overall support the current regime for their developmental work in India. On the other hand, the psychology respondents are in favor of the political communication carried out by the Indian government during the covid crisis around the crisis, the policy and other relevant things concerning the crisis.

6.2. Significance of the Study

The current research is significant in a number of different ways. Firstly, using the Easton's dimensions of public support, for the first time the public support toward the political communication in the times of crisis is studied. This adds the unique feature to the research as using the framework of three dimensions of public support the result has been derived between the respondents of the two different academic backgrounds. This gives the study more structure and also the comparison between the responses can be tallied and analysed, will give out the unique result. Generally it is understood that journalism and psychology are somewhat related and so the assumption is made that the results from them would almost be the same, but in this research, it was found out that in reality they were completely contrary to one another.

The research also used the qualitative method to derive the results and used it in a very reader friendly way, by not putting the sophisticated mathematical formulas and interpretations but rather used the bar graphs and the calculations that is reader's

friendly as the research is for people from every walk of life and thus it should be an easy understandable research.

The study has the potential to add a great sum to the existing literature as a lot of the things written and derived in the research is new and something never done before, like comparison of the responses of the different academic background respondents and yet keeping the research too much for its research questions. The diversity and the simplicity in the research would be of great benefit of the further researchers.

The research significantly and sensitively deals with the situation Covid-19 crisis in India and the support around the political communication so that no sentiments of the readers are hurt especially keeping the people of different cultural and ethnic groups in mind as India is a culturally diverse country and politics plays a greater role in the lives of the people as to no divert the attention anywhere else and to strictly find out the results and interpretations pertaining to the research questions.

6.3. Limitations and Further research

The study has few limitations. Given the time and the circumstances not a large number of respondents could be incorporated so the further researchers are suggested to at least take the research of 400 against the 200 used in the current research. The research could only use the respondents from the two different academic backgrounds, so the further researchers are suggested to take more than four or five as it would give out the larger comparison and would reflect the result of the larger population and not just of the small section of the society.

The study was limited to Easton's framework of political support as it suited the size and the population of the research, however, it is suggested for the further research that the other frameworks could also be incorporated to make the result a more nuanced one. The further research could also undertake the study of political communication during the crisis times in the qualitative method. The present research did not engage in the complicated statistical derivations to find out the result as the intention was to keep it straightforward and a read for all also concerning the time limitation it suited the best for

the research, but the further researchers could use the more advanced statistics to present the data and the results.

The study used the structured questionnaire and the options were based on the Likert scale, so it is suggested to the further researcher to also use the open-ended question to bring in more insight to the topic especially when the qualitative analysis is performed and it would make the better understanding of the topic. Further research could focus not only the political communication during the crisis but also its implications on the citizens and it directly affects the citizens, so understanding their point of view for the action of the government would be quite an interesting study. In the present study no political communication during the corona crisis is presented as the study deals with the public support towards the political communication surrounding the policy and the other main elements in a crisis situation, so the recommendation to the further researcher is to also provide the politically communicated messages through the social media sites or the television, radio, etc. so that the messages could be analyzed along with the public support.

6.4. General conclusion

The analysis of “Political Communication during COVID-19 in India: Study of Public Support” brings out quite varied results based on the research questions and the differences in the responses from two different academic backgrounds, i.e., journalism and psychology. The study was aimed to study the public support towards the political communication during the covid crisis times in India and to understand the public support the 200 respondents were interviewed 100 belonging to the journalism background and 100 from the psychology background. A structured questionnaire based on the Likert scale was presented and the responses were gathered online.

The responses from the journalism respondents were against the political communication done during the covid-19 in India by the current government and it is represented statistically in the result part of the thesis. The journalism responses were quite critical of the government’s functioning and the political communication during the crisis time and they showed very low support to the policy Atmanirbhar Bharat. The

journalism respondents did not seem quite convinced of the policy, the communication done around it and the intention behind it. They seem to have rejected the policy completely and interestingly were in favor of the branch initiative of the policy that is 'vocal for local'. As the journalism background respondents are understood to have the flair knowledge of the news and the political communication so it can also be concluded that more the knowledge about a certain area the more critical one gets in thinking and processing of the information and only accepts it when it best suits the parameters that they have set. And in this situation, it can be seen that the journalism students are quite critical of the political communication undertaken by the current regime around the covid crisis as they have shown a low interest in thirteen out of fifteen questions/statements. This clearly states that the journalism respondents have very less to no support towards the political communication done around the corona virus in India.

The responses from psychology have the totally opposite responses as the journalism responses. The psychology responses are in alignment with the research questions, i.e., '*has political communication on the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat) succeeded during the crisis times?*' and '*How positive or negative is the public support towards the government during the covid-19 crisis in India?*'. The responses from the psychology respondents are overwhelmingly in favor of both the policy and towards the government. They have also shown a high support towards political communication during the crisis times. Their support is high in almost every aspect of political communication. The psychology respondents showed low support towards the government's tendency to promote communal harmony in the crisis times. Though they believe in the Atmanirbhar Bharat policy but are almost neutral when it comes to the success of the policy, overall, psychology respondents have shown a positive support unlike the journalism respondents.

It can be concluded that though the two academic fields seem interconnected, i.e., journalism and psychology yet there can be a huge difference in the way they perceive the politically communicated messages as the research has made it clear. That the one academic background respondents are too critical of the government's performance and the political communication, but on the other hand the other is in favor of it. This is a

unique comparison and result. Concluding that the journalism respondents have the low support to the research questions vis-à-vis psychology respondents have a high support towards the political communication done during the covid crisis in India.

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Appendix: Questionaries

The support for the specific policy (Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy)

· 1. Do you agree with the Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy?

· 1. Strongly agree

· 2. Agree

· 3. Neutral

· 4. Disagree

· 5. Strongly disagree

2. Do you think the Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy has been successful yet?

· 1. Strongly agree

· 2. Agree

· 3. Neutral

· 4. Disagree

· 5. Strongly disagree

3. Do you think political communication around the policy was strong enough to motivate people to use India-made goods?

· 1. Strongly agree

· 2. Agree

· 3. Neutral

· 4. Disagree

· 5. Strongly disagree

4. The term Atmanirbhar Bharat Policy has been used in relation to making India “a bigger and more important part of the global economy”. How far do you agree with the statement?

· 1. Strongly agree

· 2. Agree

- 3. Neutral
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

5. To what extent do you agree with the “Vocal for Local” initiative?

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

The evaluation of government performance

6. PM Modi political communication was on point as he addressed the nation several times during the pandemic and assuring the citizens.

- 1. Definitely true
- 2. Somewhat true
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Somewhat false
- 5. Definitely false

7. Janta curfew was a good political communication strategy to test waters before implementing the lockdown.

- 1. Definitely true
- 2. Somewhat true
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Somewhat false
- 5. Definitely false

8. Political communication during covid-19 in India is carried out strategically and responsibly

- 1. Definitely true
- 2. Somewhat true
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Somewhat false
- 5. Definitely false

9. PM Modi first tried covid vaccine on himself was an effective political communication to motivate the citizens and building trust around India made vaccine.

- 1. Definitely true
- 2. Somewhat true
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Somewhat false
- 5. Definitely false

10. The government effectively promoted communal harmony among different ethnic groups during the pandemic.

- 1. Definitely true
- 2. Somewhat true
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Somewhat false
- 5. Definitely false

The overall support for the regime

11. I believe that the current government is truly working for the goodwill of the citizens in crisis times.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neutral

- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

12. There might be some loopholes in the functioning of the political system but political communication was delicately done to be best suited for the situation of India.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

13. The political communication carried out during the crisis not only acted as stress reliever to the citizens but also reinstated the citizen's belief in the government.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

14. The Indian government-led political communication was successful and done in the best possible way to keep Covid 19 in mind.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Neutral
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

15. Overall support the current regime for their developmental work in India.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree

- 3. Neutral
- 4. Disagree
- 5. Strongly disagree

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