A STUDY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN

NEPAL

A Dissertation Submitted to

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Madan Bhandari Memorial College

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In the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the course of JMC 570

Master in Journalism and Mass Communication

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the work reported in this thesis entitled 'A STUDY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NEPAL' submitted to Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of Madan Bhandari Memorial College, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication has been completed under the supervision of Rabi Raj Baral Faculty Member of Journalism and Mass Communication Department, is my original work, has not been submitted for the candidature or any other degree.

………………

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Date: 04 Aug, 2023

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Mrs. Sujata Basnet has prepared this dissertation entitled 'A STUDY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NEPAL' under my guidance and supervision in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the course of JMC 570 Thesis writing of Master in Arts in Journalism. Therefore, this dissertation report is recommended for its evaluation.

…………………………

Mr. Rabi Raj Baral

Dissertation Supervisor

Date: 05 Sep, 2023

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LETTER OF APPROVAL

A dissertation entitled 'A STUDY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NEPAL' has been submitted by Mrs. Sujata Basnet in the partial fulfillment of the requirements of the course of JMC 570 Thesis Writing of Masters in Art in Journalism and Mass Communication.

APPROVED

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Dr. Raghu Mainali

Head of the Department

Date: 11 Sep, 2023

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Abstract

The very nature of public relations maintaining goodwill between an organization and it's various stakeholders requires a high degree of professionalism. This research was done on how the Ministry of Health and Population established public relations during the Covid epidemic. The time of the covid epidemic was a kind of crisis time. This research has revealed how the Ministry of Health and Population established public relations at that time. At that time, when people were physically, mentally and emotionally weak, common people believed the information of the Ministry of Health and Population. The official information received from the Ministry's website was very important. People rely on official websites to get various information. It was forbidden to walk outside during covid. At that time, it was also the responsibility of the ministry to provide accurate and official information to the common people.

TABLE OF CONTENT

ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Access to covid 19 tools
Covid – 19	Corona Virus Disease 2019 caused by SARS-Cov-2
CICI	Case Investigation and Contract identify
CTCF	Contract Tracing Contract Follow up
EDCD	Epidemiology and Disease Control Division
GON	Government of Nepal
GCHDDCF	Ground Crossing Health Desk Data Collection Format
HEDMU	Health Emergency and Disaster Management Unit
HEOC	Health Emergency Operation Center
HD	Health Desk
IMU	Information Management Unit
IHR	International Health Regulations
MOHP	Ministry of Health and Population
PCR	Polymerase Chain Reaction
PR	Public relation
PRO	Public Relations Officer
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Public relations are the art of making any social organization, company, industry, etc. realize its policy objectives and programs to the employees and the target group. It expects long-term benefits, not short-term ones. The role of public relations is a means of dealing with any organizational prestige. While creating deep sympathy between the commodity production associations and the general public, public relations help to change the public perception through a variety of strategies.

The main purpose of public relations is to maintain long-term good relations between the public and the organization. Public relation plays an important role not only outside the organization but also within the organization. Since the success and failure of any organization lies in public relations, the importance of public relations is high. Public relation is important to enhance the image of the organization. In this way, public relation helps to maintain good relations and establish reputation between the organization and the people.

According to standard dictionary 'Turning point of better or worse' is called crisis. In times of crisis, we have to face very difficult challenges and the crisis has golden opportunities for change. Covid 19 has created fear, terror, and uncertainty in people. This is a time of crisis. During this time many doubts and suspicions arise in people. At this time, when there is no uniformity in the news received through the media, such news is also helping to spread tragedy. The media must responsibly flow accurate, factual information at all times. In times of crisis, we need to be more vigilant. In times of crisis, people are worried. At that time, the flow of accurate,

systematic and factual news and ideas is one of the principles of journalism. People who are not media literate, however, believe that the misleading news in the media is the truth, which creates a tragic situation. Therefore, in times of crisis, information should flow more easily through the media.

Public relations, as a distinct field of academic study, is relatively new, but public relations techniques can be traced historically to as early as the civilizations of Babylonia, Greece, and Rome. In America, early examples of the use of strategies and tactics to gain public consent including the Boston Tea Party, the Federalist Papers, and Thomas Paine's "Common Sense" helped lay the foundation for the American Revolution. During the 1800s, P.T. Barnum and the railroads led the way in the development of what has become known as the press agentry model of public relations, which exists solely to promote the client's view and position. By the 20th century, public relations included concerted efforts on the part of the federal government to sell World War I and World War II to the American people. Instead of just disseminating information, public relations practitioners began to focus on psychological and sociological aspects of communication Sahar Khamis Elizabeth L. Toth (2009). Lessons learned from those efforts helped shape the role of public relations in managing not just public consent but also public opinion regarding companies and organizations.

The practice of public relation in Nepal was started in the 1950s and 1960s. It was developed by government agencies, political parties and non-governmental organization An introduction to public relations Lal Deusa Rai (2022). During this period traditional media channels like newspaper and radio are used for public relation activities. The government of Nepal has recognized the importance of public relation and communication such as disaster

management, earthquakes, Covid-19 pandemic etc. Public relations have played a role in disseminating vital information and managing public perceptions during critical events.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

The Covid-19 pandemic has generated a challenge to public relations (PR) in various sectors. That was the time frame of crisis and in that time health, social and economic condition is affect by Covid-19 pandemic. At that time people are facing with misleading information and directly-indirectly affected by psychological problem too. Similarly, people are facing such a trauma in that time frame. In that scenario, how public relation create a vital role for people, how effectively communication and management of public perception organized by MoHP, PR challenges, what types of tools and technique follow by MoHP to handle the situation to maintain reputation of MoHP are analysis in this research.

1.3   Research Question

Research question is fundamental component of any research formulate by any organization. Which helps researcher to entire investigation and it also assist to find out purpose and scope of their study. Research question guide researcher in right track and specific question creates a clear result of related topic. For analysis such types of condition following research questions are included in this study:

1.3.1 What types of PR tools applied by Ministry of Health and Population to continue its public relations work during the Covid pandemic?

1.3.2 Why did MoHP use public relation during Covid-19 pandemic?

1.3.3 What was the impact of Ministry of Health and Population PR during the covid-19 pandemic?

1.4   Objective of the study

The main purpose of this research is to find out about the public relations information provided by the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) through its website, Face book page, Twitter handle, Our Health Apps and Viber Group during Covid 19. This research can provide information about public relations in the situation of crisis.

1.4.1 To explore PR tools applied by Ministry of Health and Population to continue its public relations work during the Covid pandemic.

1.4.2 To examine MoHP use public relation during Covid-19 pandemic.

1.4.3 To analyze the impact of Ministry of Health and Population PR during the covid-19 pandemic.

1.5   Significant of the study

We never know when the time of disaster will come. Therefore, there is no option but to be careful and prepare in advance. Efforts made by the Ministry of Health to establish public relations are very necessary in times of crisis. In upcoming days, Even the government agencies can consider the decisions of this ministry as a basis for solving the problems in their area. It is also important because this type of research is needed in times of crisis. This research is important for anyone who wants to know about public relations techniques used in a crisis. To understand the how website, Face book page, Twitter handle, Our Health Apps and Viber Group was smoothly run and provide information in crisis is another important part of the study. As well as it provides much more information to handle the health-related pandemic in future generation.

Misleading information spreads quickly in the crisis situation. Creating an atmosphere of trust for people in times of crisis is an important task for the Government. Important steps are

taken to prevent the spread of misleading news in times of crisis, to provide accurate information and to follow the necessary information and instructions. The research aims to gather important information for future generations on how to communicate in times of crisis and post-crisis rehabilitation. This research will be important for researchers and researchers studying Crisis communication and public relations. This research work can be helpful other researchers, educators, practitioners and policymakers.

1.6 Limitation of the study

This research only analyzed the website, Face book page, Twitter handle operated by the Ministry of Health and Population. This research and study focusing on the emergency situation of Covid-19 cannot be said to be the same and similar in other emergency situations. Only the Ministry of Health and Population has been studied in this research. Even in that, only the public relations did during Covid 19 has been made the center of study. Also, the limitation of this research is only the Ministry of Health and Population is analyzed among the various ministries. Regarding the Twitter handle and Facebook page, only 15 days of the start of Covid have been made as a basis. Only 100 people have respondents in the survey used in this research. This Campus has chosen the respondents of this campus due to the participation of students studying from different places all over Nepal. Having only 100 respondents is a limitation of my research. In addition to this, considering the content of only 15 days of Facebook and Twitter under social media is another limitation of this research.

The time period has been fixed in this research because it is easy to analyze the data of only fifteen days, there is no gelling or distortion in the data, and the effect of a short period of time can be detected through analysis.

1.7   Oraganization of the study

This study catogorized in three parts Chapters, Reference and Annexes. There are five chapters in this study which discuss introduction of the study, review of the literature, research methods, data presentation, interpretation and analysis and finding, conclusion and recommendation. Reference uses of a source of information in order to ascertain something and provide (a book or article) with citations of sources of information. Annexes are separate from the main content of study.

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1   Review of Previous Studies

Public relation is simply state the art and science of building relationship between and

organization and its key audiences. Any organization's contact with the public, exchange of ideas

and goodwill is called public relations. Public relations are concerned with planned, ongoing

activities and interactions with the public. Public relations are necessary to increase mutual

cooperation and understanding between the organization and the customer and to achieve the

expected goals of the organization. For this, the employees, who are considered as the driving

force of the organization, have to create a customer-friendly, neutral and clean image with

service with a smile.

Among the various searches and researches related to public relations. This study

analyzes the topics found in some public relation books, various thesis and articles. Among

them, in this thesis, public relations of government agencies have been carried out. Author

Purushottam Nepal has written a book on the recent major earthquakes, aftershocks and the

waves they have caused in Nepal and other countries - 'Earthquake of 2072 and the history of

earthquakes. Nepal (2072) provides detailed information about the impact of the earthquake in

2015 and the damage caused by it. The quake killed at least 8,896 Nepalis and foreigners and

injured 22,303 others.

Private and government physical structures, historical and archeological shrines were

destroyed. The damage is estimated at seven billion. Public relation plays an important role in

keeping the image of the organization high. As an information officer or spokesperson is

appointed in the government bodies to disseminate any important information, it creates a

conducive environment for the flow of information from the subject matter experts of the concerned sector. Even a small lack of management can be a big loss to the organization.

Another important issue is the reputation of the organization. It is said that it is harder to maintain one's reputation than to gain it. If the organizational pattern is not followed, there will be difficulties in daily administrative work. Another important question is what to do in times of crisis. It is very important for the organization to be aware of the problems and challenges that may come to the public relations officer during the crisis. Conflicts, whatever their nature, be they external or internal, are destructive to the organizational structure, and conflicts must be identified and resolved. Conflict prevention can be resolved through internal discussions. Discussions, study of past conditions, planning and implementation are important for solving organizational problems so as not to tarnish the image of the organization.

Employees working within the organization should also have a sense of responsibility, role and rights. Scholars suggest that developing a proper communication system is the only way to resolve conflict. A certain person spokesperson can be arranged to provide information in the organization. In times of crisis, the organization must act with foresight and understanding. In case of crisis, if you inquire about the organization by telephone, the responsible persons of the organization should answer it. Information that is available at all times plays an important role. In times of crisis, the public relations manager should be instructed to convey messages only by respecting the wishes, consciousness and feelings of the people.

The message plan to be prepared by the public relations consultant during the crisis should have message elements, responsibilities, communication system, schedule, agreement, estimated time, etc. for the target group. Every member working in the organization should have a sense of trust, cooperation and understanding with each other. In addition to how

organizational work is conducted, arrangements should be made to encourage and reward employees for developing a system that evaluates their conduct. Those who commit immoral acts should be warned first and then punished. Anyone working in the public relations department needs to be proficient. In order to move the organization forward by adopting special strategy or new measures in case of crisis, the target group should be influenced by changing the means of public relations. Choose the means to deliver information quickly to the target group. For this, special attention should be paid to the art of information communication. An appropriate fund should be set up to make decisions about the flow of information and a list of how to effectively communicate messages to the target group. Since the message raises awareness among the people as well as motivates them to consume goods and services, a definite approach has to be taken for the message.

Public relations are an effective means of mutual cooperation between one government and another government, government and people, people and political parties, individuals and people. The process of providing information about the organizational structure of an organization is called institutional public relations. The two criteria for measuring institutional public relations are communication about efficient manpower and organizational structure. The more skilled workers there are in a skilled manpower organization, the better the organization will be. Employees are efficient, honest and diligent. Effectiveness comes in organizational work. Training can be arranged for the employees to boost their morale. Employees who do a good job in the organization should be encouraged, promotion should be done on the basis of efficiency, salary allowance and facilities should be provided. When the work is divided according to efficiency, the work system becomes dynamic.

The key members of the organization should inform other members about the organizational structure of the organization by communicating about the organizational structure. All the members of the organization should know how the operations are carried out by the branches and departments. How does any employee operate the organization? Creating a public relations program is actually a very complex task. In order to create an effective public relations program, the public relations program maker must be very efficient. Similarly, the organization or agency conducting public relations programs should also be sensitive in mobilizing resources.

The Internet is an important part of public relations business. From this, information can be distributed to a large number of scattered people. With this technology, public relations practitioners may need to get background on public relations programs. The influence of the Internet is so great in the world today that it is easy to assume that it will continue to do so in the future. Public relation is a kind of art. This creates a deep sympathy between the commodity production association and the general public. It makes people think negatively about the goods or services and makes them humble to consume the goods. If there is a misconception among the people about the goods or services of any person, the public relations will take action to remove it.

To control the spread of the virus and protect public health Nepal implemented a nationwide lockdown on March 24, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Government declares restrictions on movement, closure of businesses and educational institutions, and other measures to limit social interactions. Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) provide updated information about Covid-19 through Press briefing. MoHP also include Call Center 1115 & 1133, websites www.Covid19.mohp.gov.np, different types of Mobiles Apps (Hamro Swastha), Viber Group (MoHP Nepal COVID-19) dedicated to Covid-19 information. MoHP Frequent

Updates about number of cases, testing and treatment procedures, safety measures, and vaccination efforts. Different types of Public Service Announcements (PSA) are broadcast by television, radio, and social media platforms.

It encourages and motivate public about preventive measures, symptoms, testing information, and vaccination campaign. Press Releases is tools of PR. It creates important role towards public. Regular press releases to update the media on the latest scenario, guidelines, and statistics related to COVID-19. Which creates trust between Government and public. Government creates Emergency Hotlines number to get information, solve problems and easy to record COVID-19-related issues. Collaboration with International Organizations is another important step of MoHP.

In public relations It's important to listen to public feedback, monitor the effectiveness of communication efforts, and make adjustments as needed. Ministry of Health and Population continue its public relations work during the Covid pandemic with different tools and techniques.

Ministry of Health and Population provides news, information and update their target audience through different Public Relations tools like websites, Viber group Hamro Sawastha Apps, Facebook Page, Twitter Handle. Not only that traditional method like briefing every day from Nepal Television, press release etc. also uses at that time.

Social media is increasingly being used both for marketing and PR, as well as for crisis communication (Utz el al., 2013). Crisis situations test the resilience, leadership and preparedness of companies, systems and people (Germain and McGuire, 2014). We can understand about the government's flexibility and preparedness in times of crises, disasters and pandemics. The Ministry of Population and Information initially adopted the lockdown method adopted by China government to manage the situation of the Covid pandemic.

This statement shows that we're not ready for the worst situation. Effectively responding to such situations requires a state of readiness, situational control and large flexibility (McGuire et al., 2020).

In the situation of crisis, pandemic and disaster, the government should make various plans and pre-preparations. Especially during times of crisis and pandemics, misleading news spreads quickly. To prevent that, it is necessary for the government itself to provide accurate and factual information. Social media turned into a channel for rapidly spreading misinformation given its ability to reach large portions of the public (Malecki et al., 2021).

Digital technology has made a leap in information flow. Now we don't have to wait for 1 or 2 hours for TV news and One day for daily newspapers. In an instant time, news spreads around the world Through social media. Digital and social media are the blessing of technology. But in crisis situation, misleading news spreads around the world in the same way.

Director of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, declared that at the time "We are not just fighting an pandemic; we are fighting an infodemic". Due to its easy access, news is spread through social media rapidly either it is bad or good. During the Covid-19 pandemic misleading news increases the feeling of fear and panic in people. It also causes mental and physical problems too.

The result was an increase in public fear and anxiety about health, an exasperation of social tensions and a rise in discriminatory behavior (Hyland-Wood et al., 2021; Mheidly & Fares, 2020). In the crisis or pandemic time Spoke person speak on behalf of the organization or Ministry. Public are facing problems at that time; they are in stress that's why spoke person language should be humble. Which helps to control the situation in crisis. The four core objectives of risk communication suggested by the OECD (2017) are:

Inform people of risks and how to handle them.

Teach people to change their behavior and habits to reduce risks to wealth, health and happiness.

Enhance the confidence of public institutions that are in charge of risk assessment and management.

Build a governance structure capable of inviting the public and stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process and resolve conflicts involved in risk assessment and management.

Once a hazardous event has begun or just occurred, crisis communication directs its audience to take specific actions (OECD, 2017). Crisis communication is a fundamental component of a sound governance framework that builds and develops more robust societies and economies. Governments have a basic responsibility to identify, monitor and anticipate critical hazards and threats via risk analysis (Jaque, 2009; Sellnow et al., 2015).

For example, in terms of crisis prevention, Jaque (2007) addresses that public managers responsible for crisis communication keep investing in the institutional and strategic development of early warning and scanning – such as audits, preventive maintenance, issue monitoring, social forecasting, environmental scanning, anticipatory management and future studies (Jaque, 2007, 2009). In addition, the following can be useful, timely information resources: leadership surveys; media content analyses; public opinion surveys; legislative trend analyses; participation in trade associations; literature reviews; conference attendance; social big data analytics (computer-based issue monitoring), monitoring key websites and social media, and chat-group analysis (Avery et al., 2010; Yang, Aloe, and Freely, 2014).

2.2   Theoretical framework

This theoretical review examines the role of public relations (PR) in managing communication during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal, with a specific focus on the Ministry of Health and Population. The study delves into the challenges faced by the ministry in disseminating accurate and timely information, building public trust, and addressing misinformation. Through an analysis of theoretical frameworks, communication strategies, and best practices, this review provides insights into the effectiveness of the ministry's PR efforts and offers recommendations for enhancing future crisis communication.

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges worldwide, and Nepal was no exception. Effective communication and public engagement became crucial for managing the crisis. This review aims to assess the Ministry of Health and Population's PR strategies and their impact on public perception and response during the pandemic. The relevant theories are:

Crisis Communication Theory: Understanding crisis communication theories such as the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and the Timothy Coombs (1995) Crisis Communication Model provides a foundation for analyzing the ministry's PR response. These theories emphasize the importance of transparency, credibility, and empathy in crisis messaging.

Agenda-Setting Theory: Agenda-setting theory Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1968) helps assess how the ministry framed key messages and influenced public perceptions about the pandemic. It explores the alignment between media coverage and the issues prioritized by the ministry.

Analyzing the strategies employed by the ministry to counter misinformation and conspiracy theories, and evaluating their effectiveness in maintaining public trust. Ministry of

Health and Population in Nepal, Identifying the specific challenges faced by the ministry in managing communication during the pandemic, such as language barriers, technological limitations, and cultural factors.

This research is guided by social responsibility theory. In mid-20th century most of the developing countries and third world nations have used this social responsibility theory of press which is associated with "the Commission of the Freedom of Press" in United States at 1949. In the book "Four theories of Press" (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm) it's been stated that "pure libertarianism is antiquated, out dated and obsolete." That paved way for replacement of Libertarian theory with the social responsibility theory. Theoretical review is the review of the literature of the theories which are relevant to the research. Social responsibility is an ethical theory in which individuals are accountable for fulfilling their civic duty, and the actions of an individual must benefit the whole of society.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

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            │   MoHP   │
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        ┌────────┴────────┐
        │ Public Relation │
        └──┬───────────┬──┘
           │           │
     ┌─────┴──┐    ┌───┴────┐
     │ Tools  │    │ Impact │
     └────────┘    └────────┘
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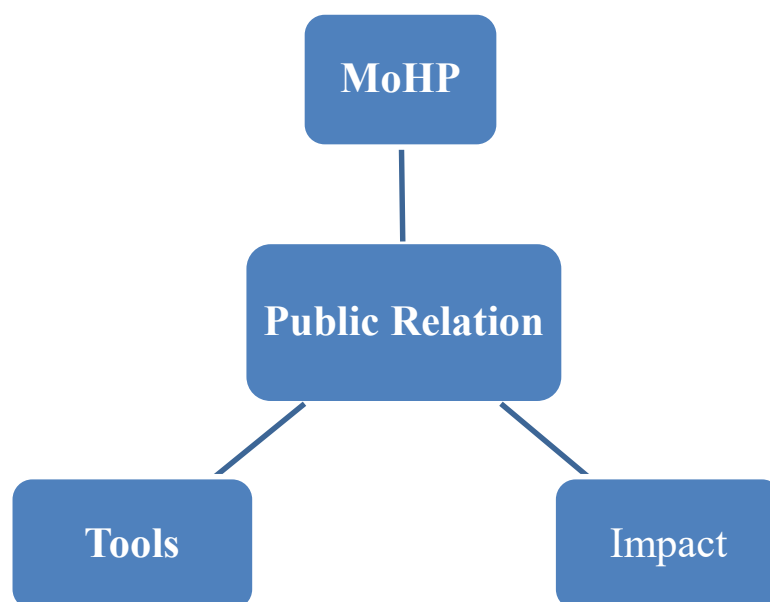
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Public Relation of MoHP, Tools and Impact

2.4   Research Gap

There have been many articles and researches about the role of government in establishing public relations during crisis, covid pandemic and disaster. However, the Ministry of Health and Population was not mentioned in any research regarding the tools used to establish public relations during the Covid pandemic. In addition, the effect of public relations during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, this research reveals about the Public Relation Scenario of Crisis, tools and techniques apply by MoHP and impact of PR of MoHP are going to analysis in this research.

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODS

3.1   Research Design

Research design plays a vital role to conduct this overall research. That's why it is most important parts of the research. In this research, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to analyze different kind of data. In this research primary sources of data were used. As qualitative data, in depth interview taken with the official of MoHP. Structure question were asked to spokesperson to understand about the internal and external scenario of Covid-19 Pandemic. That interview was recorded on recorder while evidence and to listen interview essential parts whenever doing research. As quantitative data, Web page, that collected data were organized, tabulated and creates as figure. As well as the survey methods also use to find out the real scenario of Covid-19 pandemic. The form prepared for this survey was filled by students of Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus. This survey has been conducted on the basis of the form filled by 100 students.

3.2   Selection of the Study Area

Content analysis of the Ministry of Health and Population's public relations strategies and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, official documents, press releases, statements etc. Document Analysis, in depth Interviews with spokespersons to gain insights into their strategies, challenges, and decision-making processes. As well as Surveys about social media and Twitter.

3.3   Sampling

To conduct this research, both primary and secondary data are taken from different areas. The primary data is first hand data which is collected by the researcher. In this research, in depth interview question set by researcher and interview with spokesperson Samir Kumar Adhikari in his office MoHP. Which was recorded on recorder for evidence and for research use. As well as Survey is another way to collect primary data. Where set research question was distributed and collect to find out the impact of PR during Covid-19 Pandemic.

As well as secondary data are also used in this research. Such as literature review, reports, articles, research papers relevant to the study are were reviewed that supplement the primary data.

3.4   Method of Research

Data is a collection of facts, figures, objects, symbols, and events gathered from different sources. Data collection is a systematic process of gathering information by using different techniques in the research. Without primary and secondary data, researcher didn't find their target objectives. The major techniques: Survey, Content Analysis and in-depth interview were applied to collect the essential information for this research.

3.4.1 Survey

Survey research use a variety of data collection methods such as being questionnaires and interviews. Survey has been used to gather quantitative data required for the study. For this, 10 questionnaires have been made having three options for each. To fulfil the purpose or objective of the research 100 respondent of Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus students. Where a list of questions is distributed to respondents fill it out themselves.

3.4.2 In-depth interview

For the additional information the data collection technique In-depth Interview was conducted to collect information from Spoke person of MoHP. Set question are asked to understand the scenario of Covid -19 Pandemic. That interview was recorded on recorder for evidence and also useful while preparing this research paper.

3.4.3 Content Analysis

Content analysis is technique of data collection. Which was also used in this study while conducting this research. It is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of data. Along with In-depth interview process was also done for the research.

To find out the tools and technique applied by MoHP for Public Relation is highly focused for the analysis of content thorough collected data from different sources such as Survey, In-depth Interview, Literature Review, Article, research paper, reports for understanding the public relation adopted by MoHP while crisis by using social media such as Facebook and Twitter.

3.5   Methods of data analysis

For in-depth interview Open-Ended Questions was asked to encourage detailed responses. Interview session was recorded for accuracy, evidences and for legal and ethical considerations. In-depth interview is a qualitative research method used to gather detailed information and from individuals about a particular subject. Structured question was asked to get share experiences, opinions, and perspectives of Spoke person of MoHP. All that recorded interview was listen very carefully while doing this research.

Content analysis is a versatile tool which can be used to study a wide range of materials. It is commonly found out the trends within a specific set of data. It provides a structured way to analyze and extract meaningful information from large sets of data.

Surveys was analyzed to draw conclusions and it helps to make informed decisions based on the responses. Surveys are valuable tools for understanding the perspectives and experiences of a particular group of people, which can be useful in making informed decisions or conducting research.

CHAPTER-IV

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1   Interpretation of Data

In this chapter, the gathered data from the qualitative and quantitative research is presented, analyzed, described and interpreted. The aim is to present data in a comprehensible and orderly from to detect trends and establish relations as research objectives. The form prepared for this survey was filled by students studying at Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus. This survey has been conducted on the basis of the form filled by 100 students. The Ministry of Health and Population had been using Facebook and Twitter since before Covid. During the time of covid, our health mobile apps and MoHP Viber Group were used. However, only Facebook and Twitter have been analyzed in this research.

4.1.1 Frequency of social media followed by 100 Respondents.

Table 4.1.1 Frequency of social media, followed by 100 Respondents.

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Everyday	68	68
2.	Once a week	22	22
3.	Sometimes	10	10
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

According to this table, 68.0% of the respondents use social media every day, 22.0% respondent follow social media Once a week and 10.0% respondent sometimes follow social media. This indicates that, the number of people who use social media is more. Social media is effective to distribute information and

message during Lockdown time. Compared to Traditional PR pattern social media is cost-effective way to reach a large audience. MoHP easily distribute information related covid-19 while lockdown timeframe. MoHP Building and maintaining a positive online presence through active monitoring, and responsiveness to feedback.

4.1.2 Get information and news about CoV-19 in social media

Table 4.1.2 Get information and news about CoV-19 in social media.

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Yes	60	60
2.	NO	22	22
3.	Neutral	18	18
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

Where 60% respondent said that get information and news about CoV-19 in social media, 22.0% respondent didn't get information through social media and 18.0% respondent is Neutral. Social media becomes powerful tool for building and managing public relations in today's digital age. Most audience of MOHP was dependent in social media for getting information about Covid-19. It is essential to use social media strategically in the context of public relations.

4.1.3 Reason of using social media

Table 4.1.3 **Reason of using social media**.

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Reliable	28	28
2.	For timely and updated	39	39
3.	Easily Accessible	33	33
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

According to this survey, 39 % respondent use social media for timely & updated information, 33% respondents use social media because it is easily accessible and 28% respondent think that social media is Reliable. MoHP must be focus on used of social media. Because it is easiest way to handling crises situation effectively. MoHP must use social media because audience are familiar to social media. Social media helps to creates two-way communication. This two-way communication can help to build stronger relationships with the public.

4.1.4 Details of MoHP Websites viewer

Table 4.1.4 Details of MoHP Websites viewer

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Everyday	40	40
2.	Once a week	33	33
3.	Sometimes	27	27
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

In this survey, 40 % respondent everyday visit websites of Ministry of Health and Population, 33 % respondents use websites of Ministry of Health and Population once a week and 27% respondent sometimes visit websites of MoHP. During a crisis or challenging situation, Government official websites are visit by public. People trust MoHP official websites at that time. MoHP also update and address public through press release and other form.

4.1.5 Details of MoHP website viewing before CoV-19

Table 4.1.5 Details of MoHP website viewing before CoV-19

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Yes	41	41
2.	NO	38	38
3.	Neutral	21	21
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

In this survey, 41 % respondent visit websites of Ministry of Health and Population covid-19, before, 38% respondents didn't visit websites of Ministry of Health and Population before covid-19. According to this survey 21% respondent are Neutral. In the field of public relations websites are valuable tools. It serving as a versatile platform for communication, information sharing and engagement with target audience.

4.1.6 Condition of viewing MoHP Websites

Table 4.1.6 Condition of viewing MoHP Websites

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Controversial	43	43
2.	To become updated	27	27
3.	Other	30	30
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

In this survey, 43 % respondent visit websites of MoHP when they found controversial information about CoV-19. Similarly, 27% was looking at the website to get updated news and information while 30% was visit websites for other reasons. Websites are powerful tools for PR. Websites serve as a central hub for information and communication. Websites are an excellent platform for sharing news, press releases and other important information with the public. This helps in maintaining transparency and keeping public informed about the MOHP authentic data. That's why people visiting MoHP websites while finding controversial news.

4.1.7 Popular social media of the MoHP

Table 4.1.7 Popular social media of the MoHP

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Our Health Apps	46	46
2.	Twitter Handle	11	11
3.	Facebook	43	43
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

According to this research, 46% respondents use Our Health (Hamro Swastha) Apps or Viber Group. 43% respondents use Facebook and 11% respondents use Twitter handle of MoHP. Location, demographics, and individual circumstances are major factors to usage of social media and mobile apps and other pattern. MoHP also creates mobile Apps and Viber group to reach on more people. It does not mean that only social media is used. People are using other apps more than social media.

4.1.8 Find misleading news in social media

Table 4.1.8 Find misleading news in social media

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Yes	55	55
2.	No	18	18
3.	Sometimes	27	27
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

According to this research, 55% respondents found misleading news about CoV-19 in social media. 27% respondents Sometimes and 18% didn't found misleading news in social media. Sentimental headlines and different types of attractive content designed to grab attention during pandemic and presented false information as fact. Not only that False information regarding quarantine protocols, testing procedures, and the availability of testing kits was commonly shared, which could lead to confusion and poor decision-making.

4.1.9 Psychologically effect

Table 4.1.9 Psychologically effect

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Yes	44	44
2.	No	22	22
3.	Sometimes	34	34
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

According to this research, 44% respondents psychologically effect from misleading news related to Cov-19 pandemic. 34% respondents sometimes effected by misleading news and 22% respondents didn't psychologically affect by misleading news related to Covid-19 pandemic. People are psychological affected at pandemic time. The uncertainty surrounding the virus, constant news coverage of the pandemic become toucher to people. That creates anxiety and fear among the public. People worried about their and their family health. There was also economic impact of the pandemic.

4.1.10 Impact of CoV-19 misleading news

Table 4.1.10 Impact of CoV-19 misleading news

S.No.	Frequency	Number	Percentage
1.	Yes	42	42
2.	No	18	18
3.	Sometimes	40	40
Total		100	100

Source: Survey 2022

According to this research, 42% respondent daily life is affected by misleading news related to CoV-19, 40% respondents said that sometimes daily life is affected by misleading news and 18% respondent life didn't affect by misleading news during the time of Covid-19 pandemic. Misinformation can create fear and anxiety in the general population. False reports about the virus, unproven treatments etc. can cause unnecessary panic and stress.

4.2   Data interpretation of Twitter handle of MoHP

Twitter is a powerful tool for maintaining PR during a crisis. It can play a vital role in building public relations during a crisis. Twitter provides a platform to share information openly and honestly. When MoHP deliver authentic data and information about the situation of covid, it can help build trust with the public.

In this session Twitter handle of MoHP (Ministry of Health and Population, @mohpnep) is analyzed. Here 7th Dec, 2021 to 21st Dec, 2021 post is collected on appendix.

Table 4.2.1 MoHP Posted on Twitter from 7th Dec, 2021 to 21st Dec, 2021

Date	Types of post	Total Post	Reply	Repost	Like
7th Dec, 2021	Pamphlet	1	-	1	10
8th Dec, 2021	Pamphlet and Figure and bargraph	2	2	21	57
9th Dec, 2021	Pamphlet and Figure and bargraph	2	2	19	82
10th Dec, 2021	Figure and bargraph	1	-	3	13
11th Dec, 2021	Figure and bargraph	1	1	4	8
12th Dec, 2021	Informative opinion given by Mahabhir Pun Figure and bargraph Data of people infected by covid	2	-	6	17
13th Dec, 2021	Figure and bargraph	1	-	3	9
14th Dec, 2021	Figure and bargraph	1	-	4	11
15th Dec, 2021	Figure and bargraph	1	1	2	9
16th Dec, 2021	Press release & Figure and bargraph	2	-	3	21

Date	Type				
17th Dec, 2021	Pamphlet & Figure and bargraph	2	3	13	41
18th Dec, 2021	-	-	-	-	-
19th Dec, 2021	Pamphlet & Figure and bargraph	2	2	4	37
20th Dec, 2021	Vaccine video & Figure and bargraph	2	2	7	32
21st Dec, 2021	Pamphlet & Figure and bargraph	3	4	9	42
	Total	23	17	99	389
	Average	1.5	1.1	6.6	25.9

Source: Survey 2022

During the period of 15 days, MoHP posted 23 different types of information related figure and bar graph, pamphlet, briefing and live briefing, press release as well as other information and data. This types of figures and bar graph, live briefing and briefings, pamphlet etc. play a crucial role in building and maintaining public relations during the COVID-19 pandemic. These types of information establish trust towards public. Effective communication is essential during the times of crisis too. It also shows the MoHP role during the crisis period. Briefings serve as a structured platform to share important updates, different types of guidelines and safety measures about covid-19. That's why MoHP focus on disseminate information and data through figure and bar graph as well as pamphlet and briefing.

Also briefing by authentic spokesperson is open and honest communication. Similarly, figure and bar graph are easily under stable tools for public. It's shows transparency, information dissemination used by MoHP while on pandemic time. Total post of MoHP got 389 like and 99 repost on twitter. It's shows public was highly engaged on information given by MoHP during pandemic time. Engagement of people on informative post given by MoHP on Twitter is a valuable way to build strong PR throughout pandemic. This helps to promoting informative posts on Twitter during pandemic. Information from reliable sources such as the MoHP helps to avoid spreading rumors or unverified information too. Its helps people to stay informed and stay up to date about the situation.

Using different types of informative posts on Twitter by MoHP was an effective strategy for building and maintaining public relations during the COVID-19 pandemic. That's why people were engaged on MoHP Twitter. In that total post during the period got 17 replies. There were both positive and negative response by public. On positive response people highly praise government work, activeness during pandemic time frame such as Love and Respect to all the Health worker. If all the health worker protects from virus, then Patient get care and good treatment. Even though getting such good responses there were fear, doubt, anxiety, uncertainty on people. They felt government didn't making good decision for planning and execution on timely. People were afraid of losing their job and they felt financial crisis too. In crisis timeframe people are also affected by physically and mentally pressure. That's why the express their feeling, fear, doubt, anger by giving reply towards MoHP Post.

Similarly average of 15 days the post was 1.5, reply was 1.1, repost were 6.6 and like were 25.9 respectively. MoHP post on 7th Dec, 2021 were less than average and post on 21st Dec, 2021 were more than average. Which indicates people are less interested on MoHP Twitter on initial phase. Twitter allows for instant communication and people trust official websites and social media like Facebook and Twitter. Active presence on Twitter, can helps to build a rapport building with target audience and reducing the risk of misleading information too. During the mention time frame some vital MoHP post to develop PR are as follows: There was information about vaccination. This kind of information raised the hope of avoiding Covid and information was also given about the location of vaccination. Information about Digital form with QR Code was posted. In this information Government strictly order people about taking Vaccination card. This kind of card will also bring ease to travel outside Nepal. Which is necessary card to go abroad.

In another post, indicate the overall data about the Covid-19. Which is show the current scenario of the country. In that post, the response of the health sector related to Covid-19 was mentioned in the table. In which the total number of tests, total positive cases, recovered cases, deaths and details of those in quarantine are mentioned. MoHP Post on 12th Dec, 2021, Informative information given by Mahabhir Pun about benefits and importance of covid vaccine. In this short video, people can understand the value of vaccination by him. It helps to support government plans and strategy. MoHP Post on 16th Dec, 2021, in this press release post the vaccination details received by the Nepal government from the German government were mentioned. MoHP Post on 17th Dec, 2021, in this post information is published about the time and districts where Mordna vaccine will be available. Information about Pfizer vaccination timings and districts has been published in Pamphlet.

MoHP Post on 19th Dec, 2021, while celebrating various festivals celebrated in the community, messages were posted on Udhauli, Dhanya Purnima, Yamri Punhi and Japu Diwas along with the message to be aware of Corona. Also best wishes message for public. It seems that during the pendemic, MoHP helps the community to united. MoHP Post on 20th Dec, 2021, A short video was posted containing information about the time and place of corona vaccination for children. MoHP also insist and awareness public for vaccination.

Even though, getting some negative response by user, MoHP delivered vital information and data while pandemic. It creates great impact towards people to control and prevention of covid-19. To show the people engagement of MoHP post on Twitter, the following table and column chart represent week wise engagement of people.

Table 4.2.2 Weekly Data of MoHP Posted on Twitter

weeks	Total Post	Reply	Repost	Like
First week	11	5	61	207
Second Week	12	12	38	182
Total	23	17	99	389
Average	11.5	8.5	49.5	194.5

Source: Survey 2022

This table and column chart shows that in comparative effectiveness of MoHP post during first week and second week. In second week MoHP increase the number of posts. People's interest has also increased in second week. Comparatively people reply, repost and like increase in second week. Which indicates that, people more believe on MoHP post than first week.

4.3   Data interpretation of Facebook Page of MoHP

In this session, Official Facebook Page of Government of Nepal, Ministry of Health and Population is going to analyzed. In this section, the posts on the Facebook page of the Ministry of Health and Population are mentioned. In this section, the posts from 24th March 2020 to 7th April 2020 will be analyzed. After the government of Nepal imposed a lockdown for 15 days from Chaitra 11th due to the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic could take a severe form, the Ministry of Health and Population took various steps to prevent the spread of the pandemic. Out of which various informative materials were published through social media Facebook, Twitter, Viber group, mobile apps.

In this section, the activities carried out by the Ministry of Health and Population on Facebook in 15 days have been mentioned and analyzed. The daily posted activities of the Ministry of Health and Population are summarized through this table. This table mentions the posts of the Ministry of Health and Population from March 24 to April 7. MoHP post 19

information in total 15 days. Thus, out of 17 posts made by the ministry, it was found that 2,332 shares, 9,316 likes and 1,114 comments.

The mentioned data shows the public relations established by the Ministry of Health and Population through social media Facebook. The government had announced a lockdown from to control the Covid-19 Pandemic. In the early days, people did not pay much attention to the information, press releases, and informative videos issued by the Ministry of Health and Population through Facebook to prevent the outbreak of Covid-19 and prevent the spread of the pandemic.

People were feeling free from their busy lives. People took it as an opportunity to stay at home with their families and have fun. During that time, people was happy to spend time making delicious dishes, dancing and chatting with his relatives and friends from social media. In second week of lockdown, it seems that the public has shown great interest.

It seems that they are trying to spread information to everyone by believing the posts, liking, sharing and commenting on MoHP. It seems that the positive attitude towards the Ministry of Health and Population has developed in the last days than in the initial days. During the lockdown issued by the Government of Nepal, the following table shows the effectiveness of the first week of public relations established by the Ministry of Health and Population.

MoHP focus on social media to deliver message and information. People also trust MoHP fb page to received information. There're many types of method to deliver and disseminate the information about Covid-19. But MoHP highly focus on briefing and live briefing. MoHP applied briefing and live briefing methods 9 times during the 15 days. Which indicates that Ministry of health and population try to creates rapport building with public during crisis situation by using briefing and live briefing. Then after MoHP try to deliver message through

Information post to provide informative data for people. MoHP used different types of PR patterns during the COVID-19 crisis for informational or public awareness purposes.

Stay Home, Stay Safe types of messages, real and fact data etc. are release to reduce the spread of the virus. It also provides information about Practice social distancing and avoid unnecessary outings. Mask Up: Masks are a simple and effective way to protect each and every person. Not only that Hand Hygiene is also important and that time. Government straightly orders people to hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol are also effective.

4.3.1 MoHP Posted on Facebook from 24th March 2020 to 7th April 2020

Types of information	Total post	Like	Comment	Share
Live Briefing/briefing	9	5,411	554	1,025
Information (Suchana)	5	2,393	225	528
Press Release	2	1,000	215	556
Statement	1	512	120	223
Total	17	9,316	1,114	2,332

Source: Survey 2022

During the period of 15 days, MoHP posted 17 different types of information such as live briefing and briefing, Information, Press release, statement as well as other information and data. people. Media briefing was posted on Facebook wall.

Which is given by MoHP spokesperson. This briefing creates hope on people to fight with covid-19 pandemic. Live briefings is an effective tools for creating public relations during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was a great platform to provide real-time updates and information to the public. This type of transparency helps to build trust and credibility. Briefing and Live briefings provide a consistent source of information. It also reduces believing unreliable sources.

Briefing broadcast in different media which was accessible to wide audiences. In the above table, people have liked 5411 in total 9 posts related to briefing. It is seen that people are paying attention to the posts made by MoHP during the time of covid.

Nepal has been under full lockdown started from March 24. MoHP published information on how to mobilize manpower in all 7 provinces and posted it on Facebook to control the situation. People has not fully response in this post because of unknown circumstances. People are following government fb wall to get information about covid-19 pandemic. MoHP developed a Viber group to provide genuine news and updated information about covid-19 in Nepal. At that time, people are confused and depressed because suddenly Lockdown announced by government.

In this post MoHP informed about the covid-19 pandemic, it's cause, impact and all information to prevent and control the situation. MoHP also appeal to public by follow the rules and regulation suggested by government. At that time security forces have started enforcing the lockdown. People are actively following social media during this pandemic. People appreciate and belief government information.

That briefing indicate the overall data about the Covid-19. Which is show the current scenario of the Nepal. This types of briefing and presentation of spokesperson help to encourage public to fight in crisis timeframe. People appreciate government work too.

In this post MoHP informed about Procurement of PPE and Other Health equipment. Briefing mentions the total number of tests, total positive cases, recovered cases, deaths and details of those in quarantine. The Ministry of Health and Population has mentioned the response of the health sector related to Covid-19 in the table. MoHP launched new web portal "Our Health" app which helps more people aware covid 19. MoHP try to spread awareness and

updated news of covid. People are not satisfying of increasing lockdown. An Expert of MoHP

try to clarify Rapid Test Kit toward people. People are known about Test Kit. They are

appreciating the job of MoHP. Overall people trust government and they are optimist at that time

frame.

CHAPTER-V

FINDING, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1   FINDING

It is the responsibility of MoHP to control the situation by doing different types of activities. Among MoHP activities PR plays vital and important role in crisis. On covid-19 pandemic time MoHP PR got success or not, it's activity helps to control situation or not, People believe it's PR or not? to find out this question here doing so many research activities such as survey, social media Facebook and twitter are analyzed. These outcomes revealed both expected and unexpected information in describing MoHP Public relation working in covid -19.

The main purpose of public relation is to maintain long term good relation between government and people. Since the success and failure of any government lies in public relation, the importance of public relation is very high. The public relation plays a vital role while pandemic time. The overall survey, social media analysis such as Facebook and Twitter of MoHP and In-depth Interview, different literature review, reports as well as articles create a great conclusion. Which indicate some fabulous ideas to create a public relation during crisis scenario to government.

- It is lesson learn for government to create a great public relation impact as well as choosing different types of tools while doing Public Relation. MoHP use traditional public relation tools such as press release, briefing by television which also published in social media to reach on more public.

- In initial phase people are satisfy by government work because they're not expecting with government. MoHP distribute information from different medium.

- Public has shown great interest. It seems that they are trying to spread information to everyone by believing the posts, liking, sharing and commenting on MoHP. It seems that the positive attitude towards the Ministry of Health and Population has developed in the last days than in the initial days.

The finding obtained from survey, People use social media to get real facts and reliable information in a timely manner. There are 68 percent of people who use social media on a daily basis. Who get 60% of information from social media. It has been found that 41 percent of people have been visiting the MoHP website to get official views on health and population since before Covid-19. But during the time of covid-19, when MoHP started giving information through social media, it is found that only 40 percent of people view the website of MoHP on a daily basis. Since people have more access to social media, MoHP started providing information on social media with the aim of conveying accurate, truthful and reliable information to the common people easily and simply. It seems that even during the pandemic of Covid-19, public has taken information from social media rather than the website. If the information coming from different sources is controversial, people seem to be clear from the official information of the Ministry of Health and Population. Among the social media and mobile apps used by the MoHP, 46 percent use our health, 43 percent use Facebook, and 11 percent use Twitter.

Although social media is easy and accessible to people, it has been found that 55% of the information received from it is misleading information. As well as 27% people sometimes found misleading news and 18% was neutral. The flow of wrong information affects people's psychologically a lot. As a result, it was found that information released by MoHP through social media are misleading and wrong information is being disseminated.

The data obtained from Facebook from March 24, 2020 to April 8, 2020 has been analyzed. Similarly, data from Twitter from December 7, 2021 to December 21, 2021 has been analyzed. Also, survey research has been done in 2022. Based on the analysis of the data from Facebook, Twitter and surveys, the Ministry seems to be playing an important role in conveying the truth and factual information to the public in a correct and systematic manner.

The emerging fields of health communication and strategic communication can also be included to further expand the boundary but need. In summary, during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nepal, public relations played a critical role in disseminating accurate information, managing perceptions, and fostering positive relationships between various stakeholders.

- PR professionals used both traditional and digital platforms to educate the public, manage organizational reputation, and counter misinformation, contributing to the overall response and recovery efforts in the country.

- The Ministry of Health and Population has played an incomparable role in establishing public relations during the time of Covid. As a result, the impact of covid in Nepal was reduced compared to other countries.

- It is not known when and at what time the pandemic will spread. Therefore, it is the need of the day for the Ministry of Health and Population to always be prepared for pandemic reduction and control.

- In order to keep the general public safe from various forms of covid or other disease pandemics, it is necessary to take more vigilance and vigilance in the coming days.

We should move forward by learning lessons from past pandemics and the Covid-19 pandemic. The Ministry of Health and Population should always be prepared to act in a

strategic manner in the future, accepting both challenges and opportunities during this pandemic.

5.2   Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic brought extraordinary challenges including Nepal. The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) in Nepal played a important role in managing the crisis and disseminating vital information to the population. The MoHP worked to provide accurate and timely information, address rumors and misinformation and manage public panic. Their efforts contributed to maintaining a sense of calm and trust among the population.

The MoHP's public relations efforts focused on clear and transparent communication. MoHP used different type of tools such as Press release, Regular Press briefings, Live briefing, updates, Notice and information sharing through various channels such as social media, websites, and traditional media. With these tools helped in keeping the public informed about the evolving situation, preventive measures, and treatment protocols. The MoHP launched public awareness campaigns focusing on preventive measures like wearing masks, hand hygiene, and social distancing. The MoHP used public relation to provide clarifications and guidance, which contributed to minimizing confusion, panic and fear of people, to provide accurate and timely information, address rumors and misinformation.

In summary, the impact of MoHP public relations played vital role by disseminating accurate information, building trust, facilitating government-public communication, supporting crisis management, promoting health measures, and fostering collaboration among various sectors. These efforts contributed to a more coordinated and informed response to the crisis.

5.3   Recommendation

Even though MoHP played vital role on covid 19 pandemic, it should follow more effective transparent communication in upcoming crisis. It should follow two way communication by solving the people comment. MoHP should make long term planning to control and prevent crisis situation. Not only that MoHP should follow pre-crisis, during crisis and post crisis public relation too. MoHP should lesson learn from research, planning, implementation, evaluation and feedback of previous crisis. And Government should execute those vital lesson learns for upcoming pandemic time. MoHP should Ensure clear and transparent communication using simple language to give regular updates using the PR tools such as press release, Live briefing, updates, Notice and information with figure, bargraph and pamphlet etc. MoHP should use multiple channels and social media to address concerns and misinformation. After regularly evaluating the effectiveness of public relations tools, it is appropriate to use PR tools according to lessons learned.

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ANNEX 1

Use of social media for information during the COVID-19 pandemic

Dear Sir/Madam,

The under mentioned questions are prepared for getting required data for the fulfilment of Master Degree Dissertation in Journalism and Mass Communications in Tribhuvan University.
Therefore, I respectfully request you to fill up the following questionnaire to help and generate actual data for analysis and drawing the conclusion.
Thank You!
Please tick any option/s from the given questions and provide your feedback:

Name: Gender: Age: Address:

1. How frequently do you follow social media?

a) Everyday
b) Once a week
c) Sometimes

2. Do you get information and news about covid-19 in social media?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Nutral

3. Why do you prefer social media for information?

a) Reliable
b) for timely & updated information
c) Easily accessible

4. Have you seen the website of the Ministry of Health and Population?
a) Everyday
b) Once a week
c) Sometimes

5. Did you see the website of the Ministry of Health and Population even before Covid-19?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Nutral

6. In which conditions do you view the website of the Ministry of Health and Population?

a) controversial information
b) to become updated
c) Other

7. Which medium run by the Ministry of Health and Population do you use more?

a) 'Our Health' (Hamro Swasthya) viber group Apps
b) Tweeter handle
c) Facebook

8. Have you ever found any fake news related to Covid-19 in social media?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Sometimes

9. Have you ever been psychologically affected by the misleading news related to

Covid-19 pandemic?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Sometimes

10. Has the misleading news related to Covid-19 affected your daily lives?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Sometimes

ANNEX 2

1.   MoHP Post on 7th Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Protect Health worker	Pamphlet		1	10

2.   MoHP Post on 8th Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
About Vaccine	Pamphlet	2	15	34
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	6	23

3.   MoHP Post on 9th Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Digital Form for Vaccinated people	Pamphlet	2	14	72
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	5	10

4.   MoHP Post on 10th Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	3	13

5.   MoHP Post on 11th Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	1	4	8

6.   MoHP Post on 12th Dec, 2021

Dec 12 Post of MoHP	Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
1.	**Benefits of Covid Vaccine**	**Informative information given by Mahabhir Pun**	-	4	7
2.	Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	2	10

7.   MoHP Post on 13th Dec, 2021
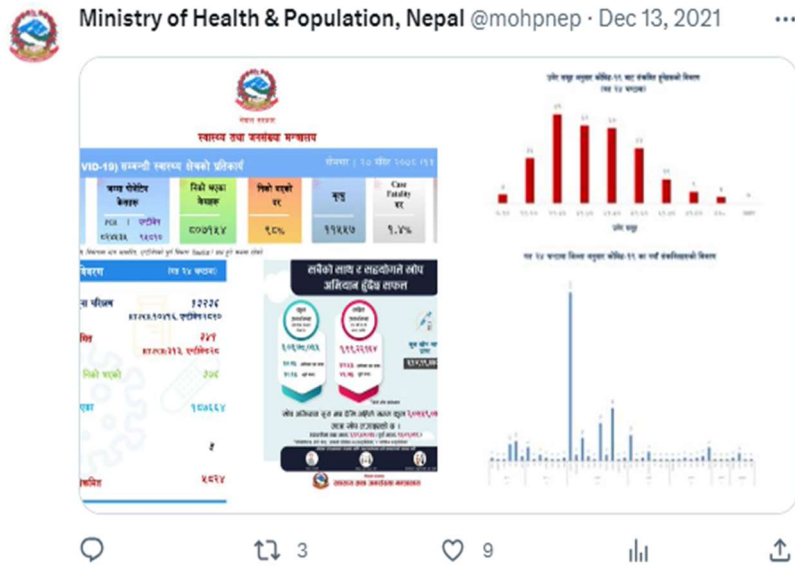
Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	3	9

8.   MoHP Post on 14th Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	4	11

9.   **MoHP Post on 15th Dec, 2021**

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	1	2	9

10.   **MoHP Post on 16th Dec, 2021**

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Vaccine Received	Press release	-	1	13
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	2	8

11.   MoHP Post on 17ᵗʰ Dec, 2021

Dec 17 Post of MoHP	Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
1.	awareness about vaccine	Pamphlet	3	12	34
2.	Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	1	7

12.   MoHP Post on 18ᵗʰ Dec, 2021

Dec 18 Post of MoHP	Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
No post	-	-	-	-	-

13.   MoHP Post on 19th Dec, 2021
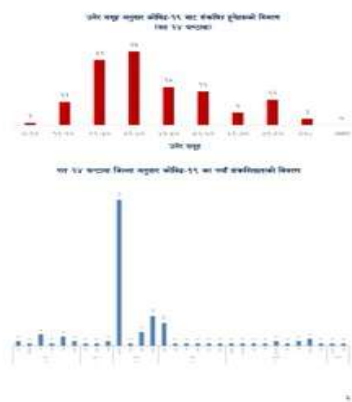
Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	1	3	7
Best wishes and awareness	Pamphlet	1	1	30

14.   MoHP Post on 20th Dec, 2021
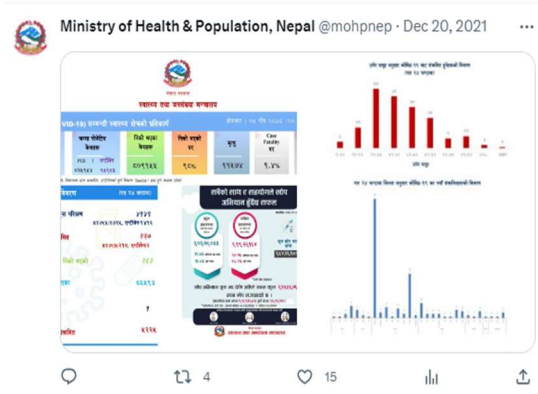
Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Vaccine	Video	2	3	17
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	-	4	15

15.   MoHP Post on 21st Dec, 2021

Content	Types of data	Reply	Repost	Like
Awareness about Vaccine	Pamphlet (photo and word)	2	4	17
Information about Vaccine	Pamphlet (photo and word) Video	1	2	14
Data of people infected by covid	Figure and bargraph	1	3	11

ANNEX 3

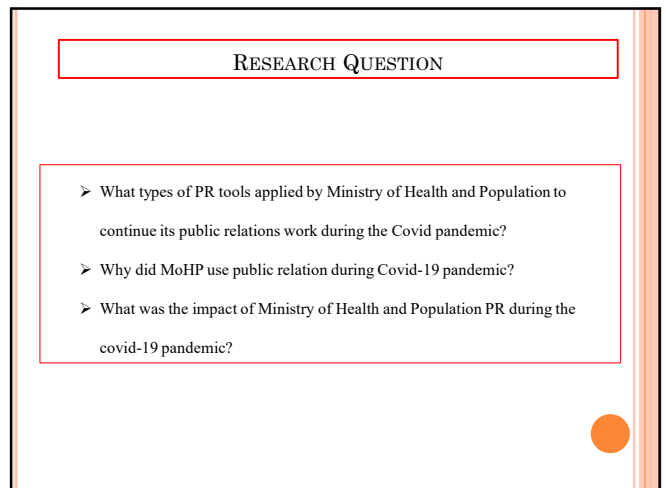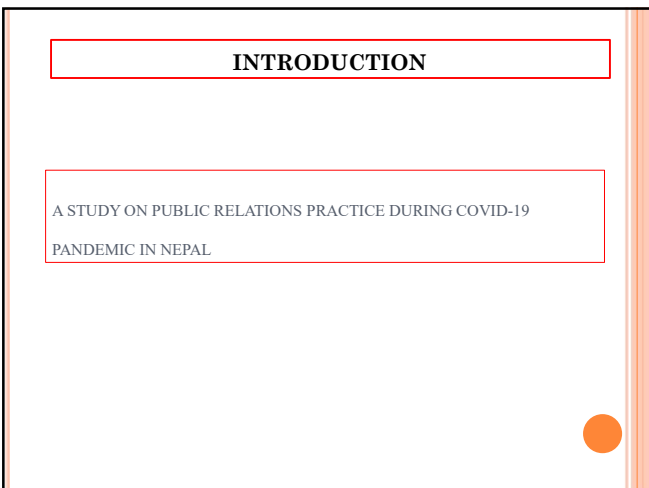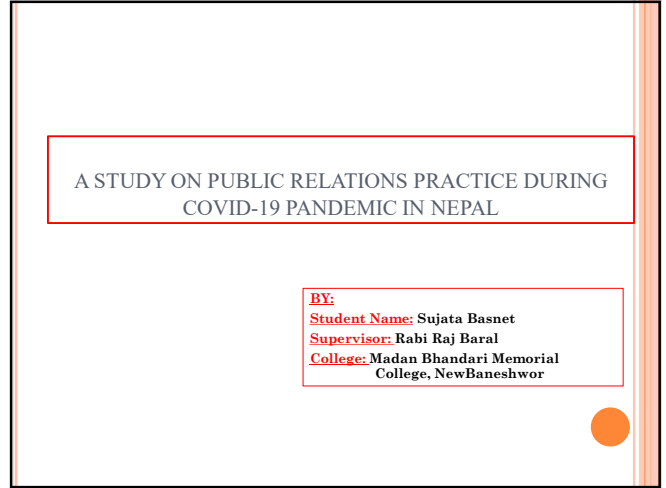| Date	MoHP post on Facebook Wall	Public user response	Interpretation
March 24	The government published information on how to mobilize manpower in all 7 provinces and posted it on Facebook.	51 like no comment Share 4	Nepal has been under full luckdown started from that day. MoHP published information on how to mobilize manpower in all 7 provinces and posted it on Facebook to controll the situation. This post, 51 like, no comment and 4 share. People has not fully response in this post because of unknown circumstances.
	Join Viber Community now and get all the genuine news related to COVID-19 in Nepal. Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) has launched its official Viber Community to disseminate the latest news and information about the Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19). To join, search for 'MoHP Nepal COVID-19' on the messaging app or click on this link: https://vb.me/mohp_comms_np2020	No like, No comment, No share	MoHP develope a viber group to provide genuine news and updated information about covid-19 in Nepal. At that time, people are confused and depressed because suddenly Lockdown announced by government.
March 25	Press releasing	460 like 105 comment: *Please continue this press meeting! Keep it up, we are with the government at this time.* 346 share	In this post MoHP informed about the covid-19 pandemic, it's cause, impact and all information to prevent and control the situation. MoHP also appeal to public by follow the rules and regulation sugessted by government. At that time security forces have started enforcing the lockdown. In this post 460 like, 346 share and 105 comment. Out of 105 comment there were 2 negative comments. People are actively follow social media during this pandemic. People appreciate and belief government information.
March 26	Press releasing	540 like, 110 comment: *With limited*	Media briefing was posted on Facebook wall. Which is given by MoHP spokeperson. This briefing creates hope on

		resources, the government is doing their level best. Congratulations and best wishes!!! 210 share	people to fight with covid-19 pandemic. There are 540 like,110 comment and 210 share. Which indicates that people are following government fb wall to get information about covid-19 pandemic. There are 9 negative comment other wise people encourge government work.
March 27	today live briefing	598 like, 180 comment: *Thanks for your imformation* 241 share	Media briefing was posted on Facebook wall. Which is given by MoHP spokeperson. That briefing indicate the overall data about the Covid-19. Which is show the current senario of the Nepal. This types of briefing and presentation of spokeperson help to encourage public to fight in crisis timeframe. This post got 598 like and 241 share, which indicate the positively response of public. This post got 180 comment. 2 comments are negative other wise people appreciate government work too.
March 28	Attention of the Ministry of Health and Population.	202 like 14 comment: भष्ट्रचार बन्द गर 65 share	In this post MoHP informed about Procurement of PPE and Other Health equipment. In this post 201 like, 14 comment and 65 share. There are 5 Negative comment about direct purchase of medical items.
	briefing	106 like 0 comment 7 share	In this Media briefing the updated data about the Covid-19 was given by MoHP spokeperson. Here 106 like and 7 share shows the positive response by public. There is no comment at all.
March 29	covid19.mohp.gov.np, which provides all information related to Corona, launched by the Ministry of Health and Population, has been launched. Mohp Nepal briefing	327 like 74comment: *Isolation* मा टेकूमा ४ र पाटनमा ३ भनिएको छ तर *apps* मा ४ मात्रै देखाएको छ टेकू बाहिरको डाटा *apps* मा नराख्रे हो की? 127 share	In this post 327 like, 127 share and 74 comment. There are 11 negative comment. Still people are confuse about the data. Because they found different data in apps and prsentation by MoHP spokeperson. But overall people are satisfy by government work.
March 30	briefing Novel Coronavirus	212 like 9 comment: *Great*	It mentions the total number of tests, total positive cases, recovered cases, deaths and

	(COVID-19) Media Briefing 2076.12.17 #COVID-19	*job all of u* 46 share	details of those in quarantine. The Ministry of Health and Population has mentioned the response of the health sector related to Covid-19 in the table. This post has been 212 like, 46 share and 9 comment. People appreciate government work at that time frame.
March 31	live briefing Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Media Briefing 2076.12.18 #COVID-19	296 like 8 comment: *Pahila kit ramro rakhnu ani sahi report aaux natra 5 ota matrai hunx ra corona ko karan le kati jo death hunx thahai xain* 56 share	In this post 296 like, 56 share and 8 comment. People appreciate the work of MoHP. Only 2 negative and other suggestion provid by public. In this Media briefing given by MoHP spokeperson shows the data about the Covid-19. Which is show the current senario of the country. As well as Testing related data also provided by MoHP.
April 1, 2020	For information related to the Corona virus (Covid-19), see the new web portal of the Ministry of Health and Population at https://covid19.mohp.gov.np. Also, you can participate in the self-assessment of Corona by downloading the ``Our Health" app on Google Playstar.	444 like 10 comment: *Mask लगाऊँ, सफाई मा ध्यान दिउँ, दुरि राखौं तर add को लागी Lock down अनिवार्य न गरौं, बिश्व त्रसित पार्ने ऐजेंडा मात्र हो ।* 43 share	MoHP launched new web portal "Our Health" app which helps more people aware covid 19. MoHP try to spread awareness and updated news of covid. In this post got 444 like, 43 share and 10 comments. Among those comment 2 comment are negative and they are not satisfy of increasing luckdown.
	A statement issued by Dr. Khem Karki, an expert advisor to the Ministry of Health and Population, about the rapid test kit.	512 like 120 comment: *Good explanation but the Minister should also clarify to public.* 223 share	An Expert of MoHP try to clearify Rapid Test Kit toward people. In this post 512 like, 223 share and 120 comment.There are 7 negative comments. People are known about Test Kit. They are appreciate the job of MoHP.
	briefing	391 like 23 comment : *We appreciate goverment efforts.* 68 share	Spokeperson of MoHP was giving updated data of covid-19. 391 like and 68 share shows positive response of people. In this post there are 23 comments. Among that 3 comment are negative. Other comment suggest government and appreciate government work.
April 3	briefing	1k likes 115 comments:	In this post spokeperson of MoHP describe about the contract trashing of infected

2020		*Thank you for sharing and keeping us uptodate.* *Door to door visit needed to identify the individuals who came from abroad as does duirng the election.* 164 share	people, quarrantine etc. There are 1,000 like and 164 share on this post. Out of 115 comments only 13 comment are negative. People appreciated government work at that time and they also focus on contract tracing.
April 4, 2020	briefing	844 likes 71 comments: I am a doctor working at Bharatpur hospital , still I am working without personal protection, hospital le euta mask ta provide gareko xaina, PPE ko ta kurai xodam.What is the status of bringing in more test kits? 185 share	In this Media briefing given by MoHP spokeperson shows the data about the Covid-19. It reflect the situation created by covid-19 pandemic. As well as Testing related data also provided by MoHP in this briefing. Here 844 like and 185 share shows the positive response by public. It is enough share by people on pandemic time. In comment session out of 71 comments only 5 comments are negetive. In those comments doctor didn't get PPE and mask while doing duty.
April 4 2020	Three new people infected with Corona have been found 1. A 21-year-old male from Kailali who returned from Mumbai 2. A 41-year-old man from Kanchanpur who returned from Uttarakhand 3. A 34-year-old woman from Kailali (relative of the man found infected earlier in Kailali) Along with this, for the first time in Nepal, another person has been infected with corona virus.	1k like 134comment: *Please test before the outbreak. It will be more expensive for govt to test after outbreak.Rapid test is urgently needed.* 327 share	The government is giving updates on covid. Which helps to stay alert from covid. In this post of MOHP got 1,000 like and 327 share. There are 134 comments where people are suggest the MoHP to increase the test and control the covid. There are 14 negative comment.
April	Information	571 like	This Notice says:- If People have been in

|			
5 2020	Notice issued by Ministry of Health and Population dated 23rd Chaitra 2076 for general public	7 comment: *Dear All MOHP team,* *It is quite shameful that on this 12 days of lockdown we are able to test only 1441 samples. I think it is necessary to scale up testing immediately minimum 1000 test per day. So only lockdown will hold significance.* 27 share	contact with a person who returned from abroad are requested to stay at home for the next two weeks and maintain a distance of at least one meter from other people. If any People have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, contact the nearest health institution immediately. Small contribution of each will go a long way in preventing the spread of the corona virus disease in the community. This post got 571 like and 27 share. Which means messgae are positively taken by people. In 7 comment only one comment about suggestion. Where user comment government to increase number of test.
	Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Media Briefing 2076.12.23 #COVID-19	871 like 136 comment: *Watching from kirtipur* 🙏🙏 202 share	In this post, 202 shares, 871 likes. In addition, people have expressed their expression through 136 comments. People are watching the work of the ministry, the information being circulated and the updates related to Corona. People are egarly waiting for next step of government. They're also Optimist.
April 6 2020	Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Media Briefing 2076.12.25 #COVID-19	668 like 14 comment: *please test fast, More n more test should be done in each province, extending lockdown is nt only the solution..* 34 share	In this Media briefing the updated data about the Covid-19 was given by MoHP spokeperson. Here 668 like and 34 share shows the positive response by public. In this post 2 comment suggest the MoHP to take a vital steps to conquer the covid. Some people informed that only increasing the lockdown is not the solution.
April 7 2020	Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Media Briefing 2076.12.25 #COVID-19	1.2 k like 120 comment: *is this a joke 1796 ??Kaan ma tell halera basxa aajha pani. Laaj pani*	In this Media briefing given by MoHP spokeperson shows the data about the Covid-19. Which is show the current senario of the country. As well as Testing related data also provided by MoHP. Here 1,200 like and 166 share shows the positive response by public. In comment session out of 120 comments

		xaina	21 comments are negetive. In those comments people are aggressive about testing rate by MOHP.
		166 share	The people are angry because the results obtained by collecting a small blood sample do not represent all the infected people.

WEL-COME

A STUDY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING
COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NEPAL

BY:
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College: Madan Bhandari Memorial
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INTRODUCTION

A STUDY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE DURING COVID-19

PANDEMIC IN NEPAL

RESEARCH QUESTION

➢ What types of PR tools applied by Ministry of Health and Population to

continue its public relations work during the Covid pandemic?

➢ Why did MoHP use public relation during Covid-19 pandemic?

➢ What was the impact of Ministry of Health and Population PR during the

covid-19 pandemic?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

➢ To explore PR tools applied by Ministry of Health and Population to continue its public relations work during the Covid pandemic.

➢ To examine MoHP use public relation during Covid-19 pandemic.

➢ To analyze the impact of Ministry of Health and Population PR during the covid-19 pandemic.
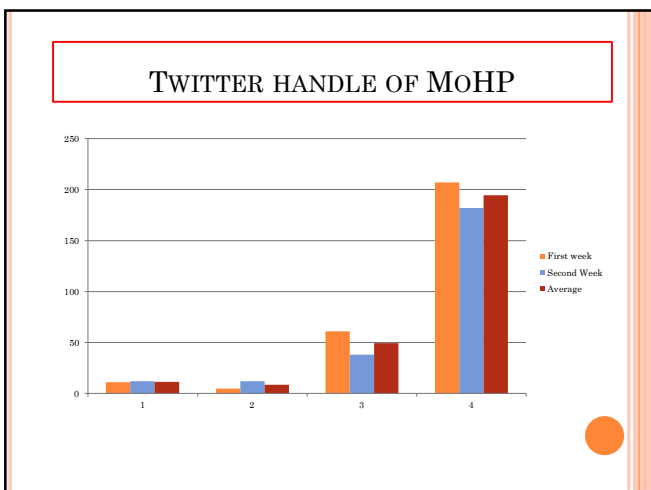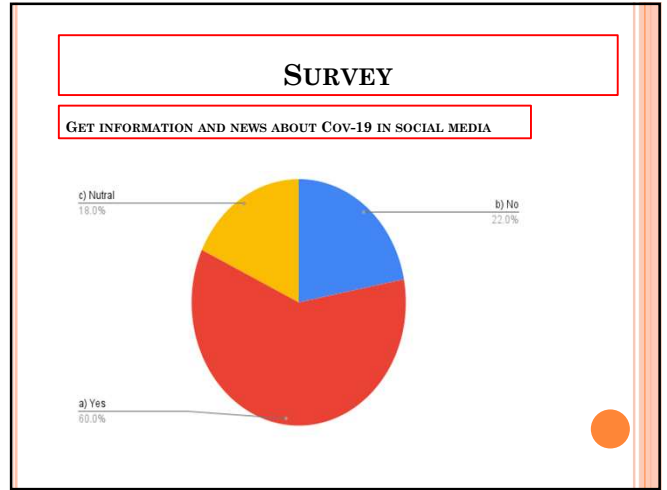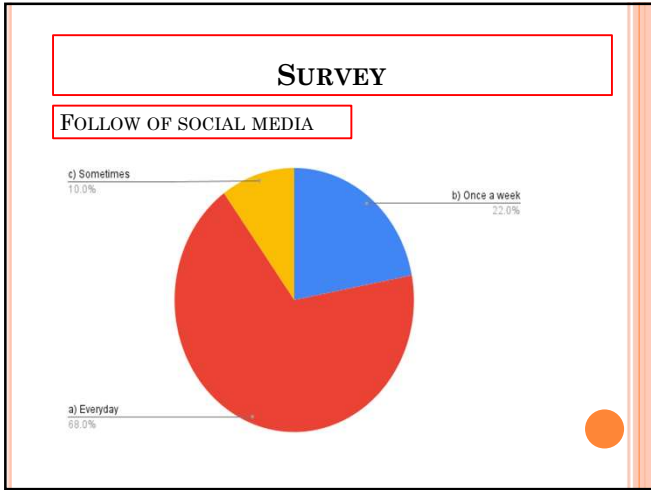
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
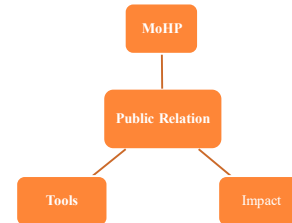
RESEARCH METHODS

➢ Survey

➢ Content Analysis

➢ In-depth Interview

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

➢ Data Presentation of Survey

➢ Data interpretation of Twitter handle of MoHP

➢ Data interpretation of Facebook account of MoHP

9/11/2023

SURVEY

FOLLOW OF SOCIAL MEDIA

SURVEY

GET INFORMATION AND NEWS ABOUT COV-19 IN SOCIAL MEDIA

TWITTER HANDLE OF MoHP

FACEBOOK ACCOUNT OF MoHP

Types of information	Total post	Like	Comment	Share
Live Briefing/briefing	9	5,411	554	1,025
Information (Suchana)	5	2,393	225	528
Press Release	2	1,000	215	556
Statement	1	512	120	223
Total	17	9,316	1,114	2,332

3

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

FINDING

- 68 percent of people who use social media on a daily basis. Who get 60% of information from social media.
- The main purpose of public relation is to maintain long term good relation between government and people.
- The public relation plays a vital role while pandemic time.
- It is lesson learn for government to create a great public relation impact as well as choosing different types of tools while doing Public Relation

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

FINDING

- PR professionals used both traditional and digital platforms to educate the public, manage organizational reputation, and counter misinformation, contributing to the overall response and recovery efforts in the country.
- In initial phase of Covid, people are satisfy by government work because they're not expecting with government.
- The positive attitude towards the Ministry of Health and Population has developed in the last days than in the initial days.

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Effective public relations played vital role by disseminating accurate information, building trust, facilitating government-public communication, supporting crisis management, promoting health measures, and fostering collaboration among various sectors. These efforts contributed to a more co-ordinated and informed response to the crisis.

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

Recommendation

- It is not known when and at what time the pandemic will spread. Therefore, it is the need of the day for the Ministry of Health and Population to always be prepared for pandemic reduction and control.
- On covid 19 pandemic MoHP played vital role. Even though MoHP should follow more effective transparent Communication in upcoming crisis.
- MoHP should focus both external and internal communication together. MoHP should make long term planning to control and prevent crisis situation. Not only that MoHP should follow pre-crisis, during crisis and after crisis public relation too. MoHP should lesson learn from research, planning, implementation, evaluation and feedback of previous crisis. And Government should execute those vital lesson learn for upcoming pandemic time.

Thank You so much for giving your valuable time