

India-EU Free Trade Negotiations and the Role of Veto Players

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ABSTRACT

Foreign Policy decision-making on a political level is a difficult and intricate task that requires coordination, cooperation and agreement between multiple actors involved in the policy making process. This challenge is vividly demonstrated by the ongoing negotiations between the European Union (EU) and India regarding the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Despite the shared eagerness of EU and Indian decision-makers to reach an FTA agreement that would benefit both the signatories (Wouters et.al, 2014), the negotiation has so far failed to reach a conclusion. In fact, the FTA talks have been ongoing for nearly a decade, underscoring the complexities inherent in the making of foreign policy decisions and the necessity of reaching a consensus among different levels of actors and decision-makers. Therefore, this research proposes to conduct a study on the Indian foreign policy decision-making, by utilizing Veto Player Theory to analyze the underlying complexities that significantly influenced the decisions made by the Indian decision-makers at two critical stages: the start and the halt of the FTA during the negotiation talks with the EU.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Over the decades, the world trading system has undergone a profound change with rapid adoption of bilateral relations between global and regional players. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs), Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) are increasingly becoming an eminent feature of international relations. A fundamental reason for such a proliferation can be closely linked to the growing association of such agreements as a platform to encourage liberalization of trade amongst the partner countries (Urata 2008). India has also been involved in establishing several such bilateral partnerships with both regional and international partners, aimed not only to boost export oriented domestic manufacturing but also to set India as a key global player at the world of international commerce. Amongst Asia and Pacific region, India is today one of the largest signatories of such trade agreements in the world with a total of 43 Trade Agreements (Asia Regional Integration Center, n.d.). With that said, involvement in FTAs and RTAs are relatively recent for India where they consider them a fundamental aspect for supporting the multilateral trade liberalization agenda (WTO, 2011a). In fact, the foreign policy approach – especially trade related foreign policies – were historically defensive in India (Khorana and Garcia, 2013; Grevi, 2012). This newly acquired interest is the outcome of two key factors, namely globalization and the perceived positive outcome from liberalization as demonstrated by India's eastern neighbors (Zhang, 2006). As a result, the signing of such agreements is now seen as a key factor for India's foreign trade policy strategy for improving market access for Indian exports (WTO, 2011b). India has over the years expanded on its efforts to engage with key trading blocs and has signed multiple FTAs and other forms of Preferential Trade Agreements and are currently launched or proposed negotiation with at least twenty-three trading blocs.

Presently, among all other proposed and ongoing trade agreements of India, the negotiation talks between India and EU is of great importance given its wide and deep coverage that goes

beyond liberalization of goods and services as well as its potential for expanding the economic partnership between both the parties. In line with this, India and the European Union (EU) are currently discussing a free trade agreement (FTA) with the goal of liberalising trade and expanding cooperation. For India, increased cooperation with the EU through bilateral agreement is especially significant for economic growth in the region. However, in the context of this thesis, there are two reasons why the India-EU FTA is the focus of the present research. Firstly, while India has several bilateral free trade agreements with other countries, time and again the country faced difficulty in concluding an FTA with the EU despite continuous governmental acknowledgement of the importance of concluding an FTA with the country's largest trading partner: the EU (Government of India Economic Survey 2016-17, 2017, p.26). Secondly, due to the nature of the commercial diplomacy, which intertwines a wide range of policy domains in the areas of goods and services which requires constant cooperation between a diverse range of sectors which includes health, finance, legal, construction, manufacturing, agricultural and numerous other sectors. Therefore, it is undoubtedly an area where several levels of actors compete to gain greater influence over the policy outcomes. Thus, this is also an area where bureaucratic, political and business interests largely overlap. Such an overlap encourages interaction between different levels of domestic actors and actors with similar ideology cooperate with each other and attempt to influence policy outcomes. Moreover, strengthening of economic ties plays a significant role in the India-EU cooperation agenda.

Indeed, due to its importance and coverage, the ongoing negotiation talks have sparked a lot of research attention. Amongst these scholarly debates, there is a constant discussion on the potential benefits and losses of the agreement for both the negotiating partners. However, the evidence for the impact of the agreement so far has been mixed. On the one hand, scholars advocated that the proposed agreement is essential from a political and economic standpoint, not only would it boost confidence in the EU and reinforce its role as a global player, but it

might also boost both partners' global competitiveness (e.g., Bhagwati, 1994; Baldwin, 1993; Dupont and Ciolac, 2012; Cheng, 2017; Wichterich and Menon, 2009). On the other hand, researchers suggest that the India-EU FTA has the potential for incurring trade losses for various sectors in India (e.g., Achterbosch et al. 2008; Berden, et al., 2009). For instance, India is most likely to incur a loss of 250 million USD if it wishes to commit to the FTA (Powel, 2008). Moreover, research has also shown that what little benefit there is from the FTA will only be in favour of a small handful of sectors e.g., the Indian services, textiles, agricultural and automobiles sectors (Decreux and Mitarotonna, 2007). Regardless of these studies, the political climate amongst the India negotiators seemed to indicate that both the partners are extremely eager to conclude the proposed deal and to the best of their ability intend to figure out a way to formulate an FTA that sufficiently satisfies both. Despite this eagerness between India and the EU, both the partners have repeatedly failed to reach a common ground over various essential issues that requires addressing before the agreement can be concluded. This often resulted in the loss of momentum in trade talks and multiple missed deadlines which contributed to a prolonged hiatus of the negotiations. This presents a research puzzle, i.e., despite the strong eagerness from both the Indian and EU negotiators to reach a conclusion, *why for the past fifteen years have the negotiation faced little to no progress in the discussions?*

Some scholars have attempted to answer this question. For instance, Khorana and Garcia (2013) argued that India-EU free trade agreement faced delays in concluding the talks due to the mismatch of interests where the EU favours a “deep integration” agenda for the FTA while India preferred a “shallow” FTA (Khorana and Garcia; 2013). However, such scholarly approach does not consider the fact that domestic politics play a major role in foreign policy decision-making of a country. In fact, many scholars who study India’s foreign policy tend to “black box” the actual process, that is, they assume that the India’s foreign policy approach is the outcome of the decision taken by the governmental representatives of the state. However,

this overlooks the complex domestic struggles which takes place internally between different level of actors within the country that shapes its foreign policy outlook. This approach to understanding foreign policy decision-making has been labelled by scholars as the “non-unitary” (Dreher and Jensen, 2013) where it has been demonstrated by previous studies that foreign policy decision-making can occur at multiple levels of decision-makers in positions of authority that either acts independently or cooperatively in a group to formulate the country’s foreign policy (Hudson and Day, 2019; Kier 1997; Legro 1995; Stien 1993; De Mesquita and Lalman, 2008).

Thus, this thesis attempts to explain this stalemate from a non-unitary perspective by employing George Tsebelis’s (1999; 2002) Veto Player Theory which argues that a government’s ability to make changes to the policy status quo depends on the number of veto players involved in the policymaking process. Subsequently, a decreased ability in policy reform occurs due to the ideological distances between each player, that is, how far the preferences of these domestic actors are from the policy status quo of the country. If the preferences are far from the status quo, it would lead negotiators to seek policy changes whereas if the preferences are closer to the policy status quo, the negotiators would prefer policy stability over change. These preferences typically come from self-interests that they aim to defend through the power of veto during the negotiation (Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig, 2009).

In this thesis, a veto player refers to any individual or group of influential domestic actors who hold authority to veto negotiation (for example member of a Parliament). These actors acquire the power to veto because of the negotiation process itself which follows a pattern of procedures. More specifically, international negotiations take place in two-levels, that is, international level and domestic level where the chief negotiator engages with both international partners and domestic actors to formulate a treaty agreement that can be domestically ratified for both the negotiating actors (Putnam, 1988). This relationship between

the chief negotiators and their domestic actors have been described by scholars to be that of a principal-agent, where domestic players with veto power (i.e., principals) “delegate power to (or otherwise constrain)” chief negotiators (i.e., agents) (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 483) to act as a “transmission belt” through which the preferences of the veto players are translated into foreign policy (Moravcsik, 2008, p.237). During this transmission from domestic level preferences to foreign policy outcome, the process undergoes different stages of negotiation which begins with the authorization stage where the talks are initially approved to formally begin, followed by the negotiation stage and once the negotiator comes at an agreement, the transmission then concludes at the ratification stage where the treaty is drafted and implemented (Delreux, 2008). However, at to each of these negotiation stages, veto points emerge which are essentially institutional check points through which every policy being formulated must pass the approval of the domestic veto players before it can proceed (Immergut, 2010). In turn, this gives the domestic actors the power to influence foreign policy outcomes.

Therefore, in the context of India-EU FTA, this thesis argues that the chief negotiators of India who decided to formally start an FTA negotiation with the EU because they were in favour of the liberalization of the Indian economy which was an ideological position located further away from the policy status quo during the authorization stage of the negotiations, which was at that time in favour of protectionism (Khorana, 2020; Lau and Aarup, 2021). However, at the negotiation stage, they could not move forward with the FTA and faced a stalemate from the Indian perspective due the ideological conflict that occurred between the chief negotiators (i.e., agents) and other veto players at the domestic level (i.e., principals) over the status quo.

As a result, this study will aim to investigate the FTA talks between India and the EU in an attempt to answer the main research question of this thesis: “does the preferences of influential veto players in India at the domestic level impact the start and halt of the India-Eu FTA negotiation talks”. Consequently, two hypotheses can be derived from the arguments thus far:

H1: During the authorization stage of the India-EU FTA negotiation process, the negotiators, and the organizations, including the CII and the FICCI, had an ideological position that was closer to the alternative policy proposal than the existing protectionist policy status quo. Specifically, the negotiators and the principal organizations favored trade liberalization, which surpassed the protectionist status quo, leading to the decision to initiate policy change and formally start the India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007.

H2: During the negotiation phase, the domestic veto players - including coalition and opposition members of the two houses of the Parliament, as well as influential businesses and service organizations - had a closer ideological distance to the policy status quo. This ideological difference came into conflict with the negotiators and other veto players, who favored liberalization of trade with international partners. The result was the halt of negotiation talks in 2013 due to the inability of the negotiators to bridge the ideological gap with the domestic veto players who preferred protectionism.

To test these hypotheses, it is important to assess the ideological distance of the actors involved in decision-making during the start and halt of the FTA. Consequently, the research aims to explore the underlying ideological factors that caused Indian domestic actors to approve the start of formal India-EU FTA negotiation talks in 2007 and halt the progress in 2013 up until 2017. To do this, it is essential to understand how the proposed policy changes within the negotiation were perceived by both the domestic veto players and the chief negotiators. Different perception of the proposed policy gives rise to divergent preferences which in turn motivated these actors to bargain with each other for policy stability versus policy change using tactics such as threats to not cooperate or veto decision to defend their interests. More specifically, if the proposed policy outcomes are perceived to be less beneficial for the veto players interest compared to the policy status quo, they would pressurize the chief negotiators to maintain policy stability in that particular policy area. Furthermore, the greater the number

of such veto players, the greater the difficulty for the chief negotiators to bring the necessary policy reforms for the FTA. In this thesis, such perceptions will be categorized in the form of ‘images’ which pertain to the coherent beliefs a veto player would hold and are manifested through the choices of words he makes while expressing his views on the ongoing FTA. This is in line with the fundamental arguments of image theory which contends that our behaviors are highly influenced by the way we perceive the situation to be, and not how it is in reality (Boulding, 1959, p.120). Thus, this thesis would be testing the predictions by employing Image theory to help capture the different perceptions of actors on the liberalization of trade with the EU. More specifically, the ideological distance between the chief negotiators and the veto players will be examined by comparing their perceived positive versus negative image of the policy reforms being discussed in the FTA talks, respectively. Examining the ideological distance would help identify the reason behind the decision outcomes to start and halt the negotiation talks, which would in turn help to answer the research question. To this end, this thesis will first discuss how trade-related foreign policy decisions are formulated and executed in India which would help to distinguish between who are the chief negotiators versus the domestic veto players present at different levels of the decision-making stage. Once the relevant representatives are identified, the study would then proceed to data collection. More specifically, this thesis will conduct a mixed method research involving the use of content and discourse analysis on data that are mainly collected from three different sources for triangulation purposes. Firstly, the documents of the executive branch of the government primarily from the online portals of two apex actors of Indian foreign affairs: the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) as they are the two most important actors dealing directly with foreign policy decision-making. Secondly, from the legislative sources i.e., the Parliamentary archives are available online through their official websites to examine available debates on the EU FTA. As the present study is longitudinal

research, and newspapers are well-known sources with complete in-depth coverage of the issue (Copeland and Copsey, 2017) the last source of data would be collected from four major newspaper sources of India: *The Economic Times*, *The Hindu*, *The Telegraph* and *The Indian Express*.

To conduct an analysis of the collected data from the ministry and legislative records, content analysis will be utilized whereas a framing analysis would be used for media records. In order to properly identify and report the perception of the FTA in a given textual material, a coding framework will first be constructed where the unit of analysis would be a line or a portion of a line that indicates a certain type of belief (positive, negative or neutral) of the Indian actors towards the potential impact of the India-EU FTA. A coding framework will be utilized as it allows researchers to reduce a vast amount of qualitative data into analyzable units by deriving categories and concepts from the extracted data (Lockyer, 2004). Furthermore, a Likert scale will also be constructed for this study which will enable a measurement of the intensity of certain ideological beliefs on a negative, positive or neutral basis. This would allow the study to easily gauge the perceptions of the domestic actors at different stages of the negotiation talks and connect them to the hypotheses.

This thesis will not constrain its research scope by only considering the perception of traditional governmental foreign policy actors. It will also consider investigating the perceptions of the government allies from within the coalition (UPA I and UPA II) and the members of the opposition coalition in the Parliament. Although the international treaties are made by the government in power and it is not obligatory for the government to seek ratification from the Parliament for signing international agreements, however it is important to note that any amendments to the country's law to implement the treaty or any agreements that affects the rights of the citizen are mandatory to be approved by the Parliament. And since, India-EU FTA agreement constituted of clauses that required changes in the law e.g., lowering of the FDI cap

in several sectors in the country and also changes in the country's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime from a TRIPS to a TRIPS-plus provision related to intellectual property rights in the health sector in the agriculture sector and technology sector especially climate change related technologies, hence, making Parliamentary approval mandatory. Therefore, making perceptions of the members of government coalition from within the Parliament worth investigating as they play an important role in approval of trade related decisions for India-EU FTA.

From within Parliament the present research also aims to investigate the perception of the opposition coalition. This is because, both the first phase of the negotiation when the talks were proceeding well i.e., from 2006-2009, and the time when the talks first started to lose its momentum from 2010 falls under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) regime led by Indian National Congress (INC). And while the UPA was the government in charge at the central, they could not acquire a simple majority in the legislative elections and hence, had to rely on the other external support to maintain a simple majority in the Parliament. Moreover, during the 2009-2013 which falls within the India-EU negotiation period many supporting allies of the UPA government were withdrawing their alliance for several reasons, this left the government as a minority in the Parliament, therefore, for any EU trade related amendments of the law that had to be passed by the Parliament required approval of both the allies and the opposition. Consequently, in order to gain a good understanding of the perceptions that shaped India's trade decisions for EU, considering the views of the opposition coalition is as important as considering views of the coalition parties that formed the government.

Lastly, trade agreements are an area of great interest for India's corporate sector. Especially, the FTA with the EU as it is one of the largest trading partners and export destinations for India. Some of the big business bodies of India are directly involved in advising the Indian government on trade related negotiation matters. They are also the only stakeholders who have

been granted access to the EU negotiation agendas (Eberhardt and Kumar, 2010). Some of India's apex business representative bodies are often known to meet high-level officials to discuss trade as well as accompany them for FTA discussions with the EU. Therefore, quite understandably the trade decisions are highly influenced by suggestions provided by these business bodies. Hence, this thesis will also pay greater attention to these big business corporates and investigate their perception towards liberalization of trade and non-trade barriers for EU imports.

The present thesis aims to study in depth the perception of these domestic actors over a period of eight years i.e., from 2006 to 2014. By doing so, the thesis aims to capture the perception of the domestic actors from around the time when the UPA-I government was considering the option to start a formal FTA talk with the EU until early 2014 as the halted phase continued for the entirety of the UPA-II years it started with loss of momentum from around 2009 and turned into absolute deadlock from 2013 and then gaining back its momentum from after the new NDA government took office in May 2014 and started re-engaging with the EU since 2015/2016.

This thesis will only be focusing on investigating the domestic aspect of the Indian side for the UPA regime. While the other international factors (such as considering EU actors' preferences) are also important, they require dedicated research of their own. It will also not investigate the time from when the NDA government took office. This is largely because of the time and issue this thesis aims to analyze falls largely under the UPA regime, and although the NDA perspectives would be studied as a part of Parliamentary opposition, however, examining their perspective since they have gained power as the central government would largely be relatable for the study of the re-start of the talks and covering that aspect of the negotiation is beyond of the scope of this study.

All in all, the theoretical contribution of this thesis is in its attempt to address the drawbacks of the existing literature which has commonly studied India as a unitary and coherent actor when engaging with other international entities (e.g., Powel, 2008; Achterbosch, et.al., 2008; Khorana and Perdikis 2010). In comparison to the range of existing studies on EU's foreign policy decision-making, Indian foreign policy decision-making studies are quite rare especially the works that studies India as a non-unitary actor in the field of trade related foreign policy decision-making (e.g., Eberhardt, and Kumar, 2010; Baru, 2009; Mohan, 2009; Kumar, 2016; Saha 2013). Therefore, by adopting a non-unitary perspective, this thesis will contribute to the current literature on Indian foreign trade policy decision-making towards the EU, a topic which has not been explored to its full potential within the literature on Indian foreign policy.

For a long period of time the scholars of International Relations have been debating on how policy decisions are made and, who are the actors who possesses the monopoly over policy decisions especially decisions related to international treaty negotiations. Previous studies on realism have tended to suggest that foreign policy domains are affairs of the state governments and treaty outcomes are decided by representatives of a state i.e., the heads of the state government. This approach of making the actual process of foreign policy decision-making opaque is often referred to as a "black box" where the internal considerations of the political decision-making system is virtually unknowable to anyone who is not a political insider (Stengel and Baumann, 2017; Hellmann and Jørgensen, 2015; Risse, 2013). Similarly, studies on India-EU FTA have also been inclined to "black box" the actual process of decision-making involved in the negotiation talks.

However, born out of such assumptions, other theories of IR such as Intergovernmentalism, Institutionalism and Neofunctionalism started to unpack the black box by arguing that international politics are not an exclusive domain the state representatives, but also, includes numerous levels of other non-state actors, for instance, private businesses, multinational

enterprises, non-governmental organizations, parliament, individual political parties, and interest groups who have their own political and economic interests to pursue influence over decision-making. Similarly, the central argument of this research is that domestic level actors played a larger role in shaping the decisions related to both the start and the halt of the negotiation talks between India and the EU. In fact, individual perception of the impact of trade liberalization and their policy preferences influenced their decision related to the FTA.

The current study will be a departure from these conventional academic literature in this field, which has mainly studied India-EU relations and their bilateral ties as an interaction between Delhi and Brussels. Alternatively, this study will focus on internal factors mainly perceptions of the domestic veto players of the Indian coalition government (UPAI and UPAL), individual political institutions (the executive and the legislative) and business organizations as a determining factor for India's decision to start and halt the FTA negotiation with EU. Studies focusing on preferences of decision-making actors so far have received little attention in the Indian academic world. Studies on India-EU FTA are mostly ones that have been sponsored to study potential economic outcomes (Gasiorek, 2007; Decreux and Mitaritonna, 2007) and reports on the potential negative impacts of the agreement (Paasch 2008; Sengupta and Narendra, 2014; Eberhardt and Kumar, 2010, MSF, 2010-2012). Relying on well documented evidence of interviews and parliamentary debates of these veto players in India, this research would attempt to capture the preferences of the Indian actors during the start of the negotiation with the EU and the period during the halt. By doing so, the study would like to highlight the struggles between different actors to achieve a foreign policy outcome that is more in accordance with their preferences.

Beyond this introduction, the following section of this chapter would also provide an overview of the thesis structure. This outline would serve as a roadmap, highlighting the key areas of focus and the progression of the research. Therefore, this thesis would proceed as follows:

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Concepts, will begin by discussing the historical links between India and Europe, establishing a contextual foundation for the India-EU FTA negotiations. It will then delve into the strategic partnership between India and the EU, emphasizing its significance in shaping the trade relations between the two partners. The chapter will then further explore the India-EU Free Trade Agreement, discussing its objectives i.e., the goals and aspirations that India and the EU sought to achieve through the agreements. Additionally, the chapter will also discuss the potential benefits and challenges that the FTA could bring for both the partners. Furthermore, the chapter will elaborate on the most widely discussed reasons highlighted by scholars regarding the complexity and difficulties faced in reaching a comprehensive agreement that satisfies the interests and concerns of all parties involved. By delving into these aspects, the chapter will provide insights into the multifaceted challenges that have contributed to the prolonged negotiation process of the India-EU FTA.

Moving on, the chapter will then transition to introducing the concept of foreign policy and the role of state and domestic actors in the decision-making processes. It will critically evaluate the unitary actor assumption, which assumes that foreign policy decisions are exclusively determined by governmental representatives. In contrast to this view, the chapter will move on to introduce the non-unitary actor assumption, acknowledging the influence of multiple decision-makers in foreign policy decision-making processes. It will do so with the help of the existing literature on foreign policy decision-making which highlights the role of various domestic actors in shaping foreign policy outcomes. Following that, the chapter will then move on to explore foreign policy studies in India, to gain insights into the country's unique political dynamics and their impact on trade-related foreign policy decisions.

Thereafter, the next section of the chapter will specifically focus on the foreign policy decision-making process in India concerning trade negotiations. It will examine the key actors involved in the decision-making process and their respective roles and responsibilities. Special attention is given to

the executive, legislative, and electorate branches of the Indian government, as well as their interactions within a principal-agent relationship. The chapter will be exploring the dynamics of negotiation at two levels, highlighting the presence of non-unitary veto players and their influence on policy outcomes. Additionally, it will delve into the three stages of negotiation and the control mechanisms that shape the decision-making process.

Chapter 3 will begin with building upon the theoretical foundations laid out in Chapter 2. This chapter will introduce the veto player theory as the overarching framework for the study. It will then provide an overview of the theory, highlighting its relevance to policy reforms and decision-making processes. Drawing on this theory, the chapter will be developing a conceptual model that guides the formulation of hypotheses. The hypotheses developed will then examine the relationship between veto players and the policy outcomes within the context of the India-EU FTA negotiations.

Chapter 4, In this chapter, the research methodology employed in the study will be discussed. The chapter will provide an outline of the data collection process, including content analysis of executive and legislative documents, as well as frame analysis of media sources. The chapter will also provide a brief explanation on why the study chose to opt for the use of mixed methods, emphasizing the benefits of such research methods in providing a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Additionally, the chapter will elaborate on the operationalization of key variables and indicators utilized in the analysis, thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings.

Chapter 5 will primarily focus on the analysis and presentation of the research findings. The chapter will begin by presenting a descriptive analysis of the collected data, aiming to provide a comprehensive overview of the empirical evidence gathered during the study. The descriptive analysis will offer a detailed examination of the data, facilitating a deeper understanding of the key aspects and patterns observed within the dataset. The chapter will then proceed to test the formulated hypotheses, examining the relationships between veto players and policy outcomes in the context of the India-EU FTA negotiations. Through a critical discussion of the results, the chapter will seek to

offer a deeper understanding of the complexities and challenges encountered in trade-related foreign policy decision-making. It will highlight the interplay between various domestic actors and their competing interests, shedding light on the factors that have contributed to both the start and halt of the India-EU FTA negotiations.

The final chapter, Chapter 6, will serve as the conclusion of the thesis, summarizing the main contributions of the research. It will emphasize on the insights gained into the intricate nature of trade-related foreign policy decision-making within the context of the India-EU FTA. Additionally, the chapter will acknowledge the limitations of the study and propose potential avenues for future research to address these limitations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Concepts

2.1 India-EU events that formed closer ties leading to FTA talks.

In the following section, the literature will explore the historical links between India and Europe, highlighting key events and interactions that have shaped their relationship. It will examine trade routes, cultural exchanges, and historical alliances to provide a comprehensive understanding of the historical ties between the two regions.

2.1.1 The historical links between India and Europe.

Although relation between India and Europe dates back to the ancient days of the Greeks, the links were mainly trade related. During the Middle Ages trade and commerce was carried on via indirect sources between the East and the West. Although profitable, the trade of goods from the East was under the Arabian and Venetian control. In the fifteenth century with the Ottoman empires capture of Asia Minor and the Constantinople major trading routes to the east came under the Turkish control who maintained hostility towards the European countries. Furthermore, the Italy dominated trade routes refused any new Western European countries such as Spain and Portugal to have any share in trade through these routes. Hence, in fifteenth century powers like Portugal and Spain voyaged their way through to India in hopes of finding direct trade routes. Portuguese sailors were the first to reach the shores of India to establish direct trade ties followed by the Dutch, the French and the British merchants. Although, until mid-20th century the trade ties were less bilateral and mainly colonial, several European progressive and liberal ideas not only influenced Indian's fight for Independence, but also shape its democratic structure and political culture as now we know it today.

Post 1945, India begun to look for ways to make itself self-sufficient once again. With new ideals of democracy, justice and equality India began to expand its friendship with the other

countries. However, foreign policy approach especially trade-related foreign policies used to be highly defensive in India. This protectionist and inward-looking foreign policy have been mainly informed by the non-interference principle and lacks a clear foreign policy agenda (Khorana and Garcia, 2013; Grevi, 2012). In other words, India's engagement with powerful nations is purely based on necessities, which informs the country's present foreign policy strategy, which is quite cautious. Such an approach to foreign policy has been to some extent influenced by the anti-capitalist ideology of the then ruling political party of India i.e., the Indian National Congress (Henry, 2008), as well as by the country's lingering defensive diplomatic history (Narlikar, 2006).

For Europe, the hope to prevent any further war damages post World War II, adapted the idea of a 'united Europe' by establishing common institutions with an aim to eventually politically and economically unite all sovereign European states under one supranational organization. Especially, in the aftermath of the Cold War, when the number of sovereign states in Europe became fifty and another seven with partial recognition it became imperative to reinforce the idea of a single European entity. The Schuman Declaration proposed the creation of a European Coal and Steel Company (ECSC) that laid the foundation for the EU that we know today. Later in 1957, the six countries- Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland decided to further develop their partnership through sharing a common market which encouraged the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) (later renamed as European Community). Although India was a Soviet ally during the Cold War era, during the 1960s, it successfully developed a political and diplomatic relation with the EEC. As a consequence of Cold War power politics, political dialogues were limited between the two. Alternatively, the major focus of the relationship at the start was purely trade and commerce. It was acknowledged by both that the growing economic ties with the EEC should not affect India's growing bilateral ties with individual European countries like Germany, France and Italy. This

system remained unchanged even after the EEC transformed to the European Union.

The 1960's witnessed the beginning of the political and diplomatic relation between India and the EEC. This meant duty-free quotas for silk and cotton handloom fabrics and handicrafts and adaptation of a common policy in agriculture between India and the six members of the EEC (The European Community and India, 1986, p.2). In 1971, the EEC introduced general tariff preferences for India alongside other ninety countries, under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) scheme. This reduced import duties on goods exported from the developing countries to the EEC member countries. It was aimed at fostering economic growth and create jobs in the developing countries.

In 1972, the United Kingdom (UK) alongside Ireland and Denmark joined the Treaty of Rome. This meant a reformation of India's relation with the EEC members. India expressed concern over removal of the benefits on trade with the UK that it received as a former colony which boosted its trade and in turn the economy of the country. Now with UK joining the EEC the Imperial Preferential status was revoked which was assumed to bring a substantial economic loss for the India (as UK was the India's largest trading partner). The concern raised by the India and other Commonwealth countries regarding the removal of Imperial Preferential status, was stated to be addressed in the Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) jointly issued by the UK and the EEC. The JDI stated the "Community's will to strengthen and extend its trade relations" with developing Asian countries and to address the issues that "may arise in the field of trade with a view to seeking appropriate solution" (The European Community and India, 1986, p.2).

Although, during initial phases India's effort to form closer ties through Association Agree was rejected by the EEC (Abhyankar, 2007, p. 395), gradual steps over the next few years have strengthened the relationship beyond commercial and economic relations to political cooperation. The first step that established a framework for stronger ties was the signing of a Commercial Cooperation Agreement (CCA) in 1973.

The CCA followed the general tariff preferences and recognized the importance of sovereign equality of both the blocs to gain mutual benefits from the partnership. This reformed the India-EEC ties in a way that would foster trade between both the partners without affecting India's bilateral trade with the member countries. Under the provisions of CCA a Joint Commission was established to advance cooperation between the two blocs. The 1980s saw further enhancement of economic and investment relations with the signing of the Commercial and Economic Cooperation Agreements that encouraged trade promotion and trade development. During this period the trade between the two partners increased with EEC accounting for twenty percent of India's total trade turnover (Abhyankar, 2007, p.396).

However, the relationship between India and the EEC failed to advance beyond economic interests until the end of the Cold War. This was largely due to the relationship that India shared with the three major players of Western Europe i.e., France, West Germany and the United Kingdom. This could be attributed to India's role in the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM). The main objective of NAM countries was to encourage mutual interest and cooperation, respect state sovereignty and territorial integrity, equality amongst all nations, as opposed to oppression and foreign dominance; and non-alliance to multilateral military pacts; and non-aligned countries' independence from great power or blocs influences and rivalries (Ministry of External Affairs,2012). For scholars like Malone (2011), India's support for non-alignment during the Cold War was essentially a protectionist foreign policy tactic to defend domestic sectors (especially the newly developing ones) from foreign competition and only allowing liberalization on other fronts that was in line with the country's interest (Lawrence and Chadha, 2004). However, the end of the Cold War era saw drastic changes within the international system which brought about major strategic and political flux alongside economic turbulences around the world (Malone, 2011). One of the crucial developments during this time was the acceleration of globalization which has also played a major part in compelling India to deepen

ties with powerful nations of the, through various partnership agreements.

Another potential reason could be the increasingly intertwining global economy that fostered regional cooperation and integration. In turn, this has aided positive economic and political gains for those who adopted a more liberalized foreign policy approach for the development of the country (Zhang, 2006).

For India, the year 1991 was all about the unprecedented economic crisis due several reason starting from the adoption of poor economic policies to ineffective industrial and public sectors which were all excessively dominated by the government, and inefficient bureaucrats and economists in the Planning Commission, bringing down the country just like it did for the Soviet Union. Because of inefficient management of sectors, soon the country was confronted with a huge trade deficit resulting in a balance of payment crisis. The hike of oil prices during the Gulf War worsened the situation.

Moreover, the collapse of the Soviet Union also had an impact in the country which paved the way for re-thinking of economic and foreign policy. This was because the collapse was more than just a downfall of a political and military giant. It was the downfall of an ideology too. With the downfall of Communist ideology, Indian socialism, which had long served as the driving ideology of statecraft and economic policymaking, faced a crisis of trust. Beliefs that were previously unacceptable to the nation's ruling elite — ideas about markets, profits, and entrepreneurship — now looked logical amidst the ruins of Communism (Kapur, 2009). As a result, India steered towards economic liberalization for a sustainable and faster economic growth. This change in economic policy is characterized as one of the very first and the most important events in the country's course of future involvements in FTAs and RTAs (WTO, 2011a). Since its first participation in the 1975 Bangkok Agreement and the 1993 South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Preferential Trading Area (SAPTA), India's has been more actively engaging in FTAs (Khorana and Garcia, 2013). The signing of RTAs

is now seen as a key factor for India's foreign trade policy strategy of improving market access for Indian exports (WTO, 2011b). India has over the years expanded on its efforts to engage with key trading blocs and has signed multiple FTAs and other forms of Preferential Trade Agreements and currently launched or proposed negotiation with at least twenty-three trading blocs (see Table 1).

Table 1: A list of India's Free Trade Agreements (source Asia Regional Integration Center, n.d.)

	Agreement Status	Trade Agreements
1.	Proposed/under consultation and study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India-Uruguay Preferential Trading Arrangement (PTA). • India-Venezuela PTA. • Indian-Russian Federation Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. • India-Colombia PTA. • India-Turkey FTA. • Comprehensive Economic Partnership for East Asia (CEPEA/ASEAN+6). • India-People's Republic of China Regional Trading Agreement. • India-Taipei, China FTA. • India-Ecuador FTA. • Georgia-India FTA. • India-United Kingdom FTA. • Bangladesh-India FTA. • India-Philippines PTA.
2.	Signed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India-Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Area.

3.	Negotiation launched	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.• Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi- Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Free Trade Area.• India-Thailand Free Trade Area.• India-European Union FTA.• India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia-India FTA. • India-New Zealand FTA. • India-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. • India-European Free Trade Association FTA. • India-Egypt PTA. • India-Israel FTA. • India-Southern African Customs Union PTA. • India-Canada Economic Partnership Agreement. • India-Eurasian Economic Union. • India-Peru FTA. • India-Iran PTA.
4.	Signed and In Effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. • India-Sri Lanka FTA. • India-Singapore Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. • India-MERCOSUR PTA. • India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. • India-Malaysia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. • ASEAN-India Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement. • Indo-Nepal Treaty of Trade. • Afghanistan-India PTA. • Bhutan-India Trade Agreement • India-Chile PTA. • India-Republic of Korea Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. • South-Asian Free Trade.

With regards to the relation between India and the EU, such post-war political and economic developments created fresh prospects for cooperation. Both emerging and developed economic powers of the East (Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia) encouraged a significant higher political attention from the West. As a result, the European Commission for the first time launched an Asia Strategy. As the document states, it was a step taken by the European Union to understand “the cause and effects of the rapid growth sweeping across much of Asia, and to identify the reasons behind Europe’s failure so far to establish adequate economic and political profile in the region” (The European Commission, 1994). During the same time, India’s trade doubled after the opening of their economy especially with China and USA (Bava, 2010). As a result of economic growth, the country’s per capita income also increased significantly. All these factors soon started drawing Europe’s attention towards India and soon by 1994, both the blocs decided to institutionalize their relationship by signing the Cooperation Agreement on enhanced partnership and development. The Joint Political Statements of the agreement was the first step towards a closer political cooperation between both the entities, which has progressed through annual summits and frequent ministerial and high-level meetings.

In 1994, India and the EEC signed their first Political Declaration, emphasising their shared commitment to democratic and multicultural ideas. The political dimension it brought was an explicit acknowledgement of India's changing prominence in South Asia and its economic success following the reform after the end of the Cold War. For EU, India's economic liberalization was a positive development that required encouragement and strengthening. From the late-1990s, India's continuous GDP growth of six to seven percent per year underlined the success and irreversibility of the country's economic liberalization process. India, through its economic and development cooperation initiatives, increased connection with the EU significantly since 1993.

Since the 1990s, the European Commission has been working on a framework for a Substantially Enhanced Partnership with India (Abyankar, 2009). It was a long-awaited recognition that India has grown in importance as a political and economic actor on the world arena. The success of India's technological expertise by 1990s, the fast-growing middle class, and the country's consistently strong economic growth compelled a rethinking of relations with India. The United States took the lead, and others, notably the European Union, quickly followed. The EU's Common Foreign, Security Policy (CFSP) gave member states a new dimension to enhance their bilateral ties with India. The topics of human rights and laws of armed conflict, democratic ideology and compliance to basic United Nation Conventions, and strong labor and environmental norms, formed EU's policy agenda. Its support for development and economic cooperation programs are excellent tools for pursuing this strategy. The EU employs this strategy diligently not only in its dealings with India, but also with other partners. Therefore, the following subsection will delve into the strategic partnership between India and the European Union. It will briefly review the literature on the establishment of this partnership, analyzing the motivations, objectives, and areas of cooperation between India and the EU.

2.1.2 Strategic Partnership between India-EU.

The 1st India-EU Summit in Lisbon in the year 2000 established a landmark for “enhanced cooperation” and the building of a “coalition of interest” to meet future challenges (Jain, 2014, p.6). This was a step towards furthering political engagement between both the blocs alongside its rapidly growing economic relations.

The year 2001 witnessed a significant shift in the EU's approach to the world. With international security at risk after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Centre USA, Europe faced its own internal divide. While EU showed strong support for the US-led “War on Terror” in Afghanistan, but by 2003 the Iraq war created a strife between the EU members. The

lack of cohesion among member states in solving the Iraqi issue exposed a glaring weakness within the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). As a result, this triggered a chain of events that culminated in the adoption of the European Security Strategy (ESS) by the European Council at the end of 2003. The ESS provided a detailed guideline on how EU member states can achieve successful collective action against a number of key security issues which includes terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflict, state failure and organized crimes (Council of the European Union, 2003, p. 5-6). The Strategy emphasized the importance of a more integrated international society with efficient international institutions and an international order based on well-functioning "multilateralism" (Council of the European Union, 2003, p. 11). To achieve this, the EU proposed to strengthen several key partnerships including that of India. Consequently, this has resulted in a closer strategic engagement between India and EU since 2004 during the 5th India- EU summit at the Hague. This engagement, otherwise known as a "Strategic Partnership" (SP), not only demonstrated EU's acknowledgement of the growing global influence of India, but also brought the India-EU ties closer (Saini, 2012, p.186). In fact, it took merely a little over three decades for India to transition from a "non-associable" to becoming one of the few key strategic partners of the EU (Abhyankar, 2009).

The SP aimed to develop five key areas of interest: a) Strengthening dialogue and consultation mechanism; b) deepening political dialogue and cooperation; c) Bringing people together; d) enhancing Economic Policy Dialogue and Cooperation and e) developing trade and investment (Council of the European Union, 2005, p. 2). This political developments through the summit have resulted in trade almost doubling from approximately €28 billion in the 2000s to more than €60 billion in 2008 (Demertzis & Roth, 2017). Although for a year the India-EU export and import declined as a direct consequence of the global financial crisis, but in 2010 it has steadily recovered to 104.93USD (approximately €88.44 billion) worth of trade between both

the blocs in 2019-20 (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2021). However, the cordial relationship between India and EU did not begin this way. During the 1990s, India was experiencing a steady influx of FDI, but it was at a rate below a satisfactory level. While there are opportunities for improvement especially with many Indian sectors being opened for FDI, however, some continue to require clearances. As a result, investments continue to be limited due to these constraints which make an FTA necessary for India (Tripathi, 2013).

With that being said, an FTA with Europe proved to be a difficult task as many Europeans perceive that India, in addition to their economic crisis, would compete with Europe on an unfair advantage. This led to a need from the European side for a “joint action” as opposed to simply a political dialogue with India. Thus in 2005, both India and EU entered a “Joint Action Plan” (JAP) addressing matters of politics, trade and investment, economic policy, culture and academics (Council of the European Union, 2005, p. 2) which contributed to the strengthening of the summit level interactions and negotiations (Khorana & Garcia, 2013). The JAP reinforced the importance of collective action to security and defense matters in the partnership. As evidence for their ever-growing commitment, a review of the Ninth India-EU Summit held in Marseille for the JAP 2008 (European Parliament, 2008) expounded on a number of accomplishments in the India-EU relations: politically, the regular Summits and exchange visits have resulted in improved political dialogue and cooperation; economically, mutual investments have dramatically increased and dialogue on economic policies as well as financial services have accelerated; in terms of science and technology, both blocs have agreed to intensify and expand cooperation in a number of key areas including nuclear energy, information and technology, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology as well as clean development and climate change. In addition to these accomplishments, both blocs have identified four new areas which required further strengthening and cooperation to complement the existing 2005 JAP: a) Peace and Comprehensive Security; b) Sustainable Development; c) Research and

Technology and d) People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges (Abhyankar, 2009, p. 399-400). The domains of interests that were emphasized during the Summit were matters relating to international peace and security especially with regards to terrorism, India-EU bilateral trade relations particularly of the FTA negotiations and lastly the issue of climate change and the administration of a joint work program (Tripathi, 2013). For this reason, it comes to no surprise that according to *The Country Strategy Paper for India 2007–13* (European Union External Action Service, 2013), EU was the largest source of development aid as well as being one of the largest trade partners of India.

In connection to economic relations, as stated before, trade is the core nexus of India-EU relations. The EU is India's third largest trading partner with € 62.8 billion worth of trade in goods recorded while the trade in services only amounted to €31.7 billion as of 2020 (European Commission, 2021). The EU's Foreign Direct Investments in the country numbered at a total of €75.8 billion in 2019 (European Commission, 2021). Furthermore, approximately six thousand European companies are currently operating in India which created 6.7 million jobs within a wide variety of sectors both directly and indirectly. Regardless of the FTA, India holds certain preferential advantages over other states in trading with the EU. This is because of the General Scheme of Preferences (GSP) adopted by the EU to support India's trade as part of a development cooperation. The GSP enabled India to export non-sensitive goods without customs while merely requiring decreased custom duties for sensitive goods, which has helped India's developing sectors to remain competitive on international market. In spite of this, India remained a highly protectionist market characterized by various tariff barriers and non-tariff barriers (Felbermayr, et al., 2017; Sally, 2007; Shekhar, 2008). This attracted a lot of criticism that suggested trade negotiations with India are tedious, and the negotiation outcomes are superficial liberalization (Khorana and Garcia, 2013). These barriers were raised by India's post-British rule in the country with the aim to protect domestic markets. However, as

mentioned earlier, during the economic opening of the country in 2001 the barriers were significantly lowered but it is relatively high compared to the tariffs imposed by the EU for imports from India (Felbermayr, et al., 2017).

Alongside high tariffs other challenges also continue to persist. This could be attributed to the gradual increase in somewhat opaque approaches to policy reforms. Oftentimes, to avoid domestic opposition to policy change and perhaps to give the policy negotiators enough opportunity to back out from a negotiation, if required, the aims of the policy change were frequently articulated ambiguously without specifying the exact deadline or the rate of transition from one policy phase to another. The outcome was a transition process that was more sporadic and opportunistic rather than a gradual process. Any policy changes were achieved according to the politically situation at the domestic level, but because the final goal wasn't always clear, the negotiating partners were often not sure the amount of change they would need to tolerate, which might result in shallower outcomes than initially promised during start of the negotiation. (Ahluwalia, 2002).

The present change in foreign policy approach from complete protectionism to a controlled liberalization of its domestic sectors to international competition could be mainly attributed to the decisionmakers renewed interest in the economic reform (Khorana and Garcia, 2013). Since the market policy reform, India has witnessed an economic growth with an annual GDP growth rate of about six percent. With the highest FDI inflow and a contribution of fifty-five percent of annual economic growth, the services emerged as one of the key sectors for job creation and growth within the country (Government of India, 2011). India's contribution to the world GDP also started to increase since 1990s market liberalization (WTO, 2011b).

Till date, India's foreign trade strategy maintains a similar approach where they put an emphasis on controlled lowering of trade restrictions and market generated transaction costs, alongside a constant effort to identifying opportunities for the nation to become a major center for trade,

manufacturing, and services. As this could be achieved with the help of building deeper ties with other major trading bloc through FTAs, RTA, and other such preferential trade agreements (Gasiorek, et.al., 2007), consequently, India proposed to liberalize trade with EU which marked the beginning of the negotiation talks for an FTA in 2007. For India, such an opportunity would lead to significant economic growth in the region. This is because the EU is India's third largest trading partner accounting for 11.1% total Indian trade preceded by USA (11.7%) and China (12%) (European Commission, 2021). Therefore, a bilateral engagement with the EU will help Indian exports to gain furthermore preferential access (than it currently has under GSP) to one of the world's largest markets and this can have profound implications for the country as it is expected to enhance sustainable development, create immense business, and job opportunities and eradicate of poverty (Banga, 2016, p.5).

A full overview of the India-EU timeline ranging from 1960-2021 is shown in Table 2 (European Union External Action Service, 2013, p.5; Council of the European Union 2016; European Commission, 2017; European Commission 2018; The Economic Times, 2021, Council of the European Union 2020 and Council of European Union, 2021).

Table 2: An overview of India-EU timeline (compiled from: European Union External Action Service, 2013, p.5; Council of the European Union 2016; European Commission, 2017; European Commission 2018; The Economic Times, 2021; Council of the European Union, 2020 and Council of the European Union, 2021.)

India-EU relations from 1960-2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1962: India establishes diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community • 1970: European Union launched a cooperation programme in the dairy sector with support to Operation Flood. • 1971: EU provided trade support through the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). • 1973: The EU and India sign a Commercial Cooperation Agreement for marketing support to several sectors of Indian industry with export potential. • 1981: India and the EU sign a Commercial and Economic Cooperation Agreement in November. • 1983: The EU sets up a Delegation in India. • 1988: The first meeting of the EU-India Joint Commission. • 1989: Scientific cooperation between Indian and the EU is set up in fundamental as well as applied research (STD).

- **1992:** European and Indian industry establish a Joint Business Forum to promote trade and investment.
- **1993:** The first sector cooperation program is launched in primary education with EU support of €150 million. to the Indian Government's District Primary Education Programme (DPEP).
- **1994:** EU-India Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development upgrades relationship.
- **1996:** A second sector cooperation program is launched in the area of health with a grant of €200 million.
- **2000:** The first EU-India summit is held in Lisbon. €200 million support to India's Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.
- **2001:** The EU and India sign an agreement on Science and Technology Cooperation.
- **2004:** A Strategic Partnership is launched.
- **2005:** A Joint Action Plan to implement the Strategic Partnership is agreed to strengthen dialogue and consultation mechanisms, bring together people and cultures, enhance economic policy dialogue and develop trade and investment.
- **2006:** €160 million State Partnership Programme is launched with Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.
- **2007:** Beginning of the negotiations for the India-EU Free Trade Agreement. **
- **2008:** A Joint Declaration on Education is signed to facilitate cooperation in higher education. European Business and Technology Centre (EBTC) opens in New Delhi.
- **2009:** A Joint Declaration on Multilingualism is signed between the EU and India.
- **2011:** The European Investment Bank provides a framework loan of €200 mn. to finance projects in the renewable energy sector. The EU and India sign a Joint Declaration on Culture.
- **2012:** Adopted at the EU-India Summit, a Joint Declaration on Energy foresees cooperation on smart grids, clean coal technologies, nuclear safety and security, biofuels and renewable energy. The EU-India Skills Development Project is launched for vocational education and training.
- **2015:** Cooperation on ICT-Related Standardization, Policy and Legalization
- **2016:** The thirteenth EU-India summit is held in Brussels. The discussions were mainly focused on water partnership, clean energy and climate partnership, joint declaration on migration and mobility and security policy.
- **2017:** The fourteenth India-EU summit was held in New Delhi. The leaders adopted Joint Statement for Partnership for Smart and Sustainable Development, Clean Energy and Climate Change and Joint Statement on Cooperation in Combating Terrorism.
- **2018:** India-EU collaboration for International Solar Alliance.
- **2019:** EU joins India's Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.
- **2020:** In the India-EU fifteenth summit the leaders welcomed G20 action Plan to recover and support global economy after COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, both EU and India adopted A Strategic Partnership roadmap for 2025 and a Joint Declaration on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy.

- **2021:** European Investment Bank (EIB) announced measures to support India during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both the sides formally resumed trade talks and launched Connectivity Partnership. The leaders also welcomed EU's strategy for cooperation with the Indo-Pacific region and strengthening of EU-India cooperation on International Security.

The subsequent section of the literature review will discuss in depth the India-EU FTA and the events that led to the initiation of FTA talks. It will examine previous studies, reports, and scholarly works that have analyzed the evolution of trade relations between India and the EU. The literature will also discuss the key issues, challenges, and potential benefits associated with the FTA so far discussed in the scholarly works.

2.1.3 India-EU Free Trade Agreement

The 'deep integration' strategy is the driving force behind the current EU-India FTA negotiations, which are modelled after the WTO-plus-5 agreements proclaimed in recent EU FTAs with South Korea and Latin American states (Khorana & Garcia, 2013). As a result, both the partners hope to reach a comprehensive agreement that addresses all of the following: trade in goods which includes elimination of duties on 90% of tariff and trade volume within seven years from the conclusion of the agreement, which is a requirement under the World Trade Organization for such agreements; trade in services that includes all modes of supply; investment improving market access and providing for national treatment to investors; public procurement; technical regulations that involves establishing cooperation on technical barriers to trade and sanitary and phytosanitary measures; intellectual property rights (IPRs) ensuring intellectual property and geographical indicators coverage in any future agreement; dispute settlement; competition policy; and public procurement (Sachdeva, 2019; Wichterich and Menon, 2009).

The following table (Table 3) shows the list of agendas both the partners agreed to achieve

under the negotiation (Sachdeva, 2019, p.308):

Table 3: List of agenda India and EU aim to achieve under EU-India negotiation (source: Sachdeva, 2019, p.308)

1.	Goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • achieving the elimination of duties on 90% of tariff within 7 years
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing modalities for the treatment of sensitive products, including review clauses and partial liberalization.
2.	Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring substantial sectoral coverage measured in terms of number of sectors, volume of trade and modes of supply— no mode of supply is to be excluded. • Providing for the elimination of substantially all discrimination between the parties.
3.	Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving market access and providing for national treatment to investors. • Ensuring that the host and home states retain their right to regulate. • Fostering transparency by clarifying the regulatory framework. • Aiming at freeing the flow of payment and investment-related capital movement. • Seeking to facilitate the movement of investment-related natural persons.
4.	Public procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting in place a competitive procurement regime.
5.	Technical Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing cooperation on technical barriers to trade and sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures.
6.	Intellectual Property Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring intellectual property and geographical indicators coverage in any future agreement.
7.	Competition Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing agreement on framework in any future agreement.
8.	Dispute Settlement (DS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a DS mechanism

The ongoing negotiation talks have sparked a lot of scholarly attention. Amongst the scholars there is a constant debate on the potential benefits and losses of the agreement for both the negotiating partners. Within the academic circle, evidence for the impact of the agreement is quite mixed. Scholars advocated that the proposed agreement is essential from a political and economic standpoint, not only would it boost confidence in the EU and reinforce its role as a global player, but it might also boost both partners' global competitiveness (Bhagwati, 1994; Baldwin, 1993; Dupont and Ciolac, 2012; Cheng, 2017; Wichterich and Menon, 2009). Furthermore, there is a substantial amount of evidence provided by recent studies that demonstrates the potential of India-EU FTA in incurring both trade benefits and losses for various sectors in India. Economic Surveys conducted under the initiative of the Government of India, show a stronger diplomatic and trade relationship could accelerate the economic gains of the country (Government of India Economic Survey 2016-17, 2017, p.26). Moreover, studies reveal that the sheer value of India and the EU, which together account for more than a fifth of the world's population, will have a significant impact on the international stage (Grevi 2012). Additionally, scholars maintain the ongoing agreement between the EU and India will further help promoting the EU's trade agenda that advocates in favor of liberalization of multilateral trade and greater market integration (Young and Peterson, 2006).

Powell (2008) calculated that India will potentially incur a net welfare loss amounting to 250 million USD if India wishes to commit to the FTA with the EU. Likewise, a study conducted by Agence Europe (2007, cited at Khorana, 2010) predicted that majority of the profits in goods trade will be gained by the EU at nearly 57% whereas India will gain significantly less at approximately 19%. Much of India's profits would be derived from trade from the leather and textile sectors as well as to a certain degree of profits from food items and manufactured products. Another study conducted by Achterbosch et al. (2008) suggested that it would not be worthwhile for India to commit to the FTA with EU if the trade negotiations only comprise of

liberalization of tariffs. By contrast, the EU will benefit largely in the industrial sector in the Indian market, especially with the abundance of cheap labor available which results in significantly lower production costs of industrial goods. According to Polaski et al. (2008), while the FTA would slightly boost both India's exports and imports by approximately 5.5% and 3.4% respectively, however, the overall economic consequences of liberalizing the trade would be moderately negative whereby India will incur a welfare loss of 250 million USD as well as a decrease in total income and private consumption. In spite of this, the impact of liberalization will differ from sector to sector as evident from a number of studies, e.g., Berden et.al' (2009) calculated that India and EU are predicted to gain 4.9 billion Euros and 4.4 billion Euros respectively at the early phase of the FTA, whereas they will gain 17.7 billion Euros and 1.6 billion Euros respectively at the later stages of the FTA. The reduction of barriers in the automobile sector is also expected to reap benefits for both the blocs, especially with regards to the increase in investment flow due to the removal of trade barriers. However, India is also expected to suffer a loss in certain sectors including food and beverages, paper production, publishing, transport equipment and tobacco. Furthermore, the FTA will slightly increase the household income in India for both skilled and unskilled workers by more than 1.5 percent. A study conducted by Decreux and Mitarotonna (2007) suggested that India's service sector stands to gain the most profit out of any other sectors from the FTA, particularly among accountants, lawyers, and software engineers. Decreux and Mitarotonna (2007) further suggest that other sectors such as the agricultural and textile sectors would also benefit from the FTA.

In sum, the literature on the potential impact the of the FTA on the economy of the negotiating partners especially that for India's could only at best offer very mixed evidence. On the one hand, studies suggest that the FTA may provide little benefits to the Indian economy, on the other, research also shows that what little benefit there is from the FTA will only be in favor of a small handful of sectors e.g., the Indian services, textiles, agricultural and automobiles

sectors. Regardless, of these studies, the political climate amongst the India negotiators seemed to suggest that both the partners are extremely eager to conclude the proposed deal and to the best of their ability intend to figure out a way to formulate a suitable FTA that sufficiently satisfies both. In fact, at the beginning of the negotiations, the attitude of the EU and Indian negotiators were generally positive and anticipated an early conclusion of trade by 2009. Despite a strong beginning of the trade talks, the India-EU relationship slowed significantly within next decade. While India's bilateral relations with EU and some of the EU member states such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom improved significantly, however, it did not result in deepening of relationship with the other members as envisaged.

The current literature has provided multiple reasoning for the delay faced by the negotiation. For instance, Khorana and Garcia (2013) have argued that mismatch of priorities between both the partners. In this study it was pointed out that the EU's and India's macro-level priorities were very different with the EU's priority being trade, security, energy, and climate change renewable, whereas India's primary priority lies in a partnership that would help the country to achieve sustainable agriculture, development, commerce and a source of technology transfer to maintain its growth. This mismatch in priorities were arguably the reason for the 'negotiation lethargy' (Khorana and Garcia, 2013).

Moreover, it is argued that EU's willingness to export its ideological norms and values through its market power resources are also seen to have put negative impact at the India-EU FTA. It is said that attempts as such from the EU are more likely to receive resistance especially in countries like India who are themselves driven by the desire of spreading their own set of normative values around the globe (Hall, 2017; Ganguly, 2015; Ganguly and Pardesi 2009; Jain and Pandey 2013).

The engagement of both India and the EU with their respective neighboring countries was also considered a reason that further led to the slowing down of the relations. This was exacerbated

by the lack of progress in the FTA and the detention of Italian marines in 2012, which negatively affected not only Italy-India relations but also heightened tensions with the EU. During this time, the EU focused primarily on China as a crucial partner and because of its broader market prospects (Busvine, 2015). This resulted in delay in negotiation progress of the talks and the two blocs failed to arrive at an adequate trade deal as scheduled (The Hindu Business Line, 2013).

After several failed attempts to conclude the on-going negotiation, there came a period of hiatus lasting three years from 2013 up until 2016. Scholars like Wouters, Goddeeris, Natens, and Ciortuz believed that hiatus was brought about by several disagreements between the Indian and the EU stakeholders over outstanding issues and the possible negative implications that liberalization in these sectors (mentioned in Table 3) could bring on the development aspirations of India (Wouters, et al., 2014). Although both blocs expressed a renewed interest in negotiations during 2017, however, it was only up to the present time when negotiations formally commenced in full force.

For Dohmen (2020); Jain (2009; 2019); Jain and Pandey (2010; 2012; 2014); Sachdev (2015) the negotiation has been tough to conclude because of there are still many issues on which the EU and India could not agree on. Although there are many areas of mutual benefits that both the partners are yet to tap to take full advantage of the integration, yet it is believed to be underexplored because of the failure of a common understanding between both the negotiating partners which resulted in negative perception of one another.

Studies have also pointed out that the one of the current dominant issues of contentions that is stalling the talks is related to the changes of tariff barriers and NTMs to trade which includes both goods and services (Powel, 2008; Achterbosch, et al., 2008; Khorana and Perdikis 2010). EU has voiced dissatisfaction over high tariff rates imposed by India on agricultural products, textiles, wine and spirits and automobile sector. The reduction of such barriers by 90% has

been necessitated by the European side. However, the demand for liberalization of agriculture has significantly been a problematic issue causing a standstill in the negotiation talks. According to the authors this is mainly because of India defensiveness towards its domestic agricultural sector provides the largest employment in the country i.e., approximately sixty percent of Indian population depends on agriculture for livelihood (Statistica Research Department, 2021). Since 2003, the agricultural sector was facing a severe crisis with the growth rate stagnated at a staggering 3% (Polaski et.al., 2008, p.viii) resulting in continued poverty within the rural population leading to mass-scale suicide among farmers every year. Therefore, in order to protect weaker part of the Indian population from any further losses and encourage productivity and competitiveness during the early phases of the negotiation, the agricultural sector was demanded to be under sensitive listing by India (Khorana and Perdikis, 2010). Although tariff rates imposed by India drastically decreased over the last two decades from 32.2% in 1999 (Wacziarg, 2002, p.5) to 13.8 percent in 2019, current tariffs remain highest of any other major world economy including EU (5.1% in 2017) (World Trade Organization, 2019). India attitude towards deeper liberalization in agriculture is believed would not change even if the EU continues to push towards an agreement in the agriculture resulting into the stalled talks (Achterbosch, et.al., 2008).

In fact, the idea of complete liberalization of trade between both the partners was a recommendation from the Commission of the European Communities. The Commission associates the economic progress of the developing countries like India, Brazil, and China with liberalization of trade (Commission of the European Communities, 2006, p. 5). More specifically, this reduction or complete removal of barriers would ensure both Indian and EU enterprises acquire maximum access for exporters to resources and areas of significant untapped potential such as intellectual property, services, investment, public procurement, and competition (Commission of the European Communities, 'Global Europe', 2006, p.6) which is

expected to significantly boost the economic growth of both the partners. Consequently, the EU has proposed for both blocs to reduce tariffs by 90%, while India by contrast advanced for an asymmetrical agreement, i.e., India reducing tariffs by 90% while EU reduce their tariffs by 95%; citing reasons that this reflects in proportion to the level of development between the two blocs. In response, the EU rejected this offer which resulted in the stalemate in the India-EU FTA talks (Khorana and Perdikis, 2010).

Another potential area where the negotiation was said to be facing a roadblock was the in the form of Rapid Alert System for Food (RASFF) and Rapid Exchange of Information (REI) from the EU (Khorana and Perdikis; 2010). These are mainly health related trade restrictions that impact imports to the EU. This involves significant non-tariff measures (NTM), especially in agriculture (e.g., the Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures). Under the World Trade Organization Agreement, the Application of Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures (SPS), every member state is required to maintain basic safety standards for food, animal and plant health. Although the agreement allows the members to set their own SPS standards, it is recommended that they should not be arbitrarily or unreasonably discriminating between countries. However, scholars such as Singh and Priya (2014); Mehta (2005) have expressed disappointment towards the heavy and discriminatory regulation from the EU that poses major threat to Indian exports. In fact, EU member states have been referred to as a “quite prolific” user of non-tariff barriers compared to the other trading partners particularly in agriculture (Singh, and Priya 2014, p. 55). About 25% of exported goods from India has to go through technical barriers which is much higher compared to only 12% for the other trading partners (Mehta, 2005, p.9).

Another arguably stalling the FTA talks is related to the liberalizing cross-border access for trade in services (Sibal, 2018; Jain 2020; Lasker 2020). There exist multiple barriers regarding the movement of professionals in the EU. India’s demands for broader access under Mode 1

(cross- border supply of services) and Mode 4 (dealing with free movement of Indian professionals in the European Market), has acted as a deterrent that slowed down the EU-India trade. For India, eliminating visa regulations would mean increased job opportunities for highly educated youth who could gain better experiences in the European Market whereas, for the EU, maintain the visa restrictions are crucial to save their own markets given the increase in the unemployment rate in several EU member states (Dutta; 2021; Banga 2016). Moreover, issue of cross-border access is a matter under state competence, hence it is up to the state to decide whether they would prefer a more liberal visa regime with India. In this context seven years ago, the United Kingdom opposed changes on visa policy which is mandatory for free movement of trade and services between the two blocs (Khullar, 2020). On the other hand, the EU proposed liberalization of FDI in sectors such as banking, insurance services and multi-brand retail, accountancy and legal service. However, India is yet to agree on the larger access of foreign banks and enterprises under Mode 3 under the Indian service sector (Bharadwaj, 2021). Heavy resistance and a weak political commitment on FDI in the Indian retail and insurance sectors has largely impaired the country’s capacity to negotiate.

Table 4: List of Modes of Supply (source: World Trade Organization, n.d.)

Mode 1: Cross-border	A user in a country receives services from abroad through its telecommunications or postal infrastructure. Such supplies may include consultancy or market research reports, tele-medical advice, distance training, or architectural drawings.
Mode 3: Commercial Presence	The service is provided within a country by a locally-established affiliate, subsidiary, or representative office of a foreign-owned and —controlled company (bank, hotel group, construction company, etc..)

Mode 4: Movement of natural persons	A foreign national provides a service within a country as an independent supplier (e.g., consultant, health worker) or employee
	of a service supplier (e.g., consultancy firm, hospital, construction company).

The negotiation talks are also argued to be affected by disputes on matters regarding regulators on data security and data privacy matters. According to the World Trade Organization, establishing common rules under Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) would be beneficial for both the countries as this will significantly reduce the NTMs. India intends to gain EU recognition as a data secure country. However, EU has refused to consider India as a Data Secure Nation, which may impede the exchange of sensitive data between both the blocs. As a result, it might affect the operating cost and competitiveness of the Indian companies who are seeking to gain access to the EU market (Sengupta, 2018; Jain & Sachdeva, 2019, p.318).

Regarding IPR the EU negotiation draft demands higher standards of IP protection in India. Although India has made significant amendments to existing IPR laws in the country to maintain the WTO standards of TRIPS-plus, EU expects India to implement higher standards than WTO (Thacker, 2018). This has led to a widespread public resistance (especially in the pharmaceutical sectors) in India towards the negotiation. This is for the reason that complete data exclusivity as demanded by the EU might harm the production of cheap generic drugs in the country. Considering the fact that generic drugs costs less than patented drugs, they have proven to be crucial in combating a number of diseases which include HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis especially in developing as well as underdeveloped countries (World Health Organization; 2014). In addition, there are concerns raised by the EU related to human rights practices, labor standards, social and environmental issues in India. This non-trade related concerns raised by the EU caused additional strains between both the blocs as India viewed

this action of the EU to be too meddlesome and interfering in India's internal affairs that are irrelevant to trade and commerce (Malpani, et al., 2021; Sharma, 2009). All previous studies on India-EU partnership have evaluated the successes and the challenges of the collaboration between both the partners. However, the current literature does not go in-depth into one important facet of the India-EU partnership, that is, all previous publications portray India as a unitary actor that conducts foreign affairs with the EU based on decision reached through well-calculated choices.

However, since foreign policies (especially the trade-related ones) are more likely to disproportionately affect the different sectors of the Indian economy, therefore, oftentimes formulated or modified by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade through detailed discussions with the state representatives as well as the representatives of the sectors that would be affected by the reform (i.e., the domestic actors). Therefore, to sufficiently understand how domestic politics influence foreign trade policies of a federal state with multiparty coalition government, it is imperative to analyze the role of different levels of domestic actors involved in the process. Despite this, very few academics seemed to have acknowledged that India's foreign policy's complex decision-making process may have also acted as a deterrent for the ongoing FTA talks. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to contribute to the literature by further examining this unique but essential aspect of the foreign policy decision-making process.

The following section of this chapter aims to provide a concise and comprehensive analytical framework for this thesis. Studies on India-EU relations focus on the interactions between India and the EU as unitary actors in the field of foreign policy analysis. The goal of this thesis is not to provide academic work that assesses the foreign policy decision-making process through a conventional lens that sees bilateral relations as a state-to-state affair. Therefore, the present thesis does not attempt to approach India as a unitary actor attempting to develop ties

with the EU or its member states. Instead, this study seeks to shed some light on India's foreign policy-making process and assess India-EU ties from a completely different perspective. The following section would provide an overview of the concept of foreign policy and the assumptions related to the role of state actors. It will review the literature on the unitary actor assumption, which suggests that the state acts as a unified entity in foreign policy decision-making. The strengths and limitations of this assumption will be critically analyzed, alongside an explanation of the analytical perspectives that the study utilized to better answer the main research question, "to what extent India's trade relation with the EU is multilateral involving different levels of powerful domestic actors whose preferences shaped the decision to both start and halt the India-EU negotiation talks".

2.2 Foreign Policy and the role of state and domestic actors.

2.2.1 The foreign policy and the Unitary Actor assumption

Traditionally, foreign policy is referred to the external strategies employed by an independent actor (usually a government of a state) to interact with other international states or political entities (Hill, 2003, p.3). Political science scholars have placed great emphasis on understanding how foreign policies are made. For long foreign policy decision-making was thought to be the domain of the nation-states (both powerful and not so powerful) and their representatives. These nation-states were considered as "Unitary Actors" (or the "black boxes") behaving in a rational way with common goals, preferences, and interests, making it easier to assess the profit and losses that the state might incur at the international stage as a single entity (Mayer, 1991, p.226; Keohane, 2011; Walt, 1998; Hollis and Smith, 1990).

In the academic discipline of international relations this is referred to as state-centric view (Sørensen 2017). Scholars with state centric view portrayed the representatives of a nation-states as primary actors of international relations with unconstrained power carefully making

their foreign policy choices that are perfectly aligned with their personal interests (Stengel and Baumann, 2017; Jørgensen, and Hellmann, 2015; Risse 2013). Consequently, international affairs were regarded as separate from domestic politics (Waltz 2010; Gilpin 1981). In fact, within the school of classical and structural realism, domestic politics and foreign policy are categorized as different domains of policymaking. While foreign policy affairs were considered to be high politics and the department of the central authorities, low politics tend to include domestic matters concerning the legislature, interest groups and the general public and were viewed rarely a concern of the top authorities but a matter to be handled internally by other bureaucratic administrators (Waltz 2010; Gilpin 1981). For instance, while the President, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Ministers addressed international concerns directly, they delegated bureaucratic officials with the task to manage domestic issues such as economic and social affairs. Therefore, domestic politics were considered to have no influence over the state's international affairs. Proponents of these approaches refuse to delve into different operational levels of policymaking as they largely contend that it is insignificant to study international politics by focusing on different state level actors because they believe heterogeneity does not automatically mean that they are causally significant. For these scholars, individual characters and motives of an actor are not enough to explain foreign policy outcome (Keohane, 2020). This is because foreign policy is also the result of “the causes that operated among the actors collectively i.e., causes inherently in the international system” (Kischel, 2001, p.269). Focusing on individual actors downplays the significance of these causes and attempting to replace them with attributes such as interests and motives can lead to altered understanding of the true cause of the foreign policy outcome (Waltz, 2010). Despite significant domestic changes, the nature of international politics is argued to remain unchanged. Even while the characteristics and interactions of the actors that are thought to have created the foreign policy outcomes vary, the international outcomes remain mostly unchanged (Waltz, 2010).

Furthermore, the advocates of Unitary Actor assumption argue that studying a state as a heterogeneous entity produces huge number of variables making the data unworkable and would lead to immeasurable number of variables and no single variable or set of variables would be adequate for an empirical finding (Waltz, 2010). An approach that focuses on individual domestic actors' motives and interests to understand foreign policy outcome is argued to overlook the ones that commonly lead to international negotiations. Disregarding the common factors and emphasizing the individual aims, goals, policies, and actions is believed to be misinterpreting the actual cause of the existing relationship between states (Waltz, 2010). Drawing conclusions about international politics as alleged by Waltz (2010) is impossible from data about formal and informal interactions between state actors.

However, the present thesis will depart from the conventional IR assumption of a state being a "Unitary Actor" (Mayer, 1991). This is because the Unitary assumption is too broad to provide sufficient understanding of the intricacies involved in the decision-making processes in India that shapes the country's foreign policy outlook. Instead, the present study employed an approach that aligns with Waltz's level-of-analysis problem to explore the internal workings of the Indian state and examine the interplay of various domestic actors in shaping India's foreign policy decisions. Waltz's framework highlights the different levels at which international relations can be analyzed, namely the individual level, the state level, and the international system level. While traditionally, foreign policy decision-making has been seen as the domain of nation-states acting unitarily, the present research takes a different approach by recognizing the significance of examining the internal workings of the state and examining the interactions between domestic actors. By adopting a domestic level of analysis, which corresponds to Waltz's state level, the study acknowledges that the state is not a monolithic entity but comprises of various actors with distinct interests and perspectives. This approach allows us to move beyond the assumption of a unitary actor and uncover the influence of different interest

groups, stakeholders, and domestic institutions in shaping India's foreign policy choices. Understanding of such interactions among domestic actors can allow the study to capture a more comprehensive picture of the power struggles, divergent interests, and competing influences that exist and shape the policy outcomes of the country.

While the present study focuses primarily on the domestic level, it is important to note that this approach does not negate the significance of other levels of analysis within Waltz's framework. By situating the research in the context of Waltz's level-of-analysis problem, the study acknowledges that focusing on the domestic level may not fully capture the complexities of international dynamics or account for external pressure that influences India's foreign policy decision-making. It is important to emphasize that the study does not disregard the importance of other levels of analysis, rather, it highlights the significance of examining the internal workings of the state within the broader framework of international relations. By doing so, the study aims to provide a valuable insight to understanding India's foreign policy, aligning with the established body of research that emphasizes the significance of domestic actors in shaping foreign policy outcomes of a country (e.g., Putnam, 1988; Haas, 1958; Moravcsik, 1991; 1993; Sandholtz and Sweet, 1998; Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig, 2019; Slapin, 2011; Milner and Mukherjee, 2010; Milner, and Pevehouse, 2015;).

Building upon this the following subsection will provide a literature review on the non-unitary actor assumption, which challenges the notion of a unified state actor in foreign policy decision-making. It will explore different theoretical perspectives that highlight the role of domestic actors, such as interest groups, political parties, and bureaucracies, in shaping foreign policy decisions.

2.2.2 The Non-unitary Actor assumption

The notion of the state being a unitary actor at the international level began to receive criticism, especially with the rapid rise of globalization. In the words of the social theorist Anthony

Giddens (1990, p.64), globalization has intensified “worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa”. Therefore, decisions specifically related to foreign policy taken by the government of a nation state have greater implications both domestically and around the globe (Hudson and Day, 2019, p.4). However, Globalization not only increasingly interconnected states around the world economically, politically, socially, and militarily, but also brought greater attention towards other non-state actors. Consequently, IR scholars started to question both the assumption of supreme authority of the nation-states and the idea of state being a unitary actor (Strange 1996; Mathews 1997; Keohane and Nye, 2001). This facilitated a meaningful interchange of varied ideas within the discipline. For instance, some scholars continued to firmly believe in state being impenetrable and the idea that internal affairs cannot influence external relations (Waltz 1999; Gilpin 1981), the others argued a shift in power structure from nation-state to non-state actors because of globalization (Strange 1996; Mathews 1997; Rosenau and Czempiel 1992; Risse 2002; Hay, 2016).

By the 1960s, the scholars of IR started to acknowledge that international politics was not how it has been once conceived to be a domain exclusive to the nation-states (Keohane and Nye, 2001). For instance, Neo-functionalists while studying the reasons behind European integration identified that state governments are not the only important actors at the international level, other actors such as political parties and social elites were the primary force responsible for the government bargaining strategies and the ratification of the treaties that the governments drafts. These actors were believed to be interested in influencing international decision primarily due to the potential benefits (Dreher and Jensen, 2013). State preferences were more clearly conceived to be formulated based on the demands at the domestic level. Considering this, Multi-Level Governance (MLG) emerged as a critique of national government centric ideologies of the European Union (EU). MLG appeared to be a continuation of NF and its

variation, Supranationalism, which sees transnational alliances of domestic interest groups with supranational actors especially the European Commission and the European Court of Justice, as the main factors of influence behind European integration (Haas, 1958; Sandholtz and Sweet, 1998). However, it is important to note MLG focuses mainly on the role of subnational actors and argue that political power and policy-related decision-making authority are shared between different levels of government – subnational, national, and supranational (Hooghe and Marks, 2001 p.2).

Quite similar to the ideology of realist, the scholars of intergovernmentalism (LI) believed that at an international level the state particularly the state government is the primary actor representing national interest, however, they argued that the position taken by the state government is the direct consequence of a long and complicated negotiations within the domestic level actors to reach an agreement that are accepted by their own domestic constituency as well as is winsome at the international level (Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig, 2009). Moravcsik's approach sees the preferences of the governmental representatives also vary according to the shifting demands from the most influential domestic actors (Moravcsik, 1993). This means that LI takes on a bottom-up approach to politics whereby the decision of the state authorities rests on the interest and demands of the individuals and domestic actors rather than higher-level decisionmakers themselves. Consequently, several domestic actors to achieve their interest may engage in political conflict as they compete for influence and as a result, coalitions emerge where new policy alternatives are recognized by the government and adopted as the national interest (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 481). This idea was based on the Putnam's (1988) "two-level game" theory which asserts international negotiation as a "two-level game", where the states act on two levels simultaneously: the first being 'domestic level' where domestic actors exerts pressure on the government to adopt policies that would help fulfil their goals or interests, and secondly the 'international level' where the state aggregate the domestic

demands as national interests and adopts policies that would satisfy their domestic constituents (Putnam, 1988, p.432). LIG posits that generally the actors who are the least to gain from the agreement being negotiated compared to the gain they obtain from the present status quo, are the ones that are more likely to threaten the other with non-cooperation (or veto proposal), thereby pressurizing the other to give more concession than they would have otherwise given. This relationship between the domestic group and the government is also believed to be that of a principal-agent, where domestic actors (principals) “delegate power to (or otherwise constrain) governmental agents” (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 483) to act as a “transmission belt” through which the preferences of certain individual and groups are translated into foreign policy (Moravcsik, 2008, p.237). These “preferences” are formed and articulated based on the ideological belief of the actors over the potential net cost and benefits of a policy (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 483) and the groups that stand to gain and lose a great deal per capita are more likely to pursue more influence over policy decision-making (Moravcsik, 1993, p.483). Although, LIG recognized the importance of domestic actors, they maintained that domestic actors could not directly influence foreign decision making. Governments of the EU member states acted as the transmission belt through which domestic interests of certain domestic actors were translated to the EU foreign policy (Moravcsik, 1991, 1998, 2008).

Institutional theorists like Putnam, suggest that while negotiating a treaty, the state representatives bargain simultaneously with international and domestic level actors to achieve an outcome that could be satisfactory for the foreign negotiating partner and also easily implemented at the domestic level. Bargaining domestically is as equally important as bargaining internationally because an international agreement to be implemented requires domestic ratification. According to Putnam (1988) these bargains take place in two different levels of game: Level I - where the government or the chief negotiators of both the negotiating state bargain with each other to reach an agreement that could be domestically ratified; and

Level II- where separate bargaining take place between the chief negotiators of the state and their domestic partners over whether to ratify the agreement.

This requirement that any agreement at Level I must be ratified at Level II actors does not only demonstrate a crucial link between domestic level and foreign policy but also gives authority to the domestic actors to constrain the chief negotiators capability to negotiate according to their own interest. This authority to constrain is referred to as veto power that limits the number of agreements a state can accept. This ratification can take place both formally such as through voting or mandatory legislative approval or through more informal ways for example, measure of public opinion and approval ratings that are usually considered by foreign policy decision-makers (da Conceição-Heldt and Mello 2017). In fact, if the preference of the domestic actors involved in ratification is close to the status quo, it would reduce the winset of the proposed negotiation encouraging policy stability in the country (Slapin; 2011). The winset in this case is all the probable outcomes of the treaty being negotiated at the level I and the set of negotiated agreements of Level I that would win the approval at the Level II (Putnam, 1988). Therefore, according to the theory the likelihood of a successful negotiation outcome is determined by the size winset (Moravcsik, 1993; Putnam, 1988). These domestic actors with power to veto includes for example, influential interest groups, NGO's, bureaucrats, politicians, think tanks, the parliamentarians, officials of different state ministries (da Conceição-Heldt and Mello 2017). The composition of these actors may vary depending upon the policy area being negotiated, for instance, if the negotiation requires changes in the existing law of the country, then that will require the involvement of the parliament, whereas if the negotiation is going to impact the human rights issues, the NGOs may intervene to ensure that the negotiation is according to their interests.

More broadly, this thesis will utilize Putnam's model of two-level games to address the research question. Accordingly, the model presented in this thesis will consist of be two-sets

of domestic actors, the principal and the agent. The chief negotiators as the agents are assumed to have the authority to engage in international negotiations in order to achieve the closest possible bargain to the interests of the principal. While the domestic actors as the principal hold the power to ratify the negotiation or obstruct it depending on how far the negotiation are from the ideological preferences of the principal. However, in contrast to Putnam's style of modelling, the thesis does not confine the principal-agent relationship model to the executive and legislative. This is because trade-related decision-making processes in a country such as India is difficult and complex involving several negotiation stages between different domestic actors. These domestic actors can be divided into at least three categories: the executive or the head of the state alongside the bureaucracy and the several governmental ministries; the legislative level of actors i.e., the members of the parliament and other interest groups which includes big businesses, central bank, federal and second legislative chambers (Mansfield, et.al., 2005, p.2).

Therefore, the principal in this model is not only the legislature; it can be any individual or a group of individuals such as an influential interest groups, stakeholders or members of the legislature who has the power to exercise veto over a proposed treaty. Similarly, the agent in the model is not only the chief negotiator but also those who are directly involved in designing the trade policy and shaping trade negotiations. That is, it could be the officials of the executive branch, alongside cabinet ministers and other influential stakeholders who are involved in the trade advisory body responsible for designing the trade proposal. Tsebelis (1995;2002) termed these actors as "veto players". The present research will focus on these veto players and their influence over the executive decision to start and halt the India-EU negotiation talks. Depending upon the domestic constituency of the country and the policy area being negotiated, the principal and the agent will be categorized in the following way: Group A (the agent) i.e., the executive (or the head of the state); the bureaucracy (the Governmental Ministries) and

influential industrialists (involved as the high-level trade advisory body) and Group B (the principal) i.e., the legislative level of actors i.e., the members of the parliament and other interest groups which includes influential stakeholders such as big businesses, central bank, federal and second legislative chambers (Mansfield, et.al., 2005, p.2). Therefore, the current study does not attempt to approach India as a unitary actor when it comes to making high-level foreign policy decisions. Instead, the research is based on the notion that foreign policy decisions are achieved through struggles between different levels of influential domestic actors with competing interests that can intervene and influence a policy outcome of the country.

With that being said, the following section of this chapter will present some previous literature that has been guided by the non-unitary actor assumption and show the importance of domestic actors in foreign policy decision-making. It will discuss in depth the studies that has previously explored the influence of various domestic actors on policy outcomes, including their preferences, motivations, and power dynamics.

2.2.3 Literature on policy decision-making and the role of domestic actors.

The interest in understanding the actual process of how states conduct international relations became more popular amongst the scholars since 1960s. The studies of state decision-making gained significant popularity amongst researchers and scientists from a wide variety of academic disciplines who are interested in understanding the underlying mechanisms of a government's decision-making process in foreign policies (e.g., Rosenau, 1980; Milner, and Pevehouse, 2015; da Conceição-Heldt and Mello 2017; Rogowski, 2021). These studies reveal that both international and domestic politics are in fact in actuality more interconnected than previously argued and that in order to understand a state's foreign policy decision (and ultimately international politics), it is imperative to investigate not only representatives of a nation-state, but also other domestic level actors such as the bureaucratic officials, interest groups and individual stakeholders.

Decades of studies conducted by scholars utilizing diverse theoretical frameworks, conceptual models and case studies, show that both domestic politics and foreign policy are far more interdependent than was previously argued (Siverson, 1995; Brace, and Hinckley 1992; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Page and Shapiro, 2010; and Caporaso 1987). They have advocated for bridging the artificial divide between domestic and international politics and offered a broad range of explanations of how key foreign policy decisions were influenced by the domestic

factors and vice versa (Rosenau, 1980). For instance, Allison's conceptual model of decision-making with regards to the Cuban Missile Crisis demonstrated how domestic structural weaknesses and bureaucratic politics influenced the governmental decision-making (Allison 1969). In fact, some scholars believe that what goes around internationally are both the cause and the result of what happens domestically (Gourevitch, 1978). More recently, Servillas (2018) utilized Putnam's model of a win-set constraint and demonstrates how domestic groups exercise power over foreign policy outlook of the U.S. during the Cuban Missile Crisis and Israeli Operation Defence Shield. Similarly, through a study of U.S foreign policy Milner and Tingley (2015) demonstrate that domestic actors such as the members of the legislative branches, bureaucracy, public opinion, and interest groups all influence the foreign policy outcome of the country.

Studies also reveal that interactions between different levels of domestic actors influence a state's foreign policy outcome (Milner, 1997; Morrow 1991; Milner and Mukherjee 2010), especially with regards to preferential trade agreements (Maggi and Rodriguez-Clare, 1998; Grossman, and Helpman, 2002; Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse, 2015). Rogowski (2021), Milner and Judkins (2004) show a strong connection between a political party's trade policy and interest groups policy preferences. This argument on the significance of domestic level actors is further confirmed by an elaborate study conducted by Milner (1997) on different agreements such as the Bretton Woods Monetary Agreement; the Anglo-American oil Agreement and International Aviation Agreement; the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Defence Community; the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Maastricht Treaty on European Monetary Union. Each case study demonstrated the influence of domestic politics over foreign policy negotiations, affecting the policy position of a state in an international agreement and often making it harder to reach a cooperation between two international partners. Overlooking such factors that frame a

government's policy decisions would make it impossible to adequately understand the causes that facilitated a negotiation or an agreement. Hale (2018) suggested that a country's response to global issues like climate change is significantly shaped by the country's sub-state and non-state actors for example, NGO's, subnational governments, and corporations.

Few other notable studies are Huth (2009) on territorial disputes that show foreign policy leaders are domestic political actors who are greatly cautious of the implications of foreign policy action at the domestic level; Peterson (1996) on crisis bargaining where the author recognized the importance of domestic factors on the issues of war and peace for Crimean War crisis, Berlin Crisis and Fashoda Crisis. Milner (1997) presents an argument that studies which consider states as a single actor are misleading, and domestic politics do in fact possess a significant amount of impact on international trade policy outcomes as evidenced by the vast number of previous research that have been conducted. For instance, O'Halloran's (1994) study put a great deal of emphasis on the role of Congress in influencing American trade policies. Likewise, Verdier (1994) in his study 'Democracy and International Trade' demonstrated the relationship between interest groups, state officials, diplomats and political dialogue with the electorates and their influence over policy choices. Roake and Downs (1995), on the other hand, emphasized the influence of uncertainty and domestic politics on a state's international cooperation. Additionally, Evans et al. (1993) studied topics as diverse as nuclear disarmament, human rights as well as trade to understand the fundamentals of international relations and to unpack the dynamic interaction of domestic and international politics. The study shows that international negotiation that represents the ambitions of domestic politics can backfire if domestic actors are ignored which in turn can have severe implications on foreign affairs (Evans et al., 1993). The factors that determines decisionmakers' preferences for different outcomes of an interstate armed conflict are twofold: the first involving a state's population where it determines the state's power in comparison to other states and influences the likelihood

of a policy's success, while the second factor involves the policy positions adopted by domestic political actors whereby it influences the leaders' preferences for specific outcomes as well as their willingness to incur the expenses associated with those outcomes (Stam, 1996). Rosecrance & Stein (1993) explores the idea of grand strategy and maintains that factors such as domestic groups, economic constraints, social ideas and domestic political pressures have a significant influence over a state's preferences of grand strategy. Charountaki (2018) while focusing on Kurdish case studies argued that while international is conventionally said to be state-centric, but non-state actors can have power of their own which can play a significant role in shaping the international relations. Additionally, a study on Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species found that decision outcomes of other actors are extensively influenced by non-state actors such as NGOs and IGOs through successful issue framing and agenda setting (Challender and MacMilan; 2019). Relatedly, while reporting on how China's foreign policies are formulated, Jie and Ridout (2021) have pointed out that foreign policy outcomes in China are often a result of negotiation between three key actors: The national government, provincial-level government, and powerful state-owned enterprises. These actors are reported to exercise significant authority over a country's foreign policy decisions on issues such as the Belt and Road Initiatives and the climate change agendas. Scholars have also suggested that domestic actors such as Multinational corporations (MNCs) have significant influence over foreign policy through lobbying (Kim and Milner; 2019). The study found that these MNCs extensively invest in lobbying and tend to lobby more in diverse foreign policy. Therefore, making them crucial political actors whose interests and influences are worth investigating in order to understand foreign policymaking.

A fundamental theme between these aforementioned studies is a need to theoretically explain the process and pathways through which domestic politics shape the foreign policy outcomes of a state. As demonstrated by the studies, foreign policy decision-making is inherently a very

elaborate and complex the political processes, often involving different levels of decision-makers in positions of authority either acting alone or cooperatively in a group (Hudson and Day, 2019; De Mesquita and Lalman, 2008; Kier 1997; Legro 1995; Stien 1993;).

While for decades a significant section of political science scholars has advocated that domestic politics play a major role in foreign policy decision-making of a country, majority of the studies on Indian foreign policies tend to “black box” the actual policy making process rather than delving deeper into the actual process of how the decisions are reached. More specifically, the elaborate domestic apparatus that is at work to shape the country’s foreign policy decisions are often overlooked.

There have been previous incidents in India that demonstrated that Indian foreign policies could not be adequately understood without considering the influence domestic actors have on the policy decisions. For instance, in the India-Bangladesh river agreement of 2012 where India’s rejection of the agreement cannot be adequately understood if the interactions between the national government, the state government and local interest groups is not taken into consideration. If one notices the details, the agreement was at first believed to be beneficial for North-eastern states of India especially West Bengal and yet, the national government failed to sign the agreement. This was because of the lack of support from the regional government of West Bengal (Stratfor, 2013) which was a direct result of the increasing pressure from the local interest groups on the regional government to withdraw from the agreement as they believed this agreement would lead to a *“loss of higher volume of water to lower riparian would cause problems in the northern region of state, especially during drier months”* (Ray, 2012). Since these interest groups contain political power that could potentially pose a threat to both the regional and national government power position, they agreed to avoid any cost over the groups whose support is crucial for them to remain in the office, demonstrating that even at the international level, the government policies are highly influenced by the ideology and

preferences of their domestic counterparts as argued by Andreatta (2005, pg. 29). Similarly, another example can be found in India's decision to vote at the United Nations (UN) against Sri Lanka's alleged violation of human rights during the war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam which was under the influence of political parties in Tamil Nadu. During the initial phase, India was reluctant "*to vote on a nation-specific resolution*", however, the political parties in the south were discontent about the national government's stand on this issue and exerted pressure on the government (then under United Progressive Alliance or UPA) to support the UN resolution (The Hindu, 2012). More specifically, the social-democratic political party-Draida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) "*threatened to pull out its Ministers from the UPA government on the issue*" (The Hindu, 2012). Passing legislation or behaving against a coalition partner's wishes could lead to major disputes and may result in a government crisis with the partners deciding to resign. Although, the resignation of a party would not always result in a re-election because the other partners would still have a parliamentary majority, however, it might still be politically risky as this event might encourage like-minded parties to resign as well. According to Tsebelis (1995, 1999, 2002), coalitions are necessitated by political circumstances and hence, in order to maintain the coalition, the preferences of the various partners must be recognized. Therefore, making these domestic actors a crucial factor to correctly study and explain a particular behavior of a state both domestically and internationally.

With that being said, the next section will provide an overview of existing literature on India's foreign policy. It will analyze key works that have examined India's foreign policy decision-making processes. This subsection will highlight the relevance of these studies to the context of India-EU FTA negotiations and identify any gaps in understanding India's approach to trade negotiations.

2.2.4 India's Foreign Policy Studies

India's growing global prominence has frequently attracted scholarly attention especially over the question of what type of power it will become in the future. Despite being strong in terms of politics and the economy, India is yet to show its leadership globally. Although India is becoming more militarily assertive, it is still unable to project power well beyond its immediate surroundings. Considering the sheer diversity of ambitions, interests and goals, the question rises of how the Indian policymakers make foreign policy decisions? Which level of actors should be considered to be more important while studying foreign policy? Who participates in the formulation of the Indian foreign policy decisions?

An excellent collection of literature that spans through different time, themes, and location on Indian foreign policy has answered these problems. Two major categories can be used to categorize this material; the literature that focus on India's foreign relation with its neighboring countries and other major global powers; and the studies that extensively focus on India's rise as a world power and its approach to global issues.

Literature on India's foreign relations with its neighboring countries (especially Beijing and Lahore) and other major powers like Russia, USA and the EU are mostly focused on their dynamic ties (Joshi, 2016; Joshi and Sharma, 2017; Pant and Joshi 2017; Singh, 2008; Jain, 2004; Pant, 2012; Pant, 2020), failing to investigate the internal complexities that are responsible for the changing ties and existing variation in Indian foreign policy approach for different partners over the course of time. It has been asserted that India strives to create a beneficial strategic environment through bilateral and multilateral relations with the foreign governments by combining diplomacy and power politics (Joshi, 2016). However, a large portion of this literature has struggled to explain how India's policies have changed over time with regards to its partners. Moreover, these studies have typically assumed a greater degree of

intentionality by concentrating primarily on the chief negotiators to understand foreign policy outcomes instead of exploring the interconnections between different domestic actors debating and competing to gain influence over foreign policy outcome to defend their interests.

Similarly, detailed research exists on India's role as a rising world power (Mistry, 2004; Gobarev, 2000; Shahi, 2014; Ganguly, and Kapur, 2010). While the current literature has contended that India's rise would create certain power tensions with the other major global powers of the world, it has certainly failed to acknowledge the internal factors that are connected to the process of India's rise as a global power (Shahi, 2014). In fact, some academics seem to suggest that as India's relative economic, military, and diplomatic power increases globally, it would automatically seek major reforms to the current international system (Shahi, 2014; Gupta 2018; Narlikar, 2013). Another thoroughly researched area that have overlooked the role of domestic actor in India's rising global prominence is the Indian approach towards global issues like climate change, coal and energy security, non-proliferation; global security and global trade (Kumar, 2006; Garg, and Shukla, 2009; Mohan, 2006).

Some of the earlier studies directly related to India and EU mainly focused on the EU-India relations and future business prospects (e.g., Goddeeris; 1997; Chopra 1998; Giri 2001; Abyankar, 2009; Baroowa, 2007; Bava, 2010; Grant, 2008, Sachdeva 2012, 2019). Afterwards, some studies began undertaking the study of perception of the European Union in India (e.g., Subrahmanyam 2005; Mitra 2005; Jain and Pandey 2010, 2012, Lucarelli and Fioramonti, 2010; Lisbonne-de Vergeron 2006, Jain and Pandey, 2012, 2013, 2014). These studies are mostly reflections of former elite perception on EU as a normative power. Similarly, in the case of India-EU FTA, studies typically either focus on the pertaining disagreements in the negotiation or the potential impacts of such agreements on certain sectors in India (Sachdeva, 2019; Khorana, and Perdikis, 2010; Wouters, et.al, 2013; Singh, 2010; Mukherjee, and

Goswami, 2011; Chatterjee, 2011). What is much less explored are the internal factors such as international agreements or disagreements that result in foreign policy outcomes.

With that being said, it is imperative to acknowledge the Indian foreign policy studies that does take into account the role of different level of actors, institutions and ideologies that forms the country's external approach (Ganguly, and Pardesi, 2015; Hansel, Khan, and Levailant, 2017). In the past the Prime Minister's Office exercised exclusive rights over foreign policy formulation and implementation, however, over the years the rise of coalition government and increase in different media houses, influential businesses, NGO's and research development have had a substantial impact over the foreign policy decision-making of the country (Eberhardt, and Kumar, 2010; Baru, 2009; Mohan, 2009; Kumar, 2016; Saha 2013). The participation of the state governments in foreign-policy decisions through legislative means have also increased and in certain instances even shaped the national government's policy approach (Asthana, and Jacob, 2017; Wyatt, 2017). However, studies exploring the internal factors in order to understand the changing decisions of India-EU FTA negotiation talks is still comparatively limited. In fact, there exists a gap in the literature on how internal factors such as involvement of a large number of influential domestic actors with power to veto in India's FTA negotiation talks potentially affected the international agreement from moving forward. This gap represents a significant avenue for research because, according to veto players theory, *"an increase in the number of veto players (for all practical purposes, in parliamentary systems the number of parties in government) and their ideological distance from one another will reduce the ability of both government and parliament to produce significant laws"* (Tsebelis, 1999, p. 591) (discussed in chapter 3). Therefore, the current research, proposes to conduct a study on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between India and the European Union (EU). The study would aim to understand the role played by the Indian domestic actors (with power to veto) in influencing the country's decision to start and later halt the ongoing FTA

negotiations with the EU. More specifically, this research will be investigating the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks between India and the European Union and will involve identifying the ideological beliefs of the both the Indian chief negotiators and the domestic veto players towards the proposed terms of the FTA negotiation that led to the start and later contributed to the halt of the negotiation talks. However, to do this, it is imperative for this thesis to firstly elaborate on the who these chief negotiators and domestic veto players are in the context of Indian trade foreign policymaking. Therefore, the following section of this chapter would present the foreign trade policy decision-making process in India by elaborating on the actors and process through which the trade policies are formulated. This section will explore the actors involved in foreign trade negotiations in India. It will review the studies that have examined the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, such as the executive branch, legislative bodies, trade ministries, and industry representatives. The primary focus of this section will be on understanding the decision-making process and the dynamics between these actors in India.

2.3 The foreign policy decision-making in India for Trade negotiations.

2.3.1 Actors and the decision-making process in India for foreign trade negotiations

In a federal state like India, foreign policy decisions are planned and formulated through the involvement of a wide range of actors. Although, responsibility to manage India's foreign affairs lies with the actors within the Ministry of External Affairs, constitutionally foreign policy decisions are under the command of the Prime Minister's Office. Other important actors alongside the MEA and the PMO involved in the planning and formulating of India's foreign policies are the Cabinet Committee, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Finance, Prime Minister's Office, the National Security Council and the Parliament. In most recent years, additional domestic actors such as private media houses, big businesses, NGO's, private think-tanks and state government though with limited constitutional power to make foreign policy decisions, have successfully managed to influence

the central governments foreign policy decisions on multiple occasions (Baru, 2009; Mohan 2009; Kumar 2016; Rothacher 2016; Asthana and Jacob, 2017; Chatterji and Saha 2017; Wyatt 2017). Therefore, prior to the presentation of the results, it is crucial for the present research to first establish the context for the analytical approach in which this study adopts. More specifically, the following section of this chapter would like to introduce the actors that represent India's foreign relations especially actors who manages trade related interactions.

The first and most important among them is the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The MEA is the principal actor in foreign policy decision- making in India. It is one of the most crucial actors at the center who are traditionally responsible for handling matters related to the country's foreign affairs. Since its establishment, it has managed to successfully deal with a spectrum of external activities of the country including trade relations. Although foreign trade decisions involve actors of various other Ministries and institutions, it is the MEA that determines the course of the decision. Apart from decision-making, the Ministry is also responsible for gathering, analyzing, and processing information for the purpose of effective policy making. Most importantly, the MEA plays a significant role in the planning and formulation of India's foreign policy by collecting policy inputs from different source such as the Indian Embassies, Consulates and High Commission of India. All information gathered is analyzed and utilized to materialize policy objective. Such research activities are usually undertaken by the Policy Planning and Research Division at the MEA under the administration of the Specialized and Support Division (Ministry of External Affairs, 2020). The MEA prepares a monthly summary of important developments for the other senior officials to consider. If the input provided by the MEA, involves trade related matters it is directly conveyed to the Department of Commerce under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Any trade related policies, internal or international are formulated and implemented primarily by the Commerce Ministry. In order to formulate trade policy, the Ministry hold consultations

with various stakeholders such as Confederation of Indian Industry, Confederation of Indian Textile Industry, the Federation of Indian Commerce Industry and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Shaw,2018). Inter-Ministerial consultations are also held with the relevant ministries for example the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Heavy duty. The information gathered through consultation is then utilized to inform India's Trade and Commercial policies. Immediately after the policy strategies are formulated, it is approved and conveyed to the Cabinet by the Director General of Foreign Trade, where further discussions take place. New foreign trade policies are usually issued every five years however, they are regularly reviewed to consider any possible domestic or international changes (Centre for WTO Studies, 2012).

Like in many other Parliamentary systems of government, India too consists of a Cabinet of Ministers. Cabinet being the apex decision-making institution of the country, regulates the course of foreign relations of India by providing necessary directions. Consequently, consultations on foreign trade matters are also discussed with the cabinets before it is approved and implemented. As foreign trade related negotiation involves dealing with matters related to large number of sectors, specialized cabinet committees are set up to look into specific issues areas and report its observations and recommendations to the Cabinet of Ministers for consideration while making trade decisions. However, the decision to accept or reject the suggestions depends fully on the Cabinet.

Although, the trade decisions are shaped collectively by actors from two traditional apex institution of the country - the MEA and the Commerce Ministry and is further scrutinized by the actors from within the Cabinet, it is the Prime Minister's Office who has the final authority to approve the policy decisions. The PMO in India, remains one of the most crucial institutions amongst the other foreign policy decision-making institutions. As a result, all matters on foreign trade policy need the agreement of the Prime Minister's before it is implemented.

Therefore, although very important actors but, both Commerce Ministry and the MEA, remain largely a secondary compared to the Prime Minister's Office in decision-making (Kapur 2013). Consequently, the Prime Minister of India acts as a head representative of the country during negotiations and often signs international agreements on behalf of the country. At this point in the decision-making process, the PMO becomes the focal point of all foreign interactions.

In recent years another advisory group has gained recognition as a significant actor in shaping the country's foreign policy i.e., The National Security Council. Headed by the National Security Advisor, the council plays a pivotal role in providing advice on crucial policy developments that has a direct or indirect effect on the country's national interest such economic and energy security policies (Kandula, 2019).

Foreign policy making is also largely influenced by Parliament. In fact, parliament exercises full control over law making in both foreign and domestic matters of the country. While many believe that the Parliament holds limited influence over foreign policy decision-making, in comparison to national matters, it is also well known that domestic politics can also impact the foreign policy outcomes. Before the 1990s, this influence was limited as decision-making on foreign affairs were primarily Prime minister centric which allowed the government in power to make foreign policy related decisions without the consent or approval of the parliament. There were also recorded instances where the Prime Minister alone frequently took decisions related to the country's external affairs (Patel, in Aiyar and Srinivasan, 1965, p. 205-206). Although it was imperative for the Prime Minister to report policy decisions to a special committee of cabinet members for external affairs, who would then approve and report to the other cabinets, however, oftentimes foreign affair related decisions were taken unannounced without prior discussions with the special cabinet committee (Patel in Aiyar and Srinivasan, 1965, p. 205-206).

However, the late 1990's witnessed the rise of coalition politics, this was when no single

political party was able to occupy majority seats in the national elections of the Lok Sabha. Forming alliances with other political parties thus became as crucial as obtaining majority vote in the country. Thus, the national political parties (presently eight as recognized by the Election Commission of India) began forming alliances with other recognized state parties (presently fifty-four) to occupy office therefore, making coalition a central pillar of Indian political system (Vijayalakshmi, 2017, p. 205). As a result, the legislative branch gained more influence over decision-making as the executives started to require their collective vote of support to remain in office.

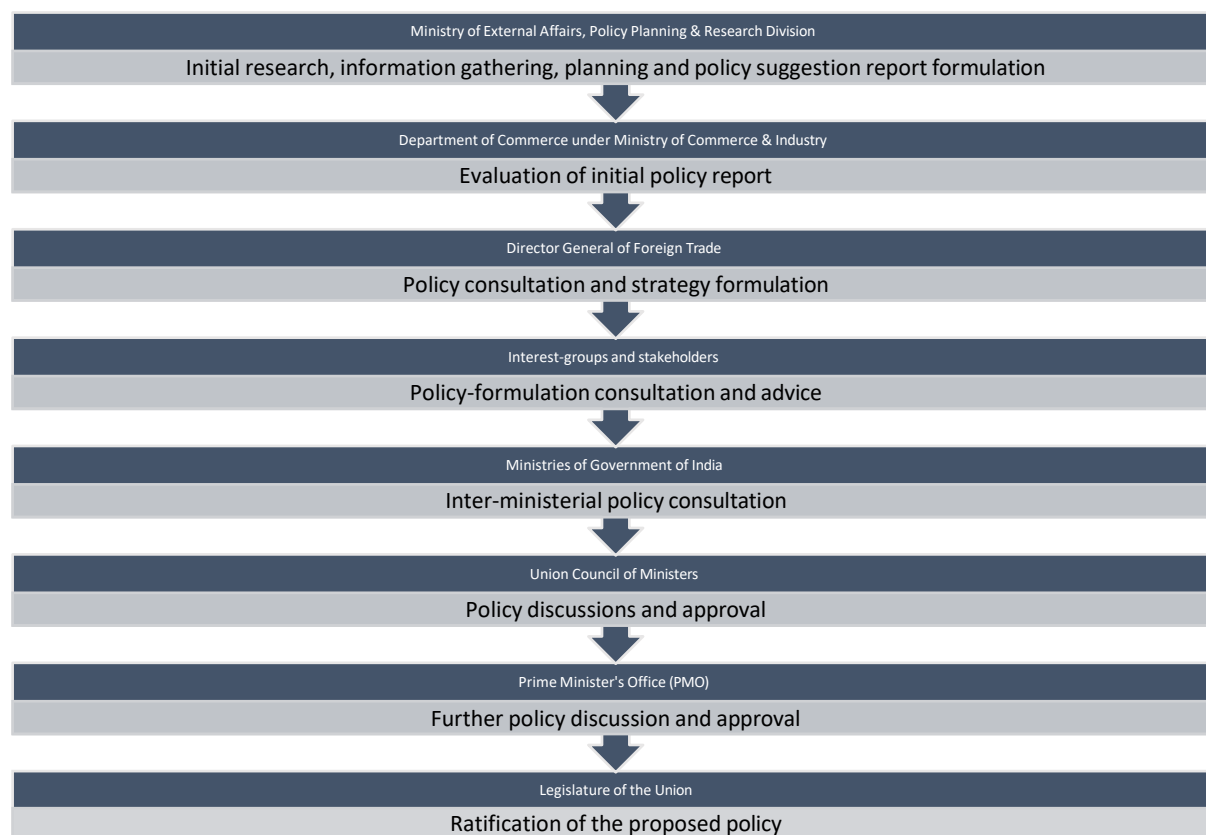
In addition, constitutionally the power to legislate all aspects of foreign affairs lies with the Parliament (Bakshi & Kashyap 2002). According to the Union List of the Indian Constitution, the Parliament is responsible to formulate laws regarding foreign affairs (Union List: Item 10, Indian Constitution). The Constitution also maintains that any decisions regarding international agreements or treaties must be made under the consultation of the Parliament (Indian Constitution). Besides the authority of policy making, the Parliament exercises influence over the foreign policy decision-making through many other external ways one such example is the Budget. Since it is Parliament's responsibility to decide on the Budget, if necessary, it can put pressure on the executive actors through budgetary cuts. There are multiple other examples that show the parliamentary influence over the country's foreign policy decisions, for example, India's decision to not sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (Sondhi, 1988), India's decisions during the 1971 South Asia crisis (also known as Bangladesh liberation war) and the signing of the Shimla Agreement are all considered to be because of the pressure from the Parliament (Bindra, 1981). Therefore, it can be argued, through its legislative and advisory powers Parliament maintains a constant influence over the foreign policy decision-making of the country.

Lastly, as more and more political parties started to depend on external support to remain in

power, other interest groups (especially individual top businesses) also started gaining influence over the country's policy decisions (Milner and Mukherjee, 2011). For instance, in 1994, when Indian National Congress (then ruling government) acquired financial aid from large industrial houses to support party activities, the latter formed a collective organization and demanded for non-liberalization of trade alongside higher protectionist measures for industrial products against increased foreign imports as a return for the financial favors they provided to support the government (Kochanek 1996, Hardgrave and Kochanek 2007). Over the years, India's increased international interactions encouraged different ministries and sectors to call for more involvement in negotiation process through meetings for discussing the ideological differences negotiate and settle on an agreement option to move forwards with the trade deal. During this period organizations such as the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI), Council for Leather Exports and many others started to actively represent views of Indian domestic industries and encouraging debates on trade liberalization (Baru, 2009). Industrial concerns started to gain increased attention from the Indian government as industries became more and more active participants of negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO). The government's participation in meetings with these associations to discuss trade policies and other issues, also increased. Although individual lobbying persisted, organizations like FICCI, CITI, CII took over a stronger role in influencing the governmental policies. These industrial organizations were formed of both members from private and public firms of India who actively participated in negotiating for Indian industrial interest both in domestic and international level (Baru, 2009). These negotiations or lobbying takes place both before the start of and during the ongoing trade talk depending upon how closely connected those interest groups are to the head negotiators of the government and how much of a power, they hold to amend a policy position. These interest groups can directly influence trade decisions or through other veto players who hold a more direct influence over

the policy decisions of a country. A diagram representing these domestic actors can be depicted as follows (see Figure 1):

Figure 1 - An illustration of the foreign trade policymaking process at the domestic level in India



As one can see, negotiations are far more complex than how they were before the 1990's. To make an amendment to the existing law or to enter an agreement requires collective consensus from actors of all levels. Accordingly, in connection to the current theoretical framework, i.e., the veto player theory, all such actors therefore are veto players as their approval are crucial to ratifying foreign policy decisions including those for the FTA (Tsebelis, 1995; 1999; 2002). Therefore, it can be argued that India's international decision-making process reveals that the policy decision outcomes is a direct result of the interactions that occur between non-unitary actors holding veto powers. These veto players according to the model presented in this thesis will be categorized under two sets of domestic actors, the principal and the agent. This idea is based on the principal-agent theory which is a framework first applied in the context of policymaking by Braun (1993). In the context of the current research, the Indian domestic

actors who can be labelled as “principal” are the Parliament, the State Legislative Assembly and the industrial interest groups who delegate powers to the chief negotiators, i.e., the executive government who can be labelled as “agents” who represent the will of the principal during the India-EU negotiations. This will be discussed further in the proceeding section of this chapter. With that being said, the rationale for applying the principal-agent framework is to showcase the power dynamics between the relevant actors in the India-EU FTA negotiations. This way it enables the current research to identify the internal workings of the India foreign policy decision-making in order to identify and clarify the source and role of multiple emerging factions involved throughout the decision-making process who are relevant to the outcome of the FTA negotiations as veto players. Another reason would be that it enables the current research to identify potential fault lines during the decision-making process. This is crucial to the current research because oftentimes having multiple principal and agent veto players involved in foreign decision-making processes can lead to conflicts at the domestic level as each have their own preferences and incentives that may not necessarily align. As a result, this leads to potential decision-making conflicts at the domestic level. These conflicts in return can lead to the use of veto power in situations where an agreed decision cannot be reached through negotiation or compromise, resulting in gridlock in the negotiation. Overall, utilizing the principal-agent theory provides the research with a useful framework for understanding the relationship between these factions involving multiple stakeholders of industries, the executive branches of the Government of India and the legislative bodies involved in the decision-making for India-EU FTA negotiations. This way, it highlights the complex communication, information sharing, and collaboration process between the relevant actors and thus imperative to understanding the FTA negotiations. Thus, the next section of the present chapter will focus on elaborating the relationship between these chief negotiators and veto players in the India-EU negotiation process.

2.3.2 The executive, the legislative and the electorates – As a ‘principal-agent relationship’.

During a negotiation, there are two sets of actors – the one who delegates power and authority to represent their preferences during a negotiation at the international stage (i.e., the principals) and the one to whom the power and authority is delegated to represent the preferences at the international negotiation (i.e., the agents) (Kassim & Menon, 2003). This means that the agent who is acting on behalf of their principal must perform the delegated tasks in accordance with the principal’s interest. To ensure proper execution of the tasks being delegated, a degree of control is maintained by the principals’ (Moravcsik, 1993; Delreux, 2008). This relationship of a principal and an agent between the actors is called the ‘agency’ relation (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 483).

Similarly, in the case of India negotiating the FTA with the EU, a negotiator, or a group of negotiators (i.e., the agents) are delegated the task to represent the preferences of another group of actors (i.e., the principals). Under the Article 77 of the Indian constitution for allocation of business, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is responsible for representing the country’s foreign policies internationally. However, the whole responsibility of formulating policies and negotiating with external partners is shared within the executive level of the government.

But this does not mean that the executive branch of the government has exclusive rights over trade-related decisions. In India, for implementing a trade related decision, a government would require a collective consensus from the legislative and certain influential interest groups (the principals) which includes big businesses, central bank, NGO’s, state legislative chambers and media whose support is crucial for the government to remain in the position of power as argued by Mansfield, et.al., (2004, p.2).

As a Parliamentary democracy, the executives of the country are appointed and governed by the Parliament majority. Maintaining confidence in the house is very crucial for the government to remain in power. In terms of foreign policies, it is the Parliament (principal) who has exclusive rights over legislating or amending policy decisions of the executive leadership.

During the question hour in Parliament, the Members examine, question and challenge government policy decisions of the government and the executive government in charge of the foreign relations is answerable to the Parliament. This includes the opposition members of Parliament. Therefore, no policies or agreements both domestically and internationally could be signed without the collective approval of the Parliament. Hence, it can be argued that in the international stage the executive actors are the agents with primary responsibility to represent the policy preferences of the legislative members (the principal) and through the legislature ultimately the electorates of the country who elected the members of Parliament in the first place to represent their preferences at the national level (Oppermann, 2008, p.182).

Therefore, in India there are two principals i.e., the Parliament members and the electorates (Oppermann, 2008, p.182). These principals delegate the power to the agent (i.e., the executive branch of the government) to conduct the country's foreign policies and the former also maintain certain control mechanisms to ensure proper representation of their interests and preferences. Hence, decisions on international negotiations in the country are highly influenced by 'domestic' actors. These domestic actors demand their executives to develop policies which would achieve their goals and interests. On the other hand, the executives have their own preferences and interests as well where they would attempt to push forward through policy decisions. These varied demands drive bargaining and negotiations between agent and the principal, influencing the decisions that follows (Moravcsik and Schimmelfennig, 2018). In the current research, two such decisions will be of focus – the start and the halt of the India-EU FTA negotiation.

However, it is important to note that both the principals and the agents have different power influence. While the Parliament has legal power to amend policies and pass bills and the executive has legal powers to formulate, analyze and process policies, the electorates, on the other hand are political actors only i.e., actors who lack the legal powers to amend or influence policies but enjoy factual influence in accordance with the political circumstances. In different

political systems, there are several types of such political veto players. For instance, powerful interest groups can be thought of as political veto players, at least in the policy areas of their concern (Tsebelis, 1995).

Likewise, as discussed in the previous section, some actors such as big businesses can exercise their political power to influence trade policies even though by law, they are not assigned with powers to take part in the decision-making process (Tsebelis, 1995). This is due to the fact that in addition to the elective power that they possess, they also hold financial privileges through which they fund political campaigns. Moreover, some businesses own media houses and they invest in positive advertising of a political party's agendas to the public all in exchange for legislative favors. Similarly, for other big media houses, it exercises political power by influencing people's opinions. One such area of influence is policies introduced by the government. Policies of a government are a crucial election issue and a massive public furor over a policy can potentially be a threat to the stability of the government in power. Therefore, governments are cautious of media portrayal of the party image and their policies and thus pay close attention to their opinions.

Since this research deals with international trade policy negotiation which involves high level negotiations, another fact that requires mentioning is that, not all electorates are as powerful as a countrywide-recognized media outlet or a big corporation and therefore it is difficult to reach the government and influence their policy outputs. Although Parliament is meant to represent the views of the electorates and influence policy outcomes in their favor, but with the sheer size of electorates that one Member of the Parliament is supposed to represent (i.e., 2.5 million) it is only fair to say that no MP can effectively represent the interest or preferences of all of their electorates in the international decision-making (Jensenius, Chhibber, Shah, 2019). Another factor that could be a reason is the potential divergence of interest and priorities between the two actors. Such a situation where an agent acts contrary to the principal's interest is referred to as 'principal-agent problem' (Gailmard, 2010).

But whatever might be the case, being able to influence an international trade policy outcome depends on a lot of factors, one of such factors is mentioned earlier where the electorate either has to be influential enough to attract the attention of top-level MPs or executive decisionmakers or has to have close connection to someone influential in the government or outside the government who can directly or indirectly influence the policy decision. Another factor that is important is one's financial availability and wealth due to the fact that influencing such apex level decisions involves a series of complex processes which are impossible without spending of large sum of money. Therefore, in the case of lobbying for international trade policy, it is only a very specific group of electorates that are directly or indirectly involved in influencing the government's decisions. As previously mentioned, these groups are mainly people with influential status who either has a lot to gain or a lot to lose per capita through the FTA to be interested in trying to influence a government's international trade decision in favor of their preferences (Moravcsik, 1993). These electorates are generally referred to as interest groups or pressure groups. While some of these groups are formally recognized by the government and provided direct access to policy making, the others apply indirect methods such as media source or parliamentary influences to pressurize the government to adopt policies preferred by them. They, alongside the Parliament will be the focus of this research.

In summary, the two principals in India (i.e., the Parliament and the influential interest groups) delegate powers to their agent (i.e., the executive government) to represent their preferences during the negotiation. These actors (both principal and agent) enjoy legal or political powers (also known as veto powers) and any decision to make changes in the existing policies or implementation of a new policy in a state must be approved by these veto players at particular 'veto points' of the policy process. These veto points are institutional check points through which every policy reform proposal must pass before it is implemented (Immergut, 2010). If it occurs that the policy proposed by the government is not accordance to the principals' preferences, the latter can exercise their control mechanisms (or vetoes) to challenge or block

the policy. These preferences are formed and articulated based on the ideological belief of the actors over the potential net cost and benefits of a policy (Moravcsik, 1993, p. 483) and the more the distance between the ideological belief of the principal and the agent, the less are the chances for the former to approve policy changes necessary for an international negotiation to be ratified (Tsebelis, 1995; 2002).

In order to identify and analyze the ideological differences of the principal and agent, it is first and foremost imperative to determine who are the veto players involved, who their agents are and at what level of the negotiation they operate. To identify these factors, the following section will illustrate the different levels of decision-making process in India that occurs between the principal, the agents and their international partner while negotiating a trade deal.

2.3.3 The non-unitary veto players and the two levels of negotiation.

According to scholars like Putnam (1998), negotiation takes place in two levels, the first level (Level 1) refers to the stage of bargaining between the international partners which in this case would be the Indian executives negotiating the FTA with the EU, and the second level (level 2) that involves the debates and discussions between the executive and other domestic actors. At Level 2 the domestic actors (i.e., principals') delegate authority and decide on certain control mechanism (Delreux, 2008; Moravcsik, 1993). The executive negotiators are the important link between both the levels whose primary responsibility is to act as a transmission belt between the principal and the international partner by formulating strategies both according to the international negotiation context at Level 1 where they negotiate with their international counterparts to establish an agreement, and on the preferences of the principal at Level 2 where they negotiate to ensure domestic ratification (Delreux, 2008; Putnam, 1998; Evans et al., 1993). Building upon this, the next section of this chapter will outline the three stages of foreign trade negotiation processes in India, including the initiation of negotiations, the negotiation

process itself, and the finalization and implementation of trade agreements. The discussion will also analyze the control mechanisms in place to ensure coherence and accountability in the decision-making process.

2.3.4 The three stages and control mechanisms

Furthermore, the two levels of negotiation involve three stages of the decision-making process – the authorization stage, the negotiation stage, and the ratification stage (Delreux, 2008). In each of these decision-making stages there are certain control mechanisms that the principal can apply over their agents. Each stage will be explored in further detail as we proceed to the following sections.

To begin at the starting point, the authorization stage can be defined as the investigating and analyzing phase before the actual start of the negotiation (Spector, 1993). The authorization stage begins when one of the international partners considers negotiation as an option to further their ties with the others and expresses their interest to the other party. This phase involves assessment of the potential benefits and losses of the proposed idea, finding ideas for boosting one's share and importance in the negotiation and identifying solutions in order to resolve existing problems. After the assessment and analysis when both or all the partners agree to formally negotiate with each other, the authorization phase comes to an end. Another reason the authorization stage could come to an end is when one of the partners rejected the option of entering into a negotiation with the other. Therefore, it can be said that an authorization stage is initiating negotiation talks, evaluating issues, assessing options, estimating potential costs and agreeing to move forward with the negotiation. (Hampson & Hart, 1995, Spector 1993). This stage is of great importance for the parties wanting to negotiate with each other, as they involve lesser exit cost compared to a formal negotiation and can act as an opportunity to set up appropriate organizational mechanisms for the following negotiation and may also further bring about other benefits such as economic development, infrastructural developments, a

chance to satisfy the domestic demands as well as avoiding potential losses.

Thus, in the context of the India-EU FTA, the first phase of the negotiation likewise began with the EU's proposal for an FTA in 2006 to the Ministry of External Affairs. The External Affairs Ministry are one of the key negotiators of India-EU FTA talks as they are responsible for managing India's foreign relation and trade negotiations with other countries. As the proposal is regarding trade, once the proposal was initiated by the EU and received by the MEA, the department requires the proposal to be communicated to the executive branch of Commerce and Industry under the central government. Subsequently, this initiates the authorization stage of the negotiation due to the fact that all trade-related negotiations are primarily overseen by the Department of Commerce and Industry within the Ministry, which is headed by the Commerce Secretary, making the department also a key negotiator in India-EU FTA.

At the domestic level, the authorizing phase includes the assessing, evaluating and analyzing of the trade-related information gathered by both the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce with the assistance of several other departments (Shaw, 2018). This includes big business organizations including the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Federation of Indian Commerce and Industry (FICI), the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), followed by the Indian Embassies and High Commissions abroad, research centers such as Indian Direct Selling Association, Indian Council of World Affairs, Institute of Cost Accountants of India, Centre for Policy Research and International Council for Research on Economic Relations (Ministry of External Affairs, 2018). Therefore, it can be said that in the context of trade policy formulation in India, all these departments have direct influence over the government policy formulation and can be considered as principals as per the principal-agent theory. This is because both the MEA and the Department of Commerce and Industry requires input and feedback from these business associations and departments

during the formulation of the Indian trade policies and negotiating agreements with the EU.

These associations and departments are considered of high importance when formulating trade policies as they have significant expertise to provide valuable information and recommendations to the government that could help promote economic growth in the country. Moreover, they can also provide valuable insights into the impact of proposed trade policies on their members' businesses and industries. In fact, the representatives of these associations and departments are referred to as the high-level trade advisory group for India-EU FTA. However, when providing recommendations and advice to the government, they are likely to prioritize their own interests and may use various methods such as providing research, conducting consultations and engaging in dialogues with the government officials to influence government decision-making. For this reason, these principals can also be considered veto players. Given that veto players are individuals or groups who have the power to block or veto policy changes, and since the principals often possess veto power due to their extensive networks, resources, and expertise, they can influence policy decisions by providing information, lobbying, and advocating on behalf of their members. Therefore, these associations and departments as principal veto players can play a critical role in shaping trade policies. With regards to the MEA and Department of Commerce, since they gather information from the principals to formulate trade policies, they act as agents representing the principals during the negotiations.

Once the policy input is gathered from different principal sources it is sent to the MEA (in the case of the EU two branches: the Europe (West) and the Central Europe headed by two Joint Secretary of MEA. Here, the data is processed and analyzed by the EU Policy Planning and Research staff (under the Specialized and Support division) alongside the Legal and Treaty division of MEA who provide legal advice for the multilateral and bilateral treaty drafts being prepared for the approval of the MEA ministers (Ministry of External Affairs, 2014). This process also involves examination and clearance of the proposals from the Finance division of

the MEA and the Director General of Foreign Trade. Thereafter, the recommendations are forwarded to the Department of Commerce where once again the High-level Advisory Group is consulted and further discussions, researching and formulating reports to provide additional advice over several matters involving trade and commerce for the Cabinet Ministries is considered (Bhalla, 2018). Therefore, both the head of the Department of Finance and the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) are key negotiators in the FTA negotiations. In countries like India, the Department of Finance and DGFT work closely to each other and is responsible for formulating and implementing policies related to international trade, including tariff rates, customs procedures, and exchange rate management. In this role, they work closely with stakeholders and industry representatives to ensure that India's interests are represented and protected in the negotiation. Therefore, they act as an agent on behalf of the stakeholders and industry representatives (principals). These industry representatives and stakeholders can also be considered as veto players, especially if they have a stake in the outcome of the negotiations. As their inputs and advice matter in the formulation of the negotiation policies, they have the potential to influence the negotiation process by using their leverage and lobbying power to shape the outcome of negotiations in their favor. In fact, the industry representatives and stakeholders sometimes may have enough leverage to block the progress of negotiations or influence the outcome. For instance, if they feel that their interests are not sufficiently addressed in the negotiation, they may threaten the negotiators by mobilizing public opposition to the agreement or engage in legal challenges that could either delay or derail the negotiations talks.

Being the most powerful institution under the Indian Government, the Cabinet is responsible for handling various functions. However, the primary responsibility of the Cabinet is to offer advice to the Prime Minister regarding policy proposals and drafts (Cabinet Secretariat, 2020). To assist the Cabinet with revision of the proposed drafts, there are currently 8 active Cabinet

Committees. Regarding foreign trade and investment issues the Committee responsible is the Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA) and Cabinet Committee of Political Affairs (CCPA). Although, both the Committees consist of several Ministries, the primary Ministries consulted for trade and investment are the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MIC), Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of External Affairs, Central Board of Direct Taxation and Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (Ministry of External Affairs, 2018). The role of the CCEA is to keep in-check the negotiating process and ensure that the negotiations align with the interest of its stakeholders. Therefore, it can be argued that in the trade negotiations, the Cabinet acts as an agent on behalf of the stakeholders by working closely with the stakeholders of various organizations. As agents the Cabinet is expected to ensure that the policy positions of the FTA agreement are structured in a way that benefits the stakeholders as well as and promotes the overall economic interests of the country. After an in-depth discussion on the draft proposals, the cabinet provides necessary recommendations to the draft. The Cabinet also has the authority to reject or approve the draft proposal, but once approved by the Cabinet, the draft is forwarded to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

At present, the PMO consist of the Principal Secretary to the PM, the National Security Advisor, Principal Advisor to the PM, three Additional Secretary, five joint secretaries, two private secretaries, four Officers on Special Duty (OFSD), six directors and other officials such as Deputy Secretary, Communication Officer, Reference Officer and under Secretary (PMINDIA, 2020). The PMO also coordinated with all the interdepartmental Ministries, Cabinets and Committees to discuss, revise, and approve formal negotiation (Sarkar, 2018). In the context of India-EU trade negotiations, the Prime Minister's Office especially the Prime Minister himself plays a major role as a chief negotiator on behalf of his stakeholders. As a key negotiating agent, the Prime Minister is appointed to represent the interests of the people of the country. Therefore, in a FTA he is expected to act in the best interests of the people especially

the stakeholders by implementing policies and making decisions that represent and benefit not only a small section of the principal stakeholders such as CII and FICCI but interests of all stakeholders.

Once the draft is approved by the PMO, the Parliament is supposed to be notified and discussion sessions on the report prepared are to be held before proceeding for the next phase i.e., the formal negotiation phase. However, at this stage, Parliamentary agreement is preferable but not mandatory. This is because the Indian constitution reserve exclusive rights to the executive to enter into a treaty obligation (Constitution of India, 1950, Article 53; 73 and 253). Therefore, judging from the text acquired from the Lower House of the Indian Parliamentary Question Answer session in 2007, it appears that there were no discussions at the Parliament. Moreover, the Parliament was not even notified of the executive leaderships' decision to start a formal negotiation with the EU until one month after the formal negotiation commenced. In the Parliamentary text, the then-Minister of Commerce Mr. Jairam Ramesh mentions setting up of an India-EU joint High-Level Trade Group (HLTG) headed by the Commerce Secretary from the Indian side to analyze and prepare a report on the possibilities of a bilateral broad-based trade and investment agreement with the EU (Bhasin, 2006). The report was submitted at the 7th India-EU Summit 2006 with the recommendation from the HLTG to move forward with the FTA.

Therefore, HLTG served as control mechanism 1 for the principal in the principal-agent theory during the authorization stage of the trade negotiations. As discussed earlier, this group consisted of experts and representatives of stakeholders from various industrial sectors of India, who have a vested interest in the outcome of the India-EU trade negotiation. By involving these experts and representatives, the principal can ensure that the negotiation led by the negotiating agents (e.g., the Prime Minister, the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the other Ministers in Cabinet) aligns with the economic interests of a wider range of principal stakeholders in

businesses, labor unions, and consumers.

Therefore, in the Summit of 2006 with the permission of the HLTG, both the partners discussed the report being submitted and agreed to move the discussion forward to a formal negotiation (Government of India Commerce and Industry Lok Sabha, 2007; Bhasin, 2006). High-level business organizations like CII and FICCI were the only non-government participants in the HLTG (Eberhardt and Kumar, 2010). Therefore, from the following information it can be deduced that the first stage of India-EU FTA decision-making which resulted in the start of the formal negotiation between both India and EU, involved very high-level actors mainly the negotiators (agents) and some limited influential business organizations (principals). However, as the negotiation progresses at the international level and both sides start to negotiate the terms of the trade negotiation, the negotiators may modify certain policy proposals put forward in agreement with the representative of the principals (e.g., the HLTG). The modification or adjustment by the negotiating agent may be as a response to the feedback from the EU side or taking into consideration of new developments or information. These changes also take place as both the partners try to find common ground by making concessions or compromises on certain issues. And as the agents are appointed by the principals to negotiate on their behalf, to ensure that the agent is continuing to work in the best interest of the principal, other control mechanisms such as legislative oversight (control mechanism 2) is used to monitor their decisions and hold the negotiators accountable for their actions.

Therefore, following the authorization stage, during the second phase of the negotiation, also known as the “negotiation stage”, the Parliament and the State Legislative Assembly play a crucial role as a principal. The negotiation stage begins when both the international partners agree to move from the general evaluation stage which involves exchanging casual information, to formally having discussions on the actual negotiation terms and conditions. This stage involves agenda-setting, discussing issues, identifying methods of addressing

differences, bargaining, and finalizing the agreement (Hampson and Hart, p.27). Any policy changes and concessions or compromise ideas put forward by the negotiators are further scrutinized and revised in this stage by the principal through legislative constraints to ensure the agent pursues policies that are consistent with the principal's preferences. During this stage, the Parliament must be kept informed by the negotiating agents about new issues and other changes that occur during the negotiation process. This is done during the Parliament debates and question answer sessions. In the case of India-EU FTA, apart from debates and question answer sessions, a special standing committee on commerce was also appointed by the Parliament as a body to be regularly consulted by the negotiators for advice and opinion on policy position (Ministry of External Affairs, 2018).

At this stage it is important to note that although international trade is an exclusive domain of the Central, it does not mean that the individual States are not involved. Especially, in the context of trade negotiations, the consent of state governments is imperative because each state in India usually have their own additional regulatory barriers and elaborate tax regime that are implemented on imports. Such limitations are usually imposed by the state governments to promote certain industries or address regional economic disparities. Trade negotiations such as the India-EU FTA that aims to make significant changes so such barriers, can impact the ability of states to impose such additional tariffs and barriers or enact their own regulations. Therefore, before committing to reduce regulatory barriers and ensure free movement of EU goods and services within Indian states, the Central needs to consult with the states. Additionally, certain areas of negotiations are under joint jurisdiction of both state and the central government (e.g., labor standards). Labor standards in every state of India vary from one another. In the negotiation between India and EU, the EU has asked India to commit to its labor standards. In such a situation, the Central must consult the state governments before it can go ahead with the agreement. Moreover, each state or the governments representing the state may have their own

individual interests, priorities, and concerns that they would like the negotiators to address in the trade agreement being negotiated. These interests may be specifically related to the state's economy, industrial demands, or social conditions. Furthermore, trade agreements have the potential to impact different states differently, depending on the state's economic structure, industrial base and level of development. To protect the interest of local industries, producers and manufacturers, the state governments want the negotiators to also prioritize their interest during the negotiation process. These trade-related interactions between the central negotiators and the state governments take place through the Inter-State Council (ISC). The ISC headed by the Prime Minister of India, consists of the Chief Ministers of all India states, the Lieutenant Governors of all Union Territories, and other Cabinet Ministers and Union Home Minister. When a trade agreement is negotiated, a Standing Committee is formulated under ISC to provide consultations and recommendations to the negotiators. Additionally, the state government provides their input and recommendations related to the negotiation process through their elected representatives in both the houses of the Parliament. Once the government is successful in negotiating with them, it can move forward to commit formulating a preliminary agreement that would abide by the international norms as well as meet the expectations of both the international partner and the domestic partners. When both the partners commit to a negotiation agreement, the negotiation moves to the "ratification stage". Last minute vetoes or suggestions for amendment to the proposed treaty from the principal can delay or prevent the finalization of the agreement (control mechanism 3). This could involve vetoes from members of both houses of Parliament and other influential Interest groups whose opinions matter to the government (as discussed earlier).

However, Indian Parliamentary document for Question Answer session of 2010 (which is three years after the formal beginning of the negotiation session) indicate that details of the negotiation were not made available to the Parliament by the executive negotiators and no

discussion or debate sessions on negotiation positions were held between the members of the Parliament and the executive government (Negotiating drafts with India-EU FTA, 2010). When the Minister of Commerce and Industry Mr. Anand Sharma was questioned by the Parliament about “when government is going to take the Parliament into confidence by having debate” in all issues related to the negotiation, Mr. Sharma replied that negotiation involves matters of “international sensitivities” therefore, “details of the ongoing negotiations are not placed in public until the closer is reached”. Furthermore, he added that “before the agreement is signed, approval of the Cabinet is obtained” (Negotiating drafts with India-EU FTA, 2010). Thus, this brings the discussion to the final stage of the negotiation i.e., the “ratification stage”. In this stage, the agreement reached with the international partner must be ratified by Parliament. Once the international partners reach mutual settlement, the agent needs to ratify the settlement from the principal without which the preliminary settlement could not be legally adopted and implemented in the country. At this stage no more amendments to the policy are accepted and both the partners can either accept the agreement or reject it (Delreux, 2008). Legally at this stage in India the negotiators cannot avoid the involvement of Parliament. This is because the Article 253 of the Indian constitution empowers the Parliament with the exclusive right on legislating and amending laws for implementation of any treaty within the Indian territory which includes foreign affairs (Constitution of India, 1950). In other words, policy changes that are required for the FTA won't be legally implementable if it lacks Parliamentary support. However, since, the details of the India-EU negotiations were not made available to the Parliament or discussed with any other stakeholders apart from the business associations directly working with the government to formulate the trade proposal at the authorization stage e.g., CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM, the negotiation could not proceed to the ratification. Such lack of transparency created a “agency problem” between the negotiators and the principal (Lane, 2013, p.88). In the Principal-Agent theory, agency problems arise when the agent does not act in their principals' interest (Eisenhardt, 1989). In some cases, such agent autonomy can

lead to a potential issue of agency loss, in which the principal-agent relation impacted by the agent's decision to act by their own interests and the interests of those stakeholders whose interests closely aligned with those of the negotiators.

It is important to note here that it is reasonable for negotiators to have a certain amount of agent autonomy. Providing agents with some autonomy is beneficial in trade negotiations because negotiators have more specialized negotiating knowledge and expertise than the principal and they can to act quickly and make decisions to capitalize on emerging opportunities during the negotiation process on the principals' behalf. However, agents pursuing their own interests also pose a risk of conflict, especially when there is a lack of interaction between the negotiator and their principal. Such a situation makes it more difficult to ensure that both the decision of the agent and the interest of the principal align. According to the present research, the halt of the India-EU FTA negotiation talks was a direct result of this. The negotiators lack of communication as agent with the stakeholders resulted in the negotiators pursuing policy options that were closer to their ideal policy position and the ideal policy position rather than pursuing an agreement that was closer to the principals' ideal policy position. This created tension and conflict between different stakeholder groups, causing a breakdown in trust and cooperation which led to the prolonged halt of the negotiation talks between 2013-2017.

To further investigate this, the present research will utilize the concept of ideological distance put forward by George Tsebelis in his study of Veto Players. The concept of ideological distance refers to how differing policy preferences of different political actors or veto players from one another can have a significant effect on policy change (Angelova, Bäck, et.al., 2018). The current research will utilize this argument to explain the changes of decisions from the Indian governments side to start the FTA negotiation talks with the EU and later deciding to halt. In the context of the India-EU negotiation, the veto players will be both the principal i.e., the Parliament or different stakeholders at the domestic level, and Indian negotiators as the agents

tasked with negotiating on their behalf. In order to do that, the research will attempt to identify their ideological position which would be through speeches, statements, and interviews of the veto players. The next chapter will first begin by summarizing the main points of the veto player theory. It will then discuss the formulation of the hypothesis and their relevance to the research question in hand.

Chapter 3: Theory and Hypotheses Development

3.1 Veto players and policy reforms

Governments around the world are constantly struggling to cope with the ongoing economic challenges, refugee crisis, economic globalization, influx in ageing population, and the consequent concerns arising relating to the country's social and economic wellbeing. Such changing circumstances sometimes make policy reforms a necessity. In such circumstances when policy reforms are required, it is preferable for a political system to be flexible and adaptable to changing situations with the ability to efficiently handle emerging problems. While certain governments can effortlessly adapt and implement policy changes according to their changing external conditions; others on the other hand, delay or refuse to adapt and implement policy reforms, even when governmental inertia can result in social consequences.

Why are some countries able to retain the underlying premise of their policies for extensive periods of time, resulting in a predictable and consistent environment, whilst others have frequent reforms, and sometimes with every reform in government? Why are certain nations flexible enough to quickly reform their policies to change internal and external, while others adapt reluctantly or with difficulty, allowing ineffective policies to persist for long durations of time? Why do some countries have little trouble implementing and enforcing rules approved by their legislatures, whereas some take a long time or even fail to do so? In order to answer such questions researchers over the years have attempted to identify the factors that influence policy decisions, and the focus of domestic level actors has long been a topic of study for a range of social science fields.

Studies have explained policy decisions in a variety of ways. Veto player theory focuses on political actors' policy preferences and institutional restrictions during decision-making (Tsebelis, 1999, 2002). Being a theory that studies legislative decision-making behavior, it

offers insight on a series of important legislations that modify the policy status quo. However, due to challenges of distinguishing between important from minor laws, only very few research focused specifically on law creation exists (Kreppel 1997; Tsebelis 1999, 2002; Conley & Bekafigo 2010). Rather, researchers interested in studying the role of veto players in policy decision-making tend to analyze patterns of investment, implementation of taxes and customs, and governments budgets balance (Hallerge 2011).

Scholars studying the role of veto players have found substantial evidence that the number of veto players is an important explanatory variable for the survival of the cabinet (Saalfeld, 2011; Tsebelis and Ha 2014; Eppner, and Ganghof, 2017). The arguments put forward by the veto player theory are further supported by a number of existing literatures. Tsebelis and Chang (2004) for example, found that broader ideological distance between veto players led to less budgetary reforms in a study of 19 OECD nations' budget decisions from 1973 to 1990. A study conducted by Bräuninger (2005) demonstrates that veto players and their actual spending preferences have a significant impact on government expenditure. Treisman (2000) found that a federal structure with a large number of veto players tends to retain their existing pattern of monetary policy. Studies like Bawn (1999) and König and Troeger, (2005) show predictions on how German federal budget are impacted by veto players. Similarly, in a time-series analysis of EU, the researcher discovered that factors such as a winning coalition in the Council, the ideological positioning of the co-legislators, and the presence of coherent nations all played a substantial effect in the EU's budgetary decisions (Citi, 2015). Conducting research on four Asian countries affected by financial crisis - Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, and Indonesia, MacIntyre (2001) contended that political institutions of all four nations had a significant impact on the country's policy environment and investment decisions. Kreppel (1997), while conducting a study on bills introduced in Italy between 1950 to 1990, demonstrated that the number of political parties participating in a government coalition reduces the country's

legislative productivity. Tsebelis (1999) himself studied seventy-five key labor regulations on working hours and work conditions that were enacted in fifteen Western European nations between 1981 and 1991. The results demonstrated that the ideology of the veto players has a considerable impact on policy change. Likewise, while investigating how veto players affected labor market reforms, Becher (2010) found that veto players limit ministers' agenda-setting ability. Conley and Bekafigo (2010), on the other hand, examined the impact of ideology among veto players on the range of key bills introduced in Ireland, but obtain just a moderately negative influence. Similarly, Boockmann (2006) investigated political and economic determinants of ratification of international treaty such as the International Labour Organization by industrialized democracies although found no support for veto player theory's prediction directly but observed that partisan preferences of government parties have a significant impact on international ratifications.

Aside from this, several scholars have questioned earlier classification of veto players by Tsebelis who posited that veto players comprised of legislative chambers, presidents, and the judicial branches of the government whereas the partisan veto players were the parties in a governing coalition (Tsebelis, 1995; 2002). He further stated that there is a key distinction amongst both institutional and partisan veto players - as per the constitution, institutional veto players' agreement is both essential and adequate for policy reform whereas partisan veto players' cooperation is not necessarily a requirement (Tsebelis, 1995). A policy that is supported by all government parties also needs a majority in the parliament and can therefore be rejected in parliament, making partisan veto players' consensus insufficient for bringing change in a policy status quo. It is possible for coalition parties of a ruling government to lack discipline and therefore fail to be restrained by their own members from opposing a government policy decision. This could also occur in the case of a minority governments, where government require the vote of approval from the opposition to achieve a minimum parliamentary

majority required to pass a bill (Tsebelis, 1995). Furthermore, Tsebelis argues that approval of all partisan veto player is unnecessary especially in oversized coalitions for forming a parliamentary majority because the coalition may contain parties whose preferences can be avoided or can make them compete against each other (Tsebelis 1995, p.303). In large majority, at least one cabinet party is unnecessary for forming a parliamentary majority and as a result not all coalition partners should be considered as veto players. In fact, support of all coalitions is only required for policy reforms in a winning minimal size coalition.

In another instance, Tsebelis (1995; 1999; 2002) argues that even though there are situations where partisan veto players' consent is not required or adequate for policy decision, there are scenarios in which all coalition parties regardless of regime type can be considered veto players. This is because, especially in huge coalitions, all government members will act as veto players and disregarding any political allies, while statistically conceivable, might incur negative political consequences (Tsebelis 1995; 1999; 2002). Making policy amendments against the wishes of the coalition could result in major dispute between partners and as a result, the coalition partners might decide to withdraw from its alliance. Although, the withdrawal of alliance of a minor partner would not always result in the change of government as the other coalition parties can still have a majority in the parliament, however, it can still be politically risky especially if other parties with similar ideology also decide to do the same.

Similarly for minority government, Tsebelis (1999) contends that all coalition parties are adequate enough to decide on policy reforms as they are believed to possess certain crucial positional and institutional advantages that facilitates them to enforce their preferences on the parliament (Tsebelis, 2002). These governments in a political spectrum are typically centrist (Laver & Schofield 1998), allowing them to move back and forth toward either of its potential partners and have their bills ratified in parliament.

Some scholars have argued that these ideas are questionable (Strøm 2000; Ganghof & Bräuninger 2006; Curini & Zucchini 2011). According to Strøm (2000), some coalition parties withdrawing alliance can legitimately threaten government position if they are a significant alliance. However, they would only risk doing so if they are a key alliance and have better external alternatives. Furthermore, he questions how far these superfluous parties in big cabinets are entitled to this right. These coalitions, particularly those with more extreme ideological positions and are smaller in size, have few external alternatives and hence have few incentives to withdraw alliance and resign from their position which could end up having to lose their influence over policy decisions. A party's threat to withdraw alliance is less credible in situations like this. Furthermore, while the existing parties still retain a majority, a formal withdrawal has little effect on the government's survival. In case of minority governments, however, Ganghof (2010) notes that a government can be extremely exclusive regarding the executive level. However, it must create a minimum winning majority in the parliament in order to override the policy status quo. As a result, it's not completely clear which parties in parliament have veto power. Even if the government's policy proposal is obviously more beneficial than the policy status quo parties at the opposition would prefer not to support the proposal (Ganghof & Bräuninger 2006). According to Müller & Strøm (1999), Tsebelis (2002) argument is solely based on the belief that political actors are mainly interested in policy, while parties are also interested in votes and authority. Even though the minority government's policy proposal is beneficial compared to the current policy status quo, opposition parties may not be willing to support it. Similarly, when the government's ideal policy position is closer to the opposition's preferences, opposition parties may choose not to support the government as claiming credit for the opposition's idea would be awkward (Huber, 1999). Situations where the government policy ideas are better compared to the status quo but still differ from oppositions ideal point, the latter could end up incurring electoral costs as a result of supporting

the government's position while undermining their own preferences (Ganghof & Bräuninger 2006).

A further explanation could be the opposition parties' external alternatives. While minority governments are usually centrist in the political spectrum and can alternate for support between political parties on both the left and right, they are in a disadvantageous position compared to the governments with a majority because their survival is highly dependent on the opposition's agreement (Saalfeld 2008). In a situation where there are better external opportunities of electing a new government compared to being a part of a centrist government who pits left-wing parties against the other right-wing parties, the opposition can utilize this opportunity for their own benefit and push their preferences on the government. In such cases, the minority governments are concerned that conflicts might lead to re-elections and change of government that would leave the minority government in opposition. Therefore, they are often bound to consider the interests and preferences of their opposition as a means to ensure the survival of the government. This means that if a minority government is in power, all opposition political parties may have veto power. Consequently, Curini and Zucchini (2011) revised the original veto player theory for minority governments to include opposition parties as veto players which has significantly enhanced the model's effectiveness. Therefore, the present research will also take into account of coalition parties as well as opposition parties as veto players in line with the revised veto player theory. The present research thus aims to identify the ideological distance of the Indian veto players to explain the Indian decision to both start and halt the India-EU FTA under a minority UPA government.

3.1.1 The veto player theory: An overview

Economic variables such as globalization and market circumstances have been studied by political economists as predictors of government reforms (Drazen and Easterly, 2001). Policy

decisions, on the other hand, is also argued to be driven by the preferences of the relevant political actors. These actors attempt to execute their policy preferences and when they are confronted with a policy status quo that contradicts their interest, they are more likely to push for a policy change (Hibbs 1977). These political actors, according to the veto player theory, are the individual or collective veto players whose approval is required for a new policy to be implemented (Tsebelis, 1999). The primary premise of this approach is that in order to implement a policy reform, all actors with veto power must agree to it. As every veto player might have different policy preferences, reaching a consensus on policy reforms might prove to be more challenging as the number of veto players grows and so does their ideological difference (Tsebelis 1995; 1999; 2002). Moreover, the veto players theory predicts that when there are policy proposals closer to the ideal position of the government compared to the status quo, the more likely is the possibility of policy change (Tsebelis, 1995).

All types of regimes consist of veto players. Domestic politics is rarely dominated by a unitary actor with no veto players, even if it is a non-democratic regime. The leader's ability to maintain power and implement policies is typically dependent on the support of the professional military or a political party. These organizations have veto power which they can exercise over the executive recommendations and may play a role in determining the country's policy agenda. Such inter-group conflict in an authoritarian regime is a driving force for democratic reform. Even in a non-democratic regime, autocrats are frequently unable to make policy decisions unilaterally as domestic actors with different interests and preferences who have veto power compete for policy influence, and leaders rely on them to make policy decisions (Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse, 2005).

Similarly, democratic regime also consists of veto players, however, the number of such actors varies greatly according to the regime's political system. The legislative and the executive compete for control over decision-making in most democratic states, however, two or more

political parties or coalitions may contend at times and not only that, this distribution of control among the relevant actors is determined by their domestic political systems (Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse, 2005). Constitutions, for instance, frequently delegate specific powers to the executive and some to the legislature. These actors may share control of the policymaking process or have separate authorities, for instance in the United States where the president and Congress both have the competence to propose legislation. Accordingly, the president can veto bills enacted by Congress, both institutions share ratification power (Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse, 2005). In a Parliamentary democracy like India, legislatives do not initiate policy proposals but only the executive actors do, and the executives cannot veto a proposal after it has been amended and ratified by the parliament. In each of these circumstances, decision-making authority is shared. While in the first instance, both actors share authority over the whole decision-making process, in the second, the actors regulate separate areas of the same process.

The executive branch within most nations determines its foreign policy approach and therefore, has the authority to initiate policies involving economic flows across borders. The executive government, on the other hand, requires the direct or indirect approval of other domestic actors in order to both negotiate and implement international trade agreements. A consent from the parliamentary branch is often required for trade-related decisions. This also commonly necessitates the assistance of other actors such as the different business associations and organizations. International trade policy decisions, like internal policy decisions, are influenced by domestic veto players where they must ratify the executive's policy decisions. Domestic actors including certain pressure groups have an impact on trade policy, and they are the focus of the present research. Due to trade agreements having a distributional impact, it is anticipated that some groups prefer to offer their support for greater trade liberalization while others will support protectionist ideals (Rogowski, 2002, 2017; Milner, 1987; Hiscox, 2002). As states

differ in terms of economic abilities and availability of resources, the structure and authority of these coalitions varies from one country to the other and one policy to another.

The veto player theory of Tsebelis (1999, 2002) proposes that the actors try to influence the status quo while taking into consideration the political-institutional framework that limits their ability to do so. In his theory, Tsebelis highlights the importance of political actors' choices with the institutional restrictions they confront, providing an explanation for policy stability across different types of political regime. Policy stability he argues, is high in a political system with a large number of veto players or broader ideological difference amongst them (Tsebelis, 1999). As it becomes more difficult to make policy reforms with changing situation, high policy stability can sometimes prove to be a cause for government instability. Additionally, policy stability can encourage executive and judicial autonomy by preventing the likelihood of new legislation being implemented that has the potential to override their actions. Policy stability, as per veto player theory, is determined by the number of veto players and their differences in preferences. These veto players are characterized as institutional or partisan veto players by the veto player theory. As mentioned in the previous chapter, veto players are individuals or a group of actors who are provided with legal power by the constitutional law of a country. This constitutional law indicates that these actors' approval is mandatory to pass a law, making them institutional veto players (e.g., the Parliament). Similarly, any other veto player who has no legal power but attains power purely due to the political situations are partisan veto players (e.g., big businesses and media house). These political situations often involve circumstances where government is heavily dependent on partisan actors for political support, to maintain party activities and to remain in power, giving them the political power to influence government policies.

In the context of the present research, the executive actors i.e., the negotiating agents have the legal power to formulate an international treaty such as the India-EU FTA, however, it is the

legislative according to the Article 253 of the Indian constitution who holds exclusive power to legislate and amend laws for giving effect to any treaty, convention, or agreement with any international partners (Department of Legal Affairs, 2001). Therefore, there are two institutional veto players in India responsible for international treaties and agreement, i.e., the executive and the legislative, and the approval from all the members of these two branches of the government are mandatory to pass a law in the country. Despite acting as a negotiating agent for stakeholders and the Parliament in the India-EU trade negotiations, the executive government can still be considered an institutional veto player. This is because, as the responsible body for formulating a trade agreement, the executive negotiators have the authority to determine which inputs from stakeholders are to be ultimately considered in the policy proposal. They have the power to reject any policy inputs that they believe do not align with the interests of the stakeholders they represent. Therefore, even though the executive government is acting as a representative for the stakeholders, their position in the negotiations still holds significant veto power over the outcome of the trade agreement and can be considered as an institutional veto player.

In this context of trade negotiation, the Parliament assumes the role of a principal, appointing the executive government as their agent to negotiate and formulate policies on their behalf. This arrangement makes the government answerable to Parliament and mandates that they regularly report their decisions to Parliament throughout the negotiation process. Such oversight allows Parliament to monitor the actions of the government and ensure that it is acting in the best interests of the stakeholders they represent. The Parliament's legislative powers enable it to make the final decision to accept, reject or suggest amendments to the proposed trade agreement. This makes the Parliament an important institutional veto player and the ultimate decision-makers that the negotiators must navigate during the negotiation process of the India-EU trade agreement. Therefore, the Parliament plays a crucial role in shaping the

outcome of the trade agreement, acting as both the principal and an institutional veto player.

In the context of the present study, it is crucial to mention that both the opposition and the allies of the ruling government in the Parliament will be considered as important institutional veto players. This is because the Parliament exercises its legislative power collectively through voting. For example, to pass a bill in the Indian Parliament, a majority of the members in each Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha must vote in favor of the bill in concern. Similarly for an FTA, the ruling government is required to gain a significant number of votes from both members of the opposition and its own allies in both the houses of the Parliament in order to get an agreement ratified. This is especially true when they do not have a simple majority in Parliament. Therefore, in the context of India-EU FTA it can be said that during the ratification phases of the trade agreement, the ruling party required approximately 163 votes of support in the Rajya Sabha and 362 in the Lok Sabha, as it did not have a simple majority in the parliament during its two terms of governance. This means that, if necessary, both the coalition and the opposition members of Parliament could act as veto players during the decision-making process. Therefore, the present study would consider both the members of the opposition and the allies in Parliament as important institutional veto players that the negotiators as agents had to face during the negotiation talks.

Furthermore, in addition to institutional veto players, it is also crucial to consider partisan veto players in trade policy decision-making. The present research follows the veto player theoretical models that suggest interest groups or stakeholders play a significant role in shaping trade policies. Stakeholders often represent specific constituency or industries who have vested interest in the trade agreement being negotiated. As trade policies create distributional winners or losers, the stakeholders with vested interest in the trade agreement tend to form groups also known as interest groups to influence the negotiators and the decision-makers' decision based on their policy preferences. Some of these groups may have a significant number of resources

and expertise to dedicate to the negotiating process.

At the International level, the negotiators are often appointed to represent larger organizations or governments. Due to the sheer number of stakeholders affected by the negotiation, it is not always feasible for the negotiators to be in direct contact with each one of them. Therefore, negotiators might depend on these interest groups to provide them with vital information and support. In many cases, these interest groups may have a direct line of communication with the negotiators and may use this access to pressurize the negotiators to act in their favor. They utilize their assets to offer negotiators valuable resources such as intellectual expertise, financial support, and influence in politics. As a result, interest groups can exert a significant amount of pressure on negotiators to secure favorable outcomes in the negotiation for the constituents or industries they are representing.

The negotiators, in turn, may be concerned about maintaining their governmental position and reputation within the country, thus need to respect these groups' preferences to secure their cooperation and support. Therefore, before entering into international negotiations, the negotiators typically consult with the interest groups to discuss whether to proceed with the agreement and the proposed terms. Other veto players may try to influence policy decisions through different means. For instance, business houses with similar preferences may come together and pressure the government through larger business organizations and associations. Similarly, media and political parties can also play an effective role in shaping policy decisions. (Rogowski, 2002; Judkins, 2004; Naveh, 2002). In summary, understanding the various veto players involved in trade policy decision-making is essential in assessing the potential outcomes of any trade agreement. By considering the preferences and actions of different actors and decision-makers the negotiators can develop more effective strategies that balance the interests of all stakeholders.

In a political structure, the engagement of a veto player varies according to the policy domain

being discussed. For example, National Security Council of India can be a crucial veto player in India's National Security, Defense and Foreign Policy matters, however, they would lack veto power in India's education policy. For the purpose of this study, the current research would focus on certain relevant veto players who are more likely to be actively involved in making trade related decisions such as: the executive members involved in initiating the FTA proposal at the authorization stage; the coalition and opposition members of the two houses of the Parliament and certain influential businesses and services organizations and associations. Please see the following Table 1 for the full list of actors as negotiators and veto players in India-EU FTA.

Table 5: A full list of negotiators and veto player in the India-EU negotiation.

Executive Institutional Veto Players as Negotiating Agents	Legislative Institutional Veto Player and Political Veto players as the principal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prime Minister of India • Foreign Secretary • Joint Secretary Europe West • Joint Secretary of Commerce and Industry • Secretary of Commerce and Industry • Director General of Trade • Additional Secretary of Commerce and Industry • Minister of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare • Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers • Minister of Commerce and Industry • Minister of External Affairs • Minister of Finance • Chairman of Empowered Committee of the Ministry of Finance • Minister of Heavy Industries • Secretary East MEA • Secretary Textiles • Secretary West MEA • Ambassador to the EU • Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs • National Secretary Adviser of the Trade and Economic Relations Committee • Minister of State Science and Technology • Deputy Chairman of Science and Technology • Deputy Chairman of Trade and Economic Planning Commission. • Chairman of Economic Advisor Council. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPs in Lok Sabha • MPs in Rajya Sabha • Chief Minister of State as the Head of State Legislative Assembly • Governor of Union Territory • President of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry • Secretary of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry • President of The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry • Director General of Indian Industry • Chairman of Confederation of Indian Textile Industry • Deputy Chairman of Confederation of Indian Textile Industry • Vice Chairman of Confederation of Indian Textile Industry • Union Secretary of Confederation of Indian Textile Industry • Senior Director of Society for Indian Automobile Manufacturers • Director General of Society for Indian Automobile Manufacturers • Deputy Global General Counsel of Cipla limited. • Secretary General of India Alliance • Director of All-India Brewer's Association • Secretary General Confederation of All India Traders

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary General of International Spirits & Wine Association of India. • Chairman of TATA consultancy services • Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies • International Marketing Corporation • Indian Dairy Industry led by Amul. • Wipro IT corporation • Chief Executive of Tech Mahindra • Indian Lawyers Association • Indian National Bar Association
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The present research is focused on the domestic ratification games between these veto players and the role they play in foreign policy decision-making particularly in the context of India-EU trade agreement. The conceptual model of Tsebelis is particularly relevant to this research as it provides a framework for understanding how domestic actors in India influenced the outcome of India-EU negotiation talks at different stages of the negotiating process i.e., the start and the halt of the.

As previously discussed, the veto players are those actors who have the power to prevent a proposed agreement from being adopted by withholding their approval. According to the veto player theory all veto players must always ratify policy changes, including entering an FTA (Tsebelis, 1995; 1999; 2002). The national constitution of a democratic regime often requires the executive leaders to obtain legislative approval for international treaties (Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse, 2005). As a result, the executive must negotiate a policy position with the foreign country that would gain a majority of the legislature during the ratification. Likewise in India, the agreement being negotiated by the executive, therefore, must gain a parliamentary majority of minimum two-thirds of its members from both the houses. The law that requires legislative approval on the negotiator's proposal affects the way the negotiators negotiate. Bringing an agreement that would not be ratified domestically will certainly incur political costs for the executives, both at domestic level and internationally. Similarly, in the case of the India-EU trade agreements, the finalization of the agreement requires the approval of the veto players who share the authority to regulate namely the Parliament. The Parliament as a veto

player also establishes a standing committee to prepare a report that take into account the input of other veto players, or the stakeholders, to ensure that the proposed agreement is in line with their interest. In the event of any issues the veto players have the power to request amendments to the proposed agreement or policies which then are reconsidered by the executive actors before a new proposal is put forward. However, it is fully up to the veto player to make the final decision about the amended proposal. This process acts as a check-and-balance mechanism to ensure that the final trade agreement is reflective of the concerns of all stakeholders involved. Due to these ratification requirements, veto players have a significant impact on foreign policy decision-making such as trade agreements. Therefore, understanding the role of veto players in domestic ratification games is crucial to understanding how foreign policy decisions are made, particularly in the context of India-EU trade agreements. The conceptual model of veto player by George Tsebelis provides a useful framework for analyzing the power dynamics at play in these decision-making situations that determines the outcome of negotiation talks at different stages of the negotiation process. Therefore, in the following section of the thesis the conceptual model of veto player theory will be introduced and its relevance to the study will be explained. More specifically, this model will be utilized as a basis for developing the hypothesis that will guide the research.

3.1.2 Conceptual model based on veto player theory.

Conceptual models are formulated on the idea that the position of political actors and policies in a policy space can be depicted in an ideological space. To this end, many policy analysts and researchers frequently refer to the political ideology of an actor as left-wing, centrist, or right-wing, implying that their political ideology can provide insight to their likely policy choices. This representation is grounded in the idea that political actors tend to accept or reject policy proposals according to how closely it aligns to their ideal policy choices, which is often referred to as their “ideal point”. By mapping political positions and policies in this way, conceptual

models can provide insight into the ways in which political actors make decisions and how policies are formulated, negotiated, and implemented in different political contexts.

The following Figure 2 would offer a model of a two-dimensional ideological space involving two veto players whose ideal policy positions are shown as point X and Y respectively. In the first instance, consider player X is the single veto player and has three policy proposals (i.e., a, b, and c) that it is considering making policy choice regarding certain policy reforms she wants to implement in the country. The position of these proposals in the political space compared to player X's own ideal policy position depicts X's judgement of the policies. The farther away the policy proposal is from X's policy position, the less will be the worth player X attaches to it. Therefore, in the policy space depicted player X would prefer b to a, c to b and c to a because of their distance from X's preferred policy position. In order to understand why it is useful to have an indifference curve (the circled area surrounding player X). An indifference curve represents a set of choices which produces the same levels of utility as an already existing policy (the status quo). The indifference curve is drawn surrounding the player X's ideal point i.e., her most preferred policy position and the status quo (sq). All the policy proposal inside the circle is preferred by X over all the points outside of the circle and on the circle, and she is indifferent towards any positions precisely in the indifference curve as they are equally far from the ideal policy position. In the figure, therefore, player X is indifferent to policy proposal b. Policy points that are within the circle and closer to X's ideal policy position such as c would be preferred by X over point b whereas point a located outside the indifference curve is considered to be having the broadest distance from X's policy point and consequently any policy point on or inside the circle would be preferred over point a. It is crucial to note that X's preference of one policy over the other is mainly based on their distance with X's ideal policy position and not their direction. In many cases there is an already existing policy which defines the status quo.

A veto player would always ratify or approve of a policy proposal that is better than the already existing policy i.e., only if the policy is located somewhere inside the indifference curve. In the figure, therefore, player X would be indifferent to both the policy status quo and the policy point b. Policy stability in a veto player theory is generally measured by the size of the winset i.e., the set of points that would beat the status quo. This is defined by the position of the actors and the status quo (the dark shaded area in Diagram 1.). The smaller the winset, the higher is the possibility of policy stability. The primary example in the model involved only a single veto player, therefore, the area inside the indifference curve of player X is her winset and any policy proposal inside the area could beat the status quo. Now if one or more veto players are added to the scenario the policy proposal needs the approval of all the veto players in order to bring changes to the status quo. Consider Y as the additional veto players. Therefore, a policy proposal that can replace the status quo requires to be inside the winset that is created by the intersection of all three veto players' indifference curve, usually defined by the position of the actors and the status quo. If a policy proposal that is outside the winset in relation to the status quo it is bound to be rejected by at least one of the veto players. It is important to note at this point that the as number of veto players increases, the smaller the area of winset gets as represented in the figure. Therefore, an increase in the number of veto players increases policy stability (Tsebelis, 2014).

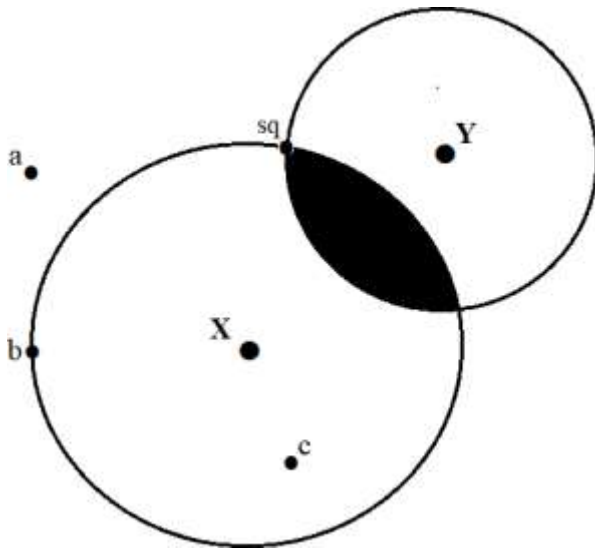


Diagram 1 – Inspired by Tsebelis (2014)

However, although an increase in the number of veto players is important, policy stability crucially depends on the actual ideological location of the veto players (Tsebelis 1999). For example, if in Diagram 2 veto player X's ideologically closer to player Y's, the policy preference of the player will be 'absorbed' (Tsebelis, 2002). Therefore, Tsebelis (2014) introduced another theoretical model (Diagram 2) that has the same status quo but two different sets of veto players: country A and country B. Country A has three veto players (A1, A2 and A3) and they are quite dispersed with broader ideological distance amongst them and country B with five veto players (B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5) who are located more closer to each other because of the ideological cohesiveness between them. As one can see, the winset in the first scenario i.e., country A is much smaller (which represents higher chances of policy stability) compared to country B even though it has a much larger number of veto players.

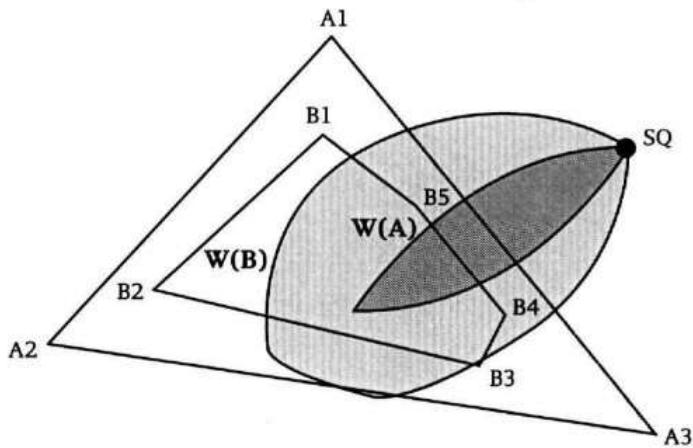


Diagram 2 – Adapted from Tsebelis (2014)

The predictions that the present research would draw from both the conceptual models of Tsebelis is firstly, a veto player would always approve a policy proposal that can bring change in the status quo only when the policy is closer to the players ideal policy position and secondly, ideological distance between veto players can cause difficulty to reach a policy agreement required before an international treaty to be concluded.

In the context of the present study, the signing of a Free Trade Agreement between India and the EU requires an understanding of the current policy status quo in India, which can be considered highly protectionist. The policy proposal on the table for the negotiators is a complete liberalization of trade. Given that different negotiators have varying preferences and priorities, the study assumes that some of the negotiators will favor trade liberalization, while others will prefer protectionism. As a result, for the policy proposal to be accepted and FTA negotiations to begin, the negotiators at the authorization stage must have an ideology or preferred policy position closer to the policy proposal than the present policy status quo. In other words, they must prefer liberalization over protectionism and be willing to seek policy reform to achieve their goals. Likewise, as the India-EU FTA the authorization stage involves certain political veto players such as the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), whose advice and inputs

were gathered by the negotiators while formulating the initial draft of the negotiation proposal. The present study assumes that the policy positions of these principals and the negotiators align with one another, resulting in no conflict of interest between the principal and agent. This alignment is critical as it leads to the formal start of the negotiation process. Through this assumption, the study seeks to explore the relationships between the principal and agent and how the alignment of their policy positions impacts the negotiation process. By analyzing the role of political veto players and the influence they have on the negotiation process, the study aims to provide insights into the factors that shape policy outcomes in the India-EU FTA negotiation process. Hence, a hypothesis can be developed as:

Hypothesis 1: During the authorization stage of the India-EU FTA negotiation process, the negotiators, and the organizations, including the CII and the FICCI, had an ideological position that was closer to the alternative policy proposal than the existing protectionist policy status quo. Specifically, the negotiators and the principal organizations favored trade liberalization, which surpassed the protectionist status quo, leading to the decision to initiate policy change and formally start the India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007.

Therefore, this hypothesis assumes that the negotiators as agent and the CII and FICCI as the principal shared a common interest in pursuing liberalization and that their policy positions were aligned with the proposed policy change. Understanding the ideological positions of the veto players is critical to comprehending the policy-making process and identifying the factors that influence policy outcomes. By testing this hypothesis, the study seeks to shed light on the political and ideological forces shaping the India-EU FTA negotiation process.

Further drawing upon the veto player theory, this research argues that during the negotiation phase, the veto players, which include coalition and opposition members of the two houses of the Parliament, as well as influential businesses and service organizations, had a broader ideological distance compared to the veto players in the authorization phase. As a result, this

widened ideological distance led to demands from the veto players to halt the negotiations.

Building upon the veto player theory, the research hypothesizes that:

H2: During the negotiation phase, the domestic veto players - including coalition and opposition members of the two houses of the Parliament, as well as influential businesses and service organizations - had a closer ideological distance to the policy status quo. This ideological difference came into conflict with the negotiators and other veto players, who favored liberalization of trade with international partners. The result was the halt of negotiation talks in 2013 due to the inability of the negotiators to bridge the ideological gap with the domestic veto players who preferred protectionism.

Utilizing the concept of ideological distance would help the study to understand whether the Indian negotiators during the India-EU negotiation opted for policy position closer to their ideal policy position rather than pursuing an agreement that was closer to ideal policy position of the principal, which in turn could have led to the conflict of interest between the principal and the agent eventually resulting in the halt of the negotiations process. If the policy position held by the negotiators was closer to their own ideology and significantly different from the ideological position of their principal, it would indicate that there was a significant difference in their policy preferences and goals between these two parties leading to a conflict of interest. For instance, the Indian stakeholders and Parliamentarians may have had a particular policy objective that they were interested to achieve during the negotiation process, for example safeguarding domestic industries from foreign competition. The negotiating agents on the other hand, might have had their own goals and preferences, such as obtaining favorable terms for Indian businesses by reducing or eliminating trade barriers and bringing in new opportunities of business. And if the results indicate that there are significant differences in their ideology it would explain why reaching the ratification stage of the negotiation became challenging for the agent and eventually resulted in a stalemate in 2013. The study would, therefore, attempt to

identify the ideological preferences of the different veto players during the first and the second stage of the negotiation to gauge whether ideological cohesiveness and distance between the veto players, exerted a significant impact on the decisions to start and halt the India-EU FTA. The ideological preferences would be identified through images i.e., the opinions, ideas, attitudes, beliefs that the veto players have towards the liberalization of trade and behavior in terms of policy choices with the EU. This brings to the next question as to why images are being incorporated here.

2.2 Images as a variable to study decision-making.

A famous work by Kenneth Boulding 'The Image' released nearly sixty- four years ago, argues that images of "other" and "self" are key independent variables that influence foreign policy decision-making. Since then, a great deal of research has been conducted on the impact of images on foreign policy decision-making (Holsti, 1962; Cottam, 1977; Herrmann, 1985; 2013; Cottam, 1986; George, 1980; Larson, 1985). These studies on images imply that decision-makers are influenced by their own perceptions of a situation or of the other partner. Such perception acts as a filter and alters situational information, influencing policy decisions.

Perception is a sensory process through which an individual or a group of individuals gain information about their surroundings. In an international arena, it can be characterized as the opinions, ideas or beliefs that the actors have of their own state and also of others. According to scholars like Jervis (1976; 2017) it is imperative to study the ideas and beliefs of the decision makers to thoroughly understand the reason behind the decisions taken by them. The fundamental argument of this theory is that our behavior is highly influenced by the way we perceive the situation to be, and not how it is in reality (Boulding, 1959, p.120). 'Images' are the outcome of such perceptions and are defined as the perceptual filters or the "coherent beliefs about the character, intentions, motives and emotions attributed to or associated with the out-group as a whole" (Alexander et al., 2005, p. 782).

In this regard, although the concept of perception includes both the perceptual process and the outcome, image refers simply to the outcome of the process. As a result, Image Theory mainly deals with the results of perceptive process. Fisher (1997) emphasizes the significance of images by stating: It is crucial to understand that individuals respond to an event or situation not on the basis of empirical facts, but instead according to their images of the facts, on what they think or feel might happen or possibly be at stake. As a result, international relations are shaped by the interaction of images.

Images help individuals to organize the environment as well as to understand and respond to it (Cottam, 1994, p. 10). For instance, the U.S.'s negative schema of Iraq as a threat to their own nation may lead the U.S. to an inclination for an attack of Iraq (Alexander et al., 2005). This relationship between the U.S. and the Middle East can be described as an 'enemy image' where one nation considers another target nation as evil and selfish, with its leaders capable yet untrustworthy (e.g., Alexander et al., 2005; Beck, 2002) and these images of the other in turn informs their policy decision (Elgstrom, 2000, p. 247; Chaban and Elgstrom, 2017, p. 481- 482). Therefore, the decisions of state actors reflect their perception of the situation and not the objective reality. As a theoretical framework, it is assumed that the images are a result of interaction between three dimensions of perceptions: goal compatibility, relative power or capability and relative cultural status (Mišík, 2013, p. 447) which results in the attribution of threat or opportunity towards the other actor.

Image theory was traditionally utilized for the study of hostilities between states. The earliest studies were conducted by Ole Holsti (1962) who analyzed the role of enemy images on hostile behavior between United States and the Soviet Union and all the publicly available statements by American diplomat John Foster Dulles between 1953-1959 were examined (p.246). The study found that the image Dulles had was a strong negative image of the Soviet Union which resulted in his hostile behavior towards the latter. He "resisted change, regardless of changes in

Soviet behavior. Dulles rejected new information inconsistent with his "inherent bad faith" image of Moscow by engaging various psychological processes, reflecting the cognitive consistency (and persuasive communications) literature: discrediting (the information), searching (for other consistent information), reinterpreting (the information), differentiating (between different aspects of the information), engaging in wishful thinking, and refusing to think about it" (Rosati, 2000, p.60). Similar research conducted by Silverstein (1989) in his work *The Psychology of U.S. Attitudes and Cognitions Regarding the Soviet Union*, studied the

relationship between the U.S. and Soviet Union and demonstrated how negative image can strongly affect policy preferences i.e., negative perception (or the perception of enemy) minimizes “the likelihood of actions that have been taken to better U.S.- Soviet relations as well as by distorting reactions to those actions that have been taken” (p.910). Therefore, conforming to the idea that the actions of one state towards another often arises from the images a state leader has of another. To illustrate this, Image theory has been utilized to explain U.S. behavior towards Latin America (Cottam, 1994) to show how enemy images and dependent images influence policy preferences. In this study, it has been contended that the U.S. positive perception of self and dependent perception of the Latin America produced a willingness to use policies of intervention. In addition to this it also argued that the enemy image of the USSR had an impact on the U.S. policy choices and tactics towards Latin America. The author found a correlation between enemy image and policy choices associated with use of force and containment. Likewise, a study conducted by White (1970) demonstrated how positive image of self and negative image of the other as an enemy resulted in the Vietnam war as well as the two World Wars.

Furthermore, scholars like Shimko (1991) have also investigated the relationship between Images and policy choices. To be more specific, the study focused on the connection between Images of the policy environment and how far these images influence the policy makers strategic arms reduction policy towards the USSR during the Reagan Administration. In this study the author analyzed the perception of the then American President Ronald Reagan and other influential American officials such as Richard Burt and George Shultz from the Department of State and Defense officials Richard Perle and Caspar Weinberger towards the USSR. This comprised of their perception about the capabilities of the USSR, their motives, and their attitudes towards the United States of America. The results illustrated individual differences in administration and how this affected the policy choices they advocated for. The

study also showed that the closer the individual's image of USSR to that of an enemy, it is more likely that the person will advocate for policy choices against the arms control, evidencing a correlation between their individual perception and policy choices.

A study by Herrmann et.al (1997) found that although people find war or use of force immoral, there are instances where they find war to be “just” depending upon what image they have of the other. For instance, if country A has a positive image (i.e., ally image) of country B, declaration of war against country B would be immoral or unjust. However, if country A has an enemy image of country B, then this would have different behavioral outcomes. Likewise, in another study Hermann and Fischerkeller (1995) provided links between positive image i.e., ally image with cooperation. When an actor perceives another as an ally it would see them as “altruistic, defensive in orientation, and willing to cooperate for mutual gain”. The perception of an ally image would encourage actors to cooperate and introduce policies that would benefit both the actors and strengthen their relationship, while expecting the other actor to do the same.

To bring the idea of images into an India-EU context, it can be said that only recently scholars have started to take more keen interest in studying perceptions of EU in India. Initial studies of perception and images of EU mainly focused on other countries such as China, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, Russia, USA, Middle Eastern Countries, and some ACP countries (for example Holland et al., 2007, Lucarelli and Fioramonti 2010, Lucarelli 2007; Park and Chung 2016; Chang and Pieke, 2018). However, the studies focusing on Indian perception of the EU are relatively scarce where most of the studies conducted on this topic are mainly focused on the perception of the European Union amongst the Indian elites which includes political elites, media elites, business elites and civil society elites (Jain 2019, Jain and Pandey, 2010, 2014, 2013, Mitra 2006). While some of the studies also focused on public perception of the European Union (Barcevičius et al, 2015; Jain and Pandey 2012, 2014; 2019), others investigated how the EU have been portrayed in the Print Media with some focusing exclusively on individual

EU member states (Kugail, 2019; Vaugier-Chatterjee 2002,2006, Pandey 2019; Babalova and Goddeeris, 2019). Although much of these studies focuses on Indian perceptions in general, by contrast, the present study aims to additionally explore a specific aspect of Indian perception, i.e., the India-EU FTA trade negotiations. It is also worth noting that the present study does not employ the “ally” image as an analytical concept from Image Theory, rather, it will only be using the term “images” as synonym for India’s veto players “positive” image of the India- EU trade liberalization. Thus, keeping in mind that the present research assumes the policy status quo of India during the early phases of the negotiation talks as highly protectionist, therefore, in order to prove first hypothesis, the executive players involved in the authorization stage requires to have a positive to strongly positive image towards liberalization of trade indicating an ideological preference which is opposite to the policy status quo as result of which they opted to make amendments to the existing policy status quo by initiating formal talks for an FTA in 2007.

Apart from the aforementioned “enemy” and “ally” images, there are also three other types of images introduced by Hermann and Fischerkeller (1995) namely the “imperialist” image, “degenerate” image and the “colony” image. When actors of one state (State A) perceives the other state (State B) to be colonial the behavioral outcome of State A is expected to be interventionist towards State B. The primary characteristics of a colony image is that State A would perceive that State B has “inferior capability and describe a divided polity where the progressive elements are threatened by the subversive elements”. State A would perceive their own strategic goals and objectives to be more advanced whereas that of State B to be inferior and hence would intervene to protect them. Alternatively, when actors of one state (State A) perceives the other state (State B) to be imperialist, the other is seen to have superior capabilities and is believed that State B is driven by the desire to dominate the State A. Hence, it is highly likely that State A would display resistance towards the influence of State B utilizing

different tactics such as terrorism. Finally, if a state (State A) is perceived to be degenerate by another state (State B), it is likely that it would be viewed as chaotic, anarchic and lacking the will to defend itself. This encourages State A to perceive an opportunity to dominate and exploit State B.

In the context of India-EU FTA negotiation talks, the concept of "images" can be used to understand the perceptions and attitudes of the involved actors alongside the decision-makers. The proposed idea suggests that different images or perceptions of each other influenced the decision outcomes related to the start and halt of the negotiation talks. This is based on the study by Herrmann et al. (1997), where the researchers found that people's perception of the other party involved in a conflict or negotiation can vary depending on the image they hold. For example, if India perceives the EU as an ally or having a positive image, it may lead to a perception of cooperation and mutual gain. This positive image could encourage India to cooperate and introduce policies that benefit both India and the EU. On the other hand, if India holds an enemy image of the EU, it may result in different behavioral outcomes. This could lead to a more defensive and potentially confrontational stance in the negotiations.

However, it is important to note that, in the same vein as hypothesis 1, the present study does not employ the "enemy", "degenerate", "colony" and "imperialist" images as an analytical concept but instead will utilize "images" as a term to likewise refer to Indian veto players' "negative" image of the India-EU free trade negotiations to prove the second hypothesis. Conclusively, it can be stated that since the present research assumes the policy status quo of India during the early phases of the negotiation talks to be highly protectionist, therefore, in order to prove second hypothesis, the additional veto players involved in the negotiation stage between 2007-2013 requires to have negative to strongly negative image towards liberalization of trade indicating an ideological preference which is opposite to the veto player in the authorization stage as result of which there were difficulty to make amendments to the existing

policy status quo which led to the halt of the India-EU FTA negotiations during the last term of PM Manmohan Singh.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Before moving on to discussing the empirical findings, it is important to provide a brief outline of the methodology being utilized for the present study i.e., a brief explanation of the methods being employed to answer the proposed research question. This chapter would also set out the reasons for choosing a mixed method approach for this study and a brief justification for why this specific case study was selected. Finally, this chapter will discuss the issues that were faced during the collection of the data and the steps taken to address them.

The decisions to utilize a particular methodology for answering the research question arises from hypotheses drawn and the research objectives identified. Therefore, it is imperative to restate them clearly before moving forward with the methodology.

The fundamental goal of this research is to analyze whether veto player in Indian domestic political system acted as a potential reason behind the executive governments' decision to the start and halt the India-EU Free Trade Agreement. Therefore, in sum, the overarching research question can thus be formed as follows:

To what extent the India's decision to start and halt the India-EU FTA talks are predominantly influenced by the perception of a diverse range of domestic actors with veto power?

Consequently, the specific hypotheses and objectives that the present research seeks to fulfil are:

Table 6 – Research Hypotheses and Objectives (source: author’s own).

Research Hypotheses	Research Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H1: During the authorization stage of the India-EU FTA negotiation process, the negotiators, and the organizations, including the CII and the FICCI, had an ideological position that was closer to the alternative policy proposal than the existing protectionist policy status quo. Specifically, the negotiators and the principal organizations favored trade liberalization, which surpassed the protectionist status quo, leading to the decision to initiate policy change and formally start the India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To explore the underlying ideological factors that caused India to participate in an India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H2: during the negotiation phase, the domestic veto players - including coalition and opposition members of the two houses of the Parliament, as well as influential businesses and service organizations - had a closer ideological distance to the policy status quo. This ideological difference came into conflict with the negotiators and other veto players, who favored liberalization of trade with international partners. The result was the halt of negotiation talks in 2013 due to the inability of the negotiators to bridge the ideological gap with the domestic veto players who preferred protectionism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To identify the ideological differences that affect the decision-making process of India and thereby halting progress in the India-EU FTA negotiation.

Now that the research question, hypotheses and objectives have been restated, it is important to mention the sources utilized to answer them. Therefore, the next section of this chapter would discuss these sources utilized for the present study in terms of its inclusion criteria, access method and timeframe of the analysis.

4.1 Data collection

In order to collect valid and reliable data for the present study, a method of ‘triangulation’ will be employed. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple data sources and analytical techniques to develop a better understanding of a certain topic (Patton, 1999) and is considered to be an effective qualitative research strategy to enhance validity through converging information that are collected from multiple sources. In other words, triangulation is “supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, do not contradict it” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 66). Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) established four types of triangulations that qualitative research can utilize to increase the validity of the research: 1) methods triangulation, 2) triangulation of data sources, 3) analyst triangulation and 4) theory/perspective triangulation.

As the goal of the present study is to accurately examine India’s perception of EU and of the India-EU FTA negotiations, the current study will employ a data source triangulation by drawing information from three potential sources:

1. The documents of the executive branches of the Government of India.

For identifying the perceptions of executive actors, the present study will be including documents from the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Commerce and Industry as they are the two traditional apex Foreign Policy actors that deal with India’s external affairs with the EU. In the case of access, a preliminary online search of the relevant documents in several Ministry websites has revealed that the best source for such documents with regards to EU can be gathered mainly through the official website of:

- a. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India accessed from: [Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India \(mea.gov.in\)](http://mea.gov.in)

b. Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Industry accessed from: [Home - Mcommerce](#)

Included in the present study will be the following documents collected from these websites:

- Transcripts of Press Interviews
- Transcripts of Media Briefings
- Transcripts of Speeches and Statements
- Annual Reports
- India's foreign relations Documents
- Bilateral/Multilateral Documents
- In focus articles

2. Legislative records of the Government of India

In addition to executive documents, legislative records from both the Houses of the Parliament, i.e., the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, will also be included. Apart from additional information on executive actors' perceptions, this data source will mainly help gaining an understanding of perceptions of the other veto players from within the legislative section of the country. This includes the members of the Parliament from the ruling coalition that formed the government at the union level and the Parliament members from the opposition coalitions. Additionally, these records also contain certain documents submitted by important stakeholders to the Parliamentary Standing committee discussing FTA with the EU. Therefore, the records to some extent would also help to capture the perception of the stakeholders who are considered important for this study mainly influential business organizations from various goods and service sectors of the country.

Similar to the executive documents a preliminary online search was conducted to determine which sources are best to collect official legislative data and it was identified for the present research, the following are the best sources:

- a. Parliament of India, Rajya Sabha, Council of States accessed from: [Rajya Sabha](#)
- b. Parliament of India, Lok Sabha, House of the People accessed from: [Parliament of India, Lok Sabha](#)
- c. Parliament of India, Lok Sabha, Digital Library accessed from: [Parliament Digital Library: Text of Lok Sabha Debates \(eparlib.nic.in\)](#)

The documents collected from these websites consists of the following:

- Parliament Question & Answer documents
- Debate documents
- Parliamentary Standing Committee Reports
- Papers Laid on the Table of the House

3. Media Records

The third source of data being collected for the empirical analysis are through media sources more specifically, online media in form of newspaper articles. The reason for this is firstly because the present study is longitudinal research, and newspapers are well-known source of data for providing complete coverage for a longitudinal study (Copeland and Copsey, 2017).

Not only that, due to its complete coverage, newspapers are a source that contains in-depth information of the past and present events occurring around the world that the scholarly sources may not cover. Media is a well-known platform for people to voice their opinion therefore acting as an excellent source for studying opinions, viewpoints, reactions, and

attitudes towards a particular event. Consequently, it plays an important role in conveying the statements of belief of politicians, policymakers and stakeholders on EU FTA, its potential consequences and what they think should be the right course of action. And therefore, it is an indispensable tool for conducting research on perceptions and images, particularly with regards to the online readership which has exceeded that of the Indian print media since 2013 (Ling and Goddeeris, 2015). As a result, the perception of EU FTA in India will be assessed for the present study through four widely circulated Indian news dailies: The Hindu, The Economic Times, The Telegraph, Indian Express.

This newspaper has been chosen for its far-reaching circulation and appeal, possessing subscribers ranging from people of all ages. The Hindu is the second most widely read English Newspaper after The Times of India (IRS, 2019) and is selected for the present study as it is often considered a significant traditional newspaper. The Economic Times is the leading business newspaper in India, publishing content that focuses on economic and financial trends both at the domestic and international level. The Economic Times ranks third overall amongst the English newspapers in India (IRS, 2019) and will provide tremendous insights into India's perceptions of EU as well as news pertaining to the India-EU FTA negotiations. The Indian Express is an immensely popular English newspaper in India, having managed to rank fifth according to the Indian Readership Survey (IRS, 2019) and is chosen for the present study as it possesses 18 editions throughout India. The Telegraph is ranked eighth according to the Indian Readership Survey (IRS, 2019) and is selected due to its wide-ranging editions in East India, spanning across Kolkata, North Bengal, South Bengal, Jharkhand and Northeast India, though the Patna and Bhubaneswar editions have discontinued since December 2018.

Newspaper Articles collected from their respective official websites are as follows:

- The Economic Times: [Business News Today: Read Latest Business news, India Business News Live, Share Market & Economy News | The Economic Times \(indiatimes.com\)](#)
- The Hindu: [The Hindu : Breaking News, India News, Sports News and Live Updates](#)
- The Indian Express: [Latest News, India News, UP Assembly Election News, Breaking News, Elections 2022 Live News, Today's News Headlines Online|The Indian Express](#)
- The Telegraph: [Telegraph India | Latest News, Top Stories, Opinion, News Analysis and Comments](#)

With regards to search terms, to ensure all published articles from the aforementioned sources related to the study are retrieved, various keywords were entered to search within their respective websites such as “Europe”, “European Union”, “EU”, “India-EU FTA”, “EU-India FTA” “India-EU Free Trade agreement” “Free Trade Agreement with the European Union” and “Free Trade Agreement”. Likewise, the equivalent search entries in Hindi as certain government documents and debates are in Hindi language.

The present thesis aims to study in-depth the perception of the Indian domestic actors with veto power that spans across a stretch of time, the time frame in which the sources were assessed vary according to the particular hypothesis being tested. More specifically, the time frame for hypothesis 1 will examine EU and India-EU FTA-related news articles that were published during the first term of Manmohan Singh from 2006 to 2009. By doing so, the thesis aims to capture the perception of the domestic actors around the time from when Indian actors were considering the option to start a formal FTA talk with the EU. This was also the period where both India and the EU set up Joint Groups to examine the potential of an FTA between both the partners. Therefore, discussions and sharing of ideas between domestic actors regarding the potential costs and benefits of liberalization of trade particularly through an FTA were more

profound from during this period. Accordingly, 2006 is the most appropriate starting point of the present study.

For hypothesis 2, the time frame will begin from the first term of Manmohan Singh to his last term as Prime Minister ranging from 2009 to 2014. This time span is chosen because it represents a major turning point where the India-EU relations began to deteriorate (Petersen, 2019), it started with loss of momentum from around 2009 and turning into absolute deadlock from 2013 and then gaining back its momentum from after the new NDA government took office in May 2014 and started re-engaging with the EU since 2015/2016. While international situation such as the Italian marine case, the global economic slowdown and economic issues within the EU were partly responsible for the stalling, there is no doubt that internal conflicts between Indian domestic actors under UPA rule also played a significant part in this. Several attempts have been made within this time frame to achieve a breakthrough however, domestic issues from the Indian side kept on pushing the efforts into a hiatus which continued up until they lost the 2014 elections to National Democratic Alliance (NDA). Therefore, any discussions and debates within this timeframe of 2009- 2014 between the domestic actors are crucial to understand why the talks started stalling in the first place and continued for so long without any breakthrough even when the UPA government attempted several times to conclude the talks especially before 2014 elections.

In order to test the hypotheses and answer the research question, the present study will employ a mixed methods approach. The next section of this chapter will discuss the rationale for a mixed method approach in this study.

4.2 Why mixed methods approach?

Research paradigm

Every study is rooted in a philosophical belief of the researcher i.e., how he perceives the nature of reality and what ways he chooses to understand and address the perceived reality. These beliefs are often shared, discussed and debated between scientists as to how a problem should be understood and solved (Kuhn, 1962). These are the paradigms taken by the researchers when considering the philosophical nature of science (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109; Grix, 2002, pp. 182-184):

- positivism,
- constructivism/interpretivism,
- pragmatism,
- subjectivism and
- critical theory.

It was Thomas Kuhn (1962) who first introduced the word paradigm to signify a philosophical way of viewing and addressing a research problem. According to scholars like Lather (1986); Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) and Morgan (2007) a research paradigm essentially demonstrates a researcher's mindset through which he/she perceives the world that further guides his/her behavior. It is a lens through which a researcher identifies the research problem, the methodological techniques to be utilized in the study and the process through which the collected data will be analyzed (McGregor and Murnane, 2010). Each paradigm has its own way of perceiving the following common elements (Teddlie et.al 2009, p.84; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108; Grix, 2002, p. 177 Cresswell et.al 2007, p.21):

- Ontology- refers to the study or knowledge of being and our understanding of the nature of reality.
- Epistemology- is argued to be what and how can one gain the knowledge of the reality.
- Axiology- the values that applies for gaining the knowledge.

- Methodology – the best methods to gain understanding of the problem and solve them.

The research paradigm for the present study can be identified through its ontological and epistemological positioning. They form the foundation for the research and informs the research methodology (Grix, 2004, p.59). (Teddlie et.al 2009, p.84; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108; Grix, 2002, p. 177; Cresswell et.al 2007, p.21; Richards, 2003, p.33). The following paragraph would provide a brief explanation of the epistemological and ontological position of the study followed by a section reporting the proposed research methodology.

The present study is positioned in the pragmatic framework. A pragmatic approach to research recognizes that reality is the result of human experience, indicating that there exists an objective reality, however, human knowledge of the reality is always based on the persons belief or habits that they constructed from the type of social experiences they had in their life (Creswell, and Clark, 2011; Yefimov,2004; Goles and Hirschheim, 2000; Morgan, 2014; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2008). As a research paradigm, pragmatic approach maintains that for a person reality is based on whatever works for him/her to achieve their desired purpose (Goles and Hirschheim, 2000). Therefore, the paradigm believes that the methodological or philosophical approach that a researcher should use to understand and solve their research problem depends upon what works best for the research problem that one wishes to investigate (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2008). In fact, under a pragmatist approach, the research question is elevated to paramount importance (Bryman, 2006) which necessitates the mixing of quantitative and qualitative methods as this is not only feasible, but desirable because, it allows a researcher to be more methodologically free in terms of how to investigate their research problem rather than making forced choices between purely quantitative or qualitative approach. In a pragmatist paradigm it discounts the importance of ontological and epistemological debates (Kaushik, and Walsh, 2019) since it places priority in answering research questions accurately by combining knowledge from novel methodological tools both quantitative and qualitative (Dewey,1980,

p.177). It is for this reason that the present study has chosen mixed research approach as a method of inquiry. In the context of the present study, a content analysis was employed.

4.3 Content analysis for executive and legislative

Due to the longitudinal nature of the present study, content analysis will be the main method of analysis in the present study for executive and legislative documents as it allows for an unobtrusive longitudinal form of investigation (Bryman, Teevan, & Bell, 2009). It is a research technique employed by researchers to systematically and objectively identify and measure patterns from the contents of a written or recorded communication (Stone, Dunphy, Smith & Ogilve, 1996; Berger, 1991). These contents can be certain words, phrases, subjects, or concepts. Often referred to as a “non-intrusive” research method, it is a technique that enables researchers to examine discourses and their meanings within a relatively short period of time (Neuman, 1997, p. 271-273) while allowing research to be conducted more frequently, when compared to survey research methods (Macnamara, 2005). For this reason, content analysis as a research method is employed extensively by scholars.

There are at least three different types of content analysis: conventional, directive, and summative (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). A summative content analysis will be ideal for the purposes of the present study as it identifies and quantifies relevant keywords or phrases within a given text with the aim to examine and understand its contextual usage (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). This is done by analyzing texts based on the number of frequencies that a specific keyword or phrase appears. The frequency of a word or phrase will be calculated as the total rate of occurrence (either by hand or through a computer), with the addition of a source or speaker indicated. This quantification of textual materials is known as ‘manifest content analysis’ (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein, 1999) and if the analysis stopped here, it becomes merely a set of quantitative data which only focuses on counting the ‘manifestations’ of a certain word or phrase (Kondracki and Wellman, 2002). However, a summative content

analysis does not only quantify textual content but also includes a second phase called a ‘latent content analysis’ (Hseih and Shannon, 2005) where it is concerned with the process of interpreting a given content (Holsti, 1969). This phase, therefore, involves qualitatively discovering and inferring the underlying meanings found within a given data or content (Babbie, 1992).

Thus, in the context of the present study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis will be utilized. The procedure will involve first initiating a thorough internet search for data in accordance with the data collection method from three different sources. All documents found will be closely inspected to ensure only relevant and accurate content are used for the present study. Once this is established, the ‘manifest content analysis’ phase will begin in earnest whereby the manual coding of the textual materials is conducted in line with the coding framework (refer to Table1 below). After the completion of this stage, basic descriptive statistics will then be generated to summarize and evaluate the general characteristics of the collected data. This will be conducted through Microsoft Excel, the software would enable the researcher to organize, analyze and gain better insight of the coded set of data. Consequently, the results will be calculated and presented in the form of a bar graph showing rate of perception of an actor or a group of actors categorized under the same category, all of which will be organized in accordance with its relevant time frame. Following this, the ‘latent content analysis’ phase will begin whereby the underlying meanings found within the quantitative data are interpreted and inferred in order to better understand the perceptual driving forces behind the start and halt of the India-EU FTA negotiations.

4.4 Frame Analysis on Media sources

Foreign policy decision-making is shaped by the way decision makers perceive the world around them. These perceptions can be understood as mental images or dynamic cognitive constructs that shape how a decision-maker views the character, intentions, and motives of other actors involved in international relations. These perceptions are neither static nor an objective representation, they evolve through ongoing struggles, discussions, and debates within public discourses. Media outlets, such as news organizations, social media platforms, and public broadcasting centers, often serve as an important center for these public discourses. They provide spaces for individuals to share their opinions, access information, exchange ideas and engage in debates and discussions on a wide array of topics.

Media professionals play an important role in how the information is being presented to the public through media outlets. They are responsible for the content that is being covered and the narratives that are being disseminated by the media. They actively participate in framing various issues in a way that has the potential to influence public opinion in favor of their agenda. Through their work, media exert significant influence on the narratives, perspectives, and discourses of individuals (Nesbitt-Larking, 2007). This influence stems from the widespread consumption of media content by the masses. Individuals actively choose to engage with various media platforms and consume their content. Consequently, they are exposed to various arguments, viewpoints, and interpretations of issues presented by journalists, experts, and public figures. This exposure influences one's perception of a situation and contributes to the development of an individual's opinions, attitudes, and beliefs on topics. Therefore, it is important to recognize the complex interactions between media personalities and the broader population (Potthoff,2012).

Political actors, policymakers, and other veto players, despite their influential position are not immune to the effects of media (Hafner Burton, et al., 2017). They are a part of this society, and they also actively participate in these media driven discourses and rely on them to gather

insights into public sentiment and shape their own understanding of current affairs. By engaging with media sources, decision-makers not only gauge public opinion but also identify emerging trends and adapt their strategies accordingly. In this dynamic process, media content serves as a valuable resource that informs the perspectives and actions of political actors, policymakers, and veto players in navigating through complex policy landscapes. Scholars have extensively explored this interaction between media and the political actors (Baum and Potter, 2008). In this context, considerable attention has been paid to the agenda-setting power of media discourses. This perspective highlights the influential role of media in shaping the thought process of a policy maker (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Furthermore, the concept known as the "CNN effect" explores the dynamics of how political elites react to media narratives, shedding light on the potential impact of these narratives on policy decisions (Robinson, 2011).

However, in this context it is also crucial to acknowledge that individuals including political actors can employ media outlets for their own benefits. Like how media can influence one's perception according to their preferred agenda, individuals especially influential public figures like Government elites, for instance, also participate in influencing media coverage to garner support for preferred agenda (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). They utilize various media platforms such as press conferences, interviews, and speeches to engage with their constituents, convey their perspectives, and shape public opinion in order to garner support for their agendas and policies. This multi-faceted relationship between the media, decision makers, and the wider public highlights the complexity of foreign policy making. While media discourses influence the perceptions of decision makers and shape public sentiment, political actors actively participate in these discourses to promote their own policy options. Therefore, for the present research, analyzing media sources offers a significant opportunity to gather a vast and diverse range of discourses on the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA). By analyzing such

discourses, the present study would be able to identify dominant narratives, as well as variations and nuances in perspectives and opinions of the veto players with regards to the liberalization of Indian trade with the EU through an FTA.

However, such discourses are complex and multi-layered, and to understand the underlying meaning of these discourses, a methodical identification of recurring key themes is imperative. This is mainly done by identifying patterns in the usage of particular words, phrases, and images. However, identifying relevant themes and patterns within a large set of data from the media sources can be challenging. This is because data collected from a media source e.g., newspaper articles, contain a wide variety of information which is not structured in a way that is directly relevant to a particular research project or the specific research question that a researcher may have. Therefore, making it difficult to extrapolate relevant information and insights from the data. To address this issue, the researcher decided to utilize framework analysis on the data collected from newspaper articles.

First introduced by sociologist Ervin Goffman in his book “Frame analysis” (1974), framework analysis is well known for its systematic organized method of identifying recurring themes in discourses (Carver, et.al., 2012). The analytical tool is used for a wide range of research purposes, including in the fields of healthcare, market research and in the social sciences especially in sociology and psychology (Schoonenboom, et.al., 2018). Studies using framework analysis have used it to demonstrate how people form their views of a society (Morse, 1991). The analytical tool has also been utilized by researchers to examine the language and imagery used during communication to identify the underlying perceptions and beliefs of an individual towards a given topic, by measuring the sum of the positive and negative usage of words towards the topic (Sheppental, 2021). This involves identifying recurring positive or negative patterns in a recorded conversation and developing a thematic framework that includes both positive and negative themes or codes. For instance, if the

conversation is about full liberalization of foreign trade, positive themes might include praise for the economic benefits of free trade such how free trade can lead to higher percentage of job creation or increase household earnings and improve standard of living, while negative themes might include complaints and criticisms against free trade such as job losses, trade imbalances, negative impact on small businesses, and increased income inequality. Once the thematic framework has been developed, researchers can use it to code the conversation and identify which themes are present. By organizing the data in this way, it is easier for researchers to identify which themes occur most frequently or most strongly associated with an individual or a situation. This can help the study to identify patterns of positive or negative communication within a recorded conversation.

Overall, utilizing such a tool provides the researcher with a structured method of analysis. It offers an organized way to interpret the collected data. Having a systematic method to organize and categorize collected data ensures all relevant themes and patterns within the discourses are correctly identified and utilized to gain an in-depth understanding of the perspective of an individual.

There are two ways to identify these themes and categories: Inductive frame analysis where the new frames are defined by identifying and categorizing related framing device; and Deductive frame analysis where scholars use already existing frame scheme to identify new frames in each data. While the Inductive frame analysis is utilized for qualitative research, for the purpose of this thesis, a deductive framing scheme would be utilized to quantify the occurrence of a frame in the data (Carver, et.al.,2012).

The present study would combine two the framing scheme used by Daichuk, et.al., (2021); Molotch, et.al., (1992) and Jakopović (2017) for understanding newspaper discourses which identified as follows:

- 1) Conflict frame: which focuses on the conflict between the stories of different actors,

both individual and group.

- 2) Human impact frame: it is a frame that describes impacts of an issue in human and individual.
- 3) Economic consequences: which conveys positive and negative economic impact of an incident or event to the society, individual and groups.
- 4) Attribution of responsibility frame: where the discourse frames a topic in a such a way that assigns responsibility to others for a problem to an individual, a group, or the government or as a solution.

Firstly, to identify and assess these media frames from online news articles a content analysis would be utilized thereafter, a human sentiment analysis would be used to assess the discourses (Jakopović 2017; 2016; Makaraem and Jae; 2016). The human sentiment analysis in the context of this study could be referred to as “analysis of a comment or post, aiming to determine the attitude of the speaker towards a brand or topic” (Jakopović 2017; p.213). With regards to this study, human sentimental analysis is ideal to capture an individual feeling of an event, often expressed in simple terms as positive, negative, or neutral (Jakopović 2017). The operationalization for media sources legislative and Executive sources would follow the same procedure that would be illustrated in the following section.

4.5 Operationalization

The articles that appeared on the website after the input of the keywords were immense with 1000plus entries for all three sources i.e., legislative: executive and sources. Therefore, the first sorting out was according to the year of publication. Any articles that were not published within the year being studied in the research was not considered. The second sorting of data was according to the appearance of the keyword as a title or a headline of an article. There were two types of articles that appeared as search results: ones that had EU in its title or headlines

and the ones that did not. The articles that did have mentions of EU in the title or headlines were firstly selected and carefully analyzed. This was done to ensure that the articles collected only contain discussions/opinions/beliefs/views relevant for the study i.e., related to the liberalization of trade with EU. The other articles that appear on the website as search results but did not have EU in its title or headlines were also searched carefully to ensure no EU related discussions were overlooked. Finally, 417 documents in total were finalized as the data to be used for the study. This was based on the fact that it projected some sort of views/opinions/beliefs on the liberalization of trade with the EU within the correct timeframe.

Furthermore, to identify their perception through the opinions/beliefs/views expressed by these actors and categories them to compare their ideological position, the present research further classified these opinions/beliefs/views into images- positive, neutral, and negative. These images (positive, neutral, or negative) would primarily be related to the India-EU FTA retrieved from the textual materials. Therefore, the independent variable for the present research is the “Images of India-EU FTA within the veto players of India”. To study the variable first, a coding framework was constructed. A coding framework is useful as it allows researchers to reduce a vast amount of qualitative data into analyzable units by deriving categories and concepts from the extracted data (Lockyer, 2004). Once the coding framework was constructed, a unit of analysis was identified. The unit that will be coded from the collected data would be individual words and phrases produced by an actor who appeared in the article.

Table 7 - The coding framework for Variable (source: author's own)

Variable	Coding	Descriptor	Examples
Image of the India-EU FTA within the different veto players of India	Positive	Expresses support and/or approval of the India-EU FTA and pursuing it will be a beneficial course of action. The India-EU FTA is perceived as desirable for the interests of India. Sources of positive images are only to be found in the perspectives of the domestic actors of India.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘would enhance the livelihood of farmers and consumers, • ‘need more not fewer FTAs’ • ‘concluding EU FTA is indispensable’ • ‘will provide Indian companies with larger and better businesses opportunities’ • ‘must consider FTA with the EU’

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘would help the country to get out of negative export’ • ‘tremendous opportunity for domestic industries’ • greater trade and investment flow will be the result of this agreement’
	Negative	<p>Expresses concern and/or disapproval of the India-EU FTA and pursuing it will be a detrimental course of action. The India-EU FTA is perceived as harmful to the interests of India. Sources of negative images are only to be found in the perspectives of the domestic actors of India.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘vehemently oppose’ • ‘strongly object’ • ‘immensely affect the small shopkeepers’ • ‘this would throw small traders and their families out of employment’ • ‘we must not open the floodgates of imports’

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘huge number of country’s population would face real income losses’.
	Neutral	<p>Neither expressed support and disapproval but merely reported or discussed the India-EU FTA.</p> <p>The India-EU FTA is neither perceived both as desirable and harmful to the interests of India.</p> <p>Sources of neutral images are only to be found in the perspectives of the domestic actors of India.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘we are in a very advanced stage of negotiation’ • ‘presently negotiating BTIA with the EU covering number of tracks’ • ‘negotiations across number of tracks are ongoing. Final positions are yet to emerge’ • ‘I believe we will be able to reach a conclusion’

Finally, a Likert scale was also constructed for this study which enabled a more precise measurement of the intensity of the words and phrases on a negative, positive or neutral basis. The Likert scale that was utilized measured the phrases on a negative to positive image continuum ranging from 1 to 7 (see Figure 4). These images can be gauged by identifying and rating certain words or phrases that indicates the desirableness or harmfulness of the India-EU FTA towards India (see Table 2). To give coding examples, the desirableness of the India-EU FTA may be described as ‘economically beneficial’, ‘free trade would provide opportunities for both producers and consumers’ ‘no way tariffs and quantitative restrictions can help domestic industries to grow’ or ‘free trade should be encouraged’ whereas the harmfulness of the India-EU FTA may be described as being ‘derail the economy’, ‘bring adverse consequences to the country’ ‘must tighten tariff barriers’ ‘liberalization should be avoided at all cost’ or ‘will hamper domestic industries.’ In order to determine the overall image of a particular actor of EU-India FTA and its intensity in a particular document, a Likert rating will be given to the phrases being used to describe their opinion on liberalization of Trade. Once all such phrases were rated, each actor’s level of positivity/neutrality/negativity was gauged by calculating the mean of all its Likert scale ratings.

Figure 2 - Likert scale developed for this study (source: author’s own)

Strongly negative	Negative	Slightly negative	Neutral	Slightly positive	Positive	Strongly positive
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Based on Figure 2, the study would distinguish between different magnitudes of perception through the degree of intensity with which an opinion was expressed of the FTA by the actors (as shown in Table 8).

Table 8 - Coding Framework for the magnitude of Positive to Negative opinion of the India- EU FTA (source: author's own).

Magnitude	Definition
<p>Negative</p> <p>Strongly Negative</p> <p>Negative</p> <p>Slightly Negative</p>	<p>India at any cost must not engage in India EU trade. It will be detrimental for the country if it does so.</p> <p>The FTA will not benefit the India but will be a clear gain for only EU.</p> <p>India-EU FTA will be unfair for some sectors of the country.</p>
<p>Positive</p> <p>Strongly Positive</p> <p>Positive</p> <p>Slightly Positive</p>	<p>India should expeditiously sign an FTA with the EU as it would immensely benefit Indian economy.</p> <p>We are hopeful that the India and EU FTA could boost trade.</p> <p>Overall, the India-EU FTA is fine but will require a reconsideration of negotiation offers in certain sectors.</p>

Once the data was coded and the Likert ratings assigned, they were organized into categories according to the actors. The actors were classified under two groups- Group A for actors involved in the authorization stage and Group B for actors who were mainly involved in the FTA discussions during the second phase of the talks i.e., the negotiation phase. While categorizing the data according to their respective groups, it was found that certain newspaper articles-maintained anonymity of the actor expressing the opinion making it difficult to be categorized under a group. Consequently, these sources were removed from the dataset, leaving 351 documents to analyze (see Table 9).

Table 9 – Total number and percentages of coverage by group.

Type of Veto Player(s)	Number of coverages	Percentage
Group A	198	56.4%
Group B	153	43.6%
<i>Total</i>	351	100%

Since the variable revolves heavily around the images of EU from the perspective of veto players, i.e., the domestic actors of India, this therefore requires a clear definition. In essence, a veto player in the context of the present study will refer to the policy-making elites of India which will include key decision makers from politics and business fields. According to Mattoo (2005) the core decision making elites mostly consists of key figures that can come from a wide range of professions such as businessmen, academics, scientists, bureaucrats, journalists, military personnel, and politicians. However, for India-EU trade analysis we would only focus on the key political veto players including Prime Minister, senior officials of relevant ministries of India, members of coalition, members of opposition in the parliament and CEO/Chairman/president or equivalent member of business groups influential enough to alter trade decisions.

However, it is worth noting that, in the context of principal-agent theory, veto players of group A consists of both agents i.e., Indian bureaucrats alongside the Head of the Indian Government, and limited principals who worked closely with the government to input suggestions on various trade-related issues during the authorization stage of the negotiation talks. These principals were mainly non-government, non-profit, industry-led, and industry-managed business associations in India e.g., the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). Their primary aim is to promote and protect the interests of Indian businesses and to enhance their competitiveness in the global marketplace. To

do so, they regularly engage with the government, policymakers, industry leaders, and other stakeholders to advocate for policy changes and reforms that support the growth and development of Indian industry. Please see Table 10 for an elaboration of the veto players categorized under group A in the current research. By contrast, group B consists primarily of principals such as the members of Parliament of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha) in India. The primary responsibility of both the Houses of Parliament and Vidhan is to monitor the actions of the executive government to ensure that they are acting in the best interest of the people. They monitor and control the government through various mechanisms such as passing law and exercising budgetary power and scrutinizing the actions of the government through question hour, debates, reports, and committees. Due to these practices, the relationship between these principals and the government (agent) can be complex and involve various factors such as political considerations, power dynamics, and institutional constraints. The government may have its own interests and priorities, which may not always align with those of the principals of the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha or Vidhan Sabha creating principal-agent conflict. However, if the conflict cannot be resolved by negotiations and discussions, the principals can reject a policy proposal from the government. Furthermore, other principal veto players categorized under group B are the stakeholders from industrial bodies, including businesses and industry associations who have a direct interest in the outcomes of the India-EU FTA negotiations. They were included as they are directly impacted by the policies and provisions of the agreement that can affect their competitiveness, market access, and regulatory environment. As a result, they have as much vested interest in ensuring that the FTA negotiations are conducted in a manner that is consistent with their concerns and priorities and thus, included in group B as principals. Please refer to Table 11 for an elaboration of veto players categorized under Group B in the present research.

Table 10: A list of key Group A actors statements collected in the present study (source: author's own)

	Chambers/Office	Actors
Agent	Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Commerce Minister; Commerce Secretary; Joint Secretary; Director General of Trade; Additional Secretary; Minister of State; Joint Secretary Europe West.
	Prime Minister's Office	Prime Minister
	Ministry of External Affairs	MEA Minister; Official spokesperson; Secretary East; Secretary West; Ambassador to EU; Foreign Secretary;
	Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs	Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs
	The Trade and Economic Relations Committee	National Secretary Adviser; Prime Minister; Minister of MEA; Commerce Minister; Chairman of Economic Advisor Council; Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission
	Ministry of Finance	Minister of Finance; Chairman of Empowered Committee of the Ministry of Finance
	Ministry of Science and Technology	Deputy Chairman; Minister of State
Principal	Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare	Minister of State
	Confederation of Indian Industry	Director General
	Confederation of Indian Textile Industry	Chairman; Deputy Chairman and Vice Chairman; Union Secretary
	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry	President; Secretary General
	The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)	President

Table 11: A list of key Group B actors considered for the present study (source: author's own)

	Chambers/Associations/Organization	Actors
Principal	Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha	Parliament Member (opposition); Parliament Member and government alliance; Speaker; Deputy Speaker; Parliamentary Committee
	State Legislative Assembly	Chief Ministers of Indian States
	Society for Indian Automobile Manufacturers	Senior Director; Director General
	Indian Pharmaceutical Industry	Global general Counsel of Cipla limited
	Indian Pharma Alliance	Secretary General
	The All-India Brewer's Association	Director
	Confederation of All India Traders	Secretary-general
	International Spirits & Wines Association of India	Secretary general

It is important to note here that the principals in group B have different power influence. While the Parliament and State Legislative body has legal powers to monitor and control the agents by suggesting amendments to policies and passing bills and the from group A has legal powers to formulate, analyze and process policies, whereas the business stakeholders are political actors only and thus lack the legal powers to amend or influence policies. With this said, they enjoy factual influence in accordance with the political circumstances (Tsebelis, 1995). In different political systems, there are several types of such veto players such as powerful business interest groups who can be thought of as political veto players, but only within the policy areas of their concern (Tsebelis, 1995). The reasons why they can influence trade negotiations are several. In addition to the elective power that they possess, they also hold significant other resources such as financial privileges through which they fund political campaigns and intellectual expertise in the area of

international trade. Furthermore, they have access to information, expertise and networks that enable them to identify the areas in which they can exercise influence. Additionally, these business associations often have strong political ties and can exert their influence with policymakers to advance their interests. Finally, as the agent, the government is expected to act in the best interests of their principals and to carry out the policies and programs approved by them.

In conclusion, the present study will conduct a content analysis on the aforementioned online sources consisting of newspaper articles, legislative as well as executive documents between the years 2006 to 2014. This way, the present study aims to identify the ideological distance between the relevant Indian domestic actor during the start and the halt of negotiation. In order to properly identify and report the images of the FTA in a given textual material, a coding framework will be constructed where the unit of analysis comprises of a sentence or a portion of a sentence that indicates a certain type of belief (positive, negative or neutral) held by the Indian actors towards the potential impact of the India-EU FTA. This will be achieved through a Likert scale which will enable the quantification of the ideological intensity on a negative, positive, or neutral basis. By this method, the present study will be able to clearly gauge the ideological distance between the veto players at different stages of the negotiation talks. With that being said, it is worth delving into foreign policy decision-making structure of India in order to establish the analytical context thereby providing a clearer picture as to what these relevant veto players consists of and how these trade decisions are made in general. Accordingly, the following section will provide a brief overview of the foreign policy decision- making structure in India.

Chapter 5: Research Findings and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

Since the early 2000's India has experienced higher levels of economic growth (The World Bank, 2018). As a result, over the past 25 years, India's position in the world economy has dramatically improved. Its percentage of the global output (measured in US dollars) rose from 1.4% in 1990 to more than 3.2% in 2017 (Mitra, Sen Gupta, Sanganeria, 2020). The increase has been much more pronounced in terms of purchasing power parity because during this time India's contribution to global output increased from 3.4% to 7.3%, making India the third largest economy in the world (Mitra, Sen Gupta, Sanganeria, 2020). Yet regrettably India's export performance continued to underperform, making up only 2.1% of all goods and service exports worldwide (Mitra, Sen Gupta, Sanganeria, 2020). Even less, about 1.7%, of the world's exports of goods come from India which is significantly less than other nations with smaller economies including the Russian Federation, Mexico, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and China (Mitra, Sen Gupta, Sanganeria, 2020).

Exports are a critical factor for rapid economic growth, job creation, and alleviation of poverty in a country. Higher levels of connectivity with the international market enable businesses to function on a larger scale and adopt new technology from other firms that reduces production expenses and encourages innovation. While many economies in the past, particularly those in East and Southeast Asia, have benefited significantly from economic liberalization which has enabled export related growths within the countries, many Indian domestic industries refrained from such liberalization and in fact demanded the government to implement higher levels of protection from foreign competition. This resulted in India's low shares in the global export and export related economic growths.

This was further exacerbated by the country's economic policy that supported replacement of imports with domestic produce since independence. Moreover, there were strict regulations on imports necessitated by the policy framework of the country to protect the domestic manufacturers from foreign competition. This was predominantly due to the country's substandard infrastructure, lack of raw materials, and an inability to import intermediate goods which impaired the businesses' ability to produce effectively enough to compete with the foreign producers. Therefore, to protect domestic businesses imports were subjected to extensive restrictions, which stifled competition and gave Indian businesses greater monopoly over the domestic market. As a result, businesses lacked any incentive to raise their level of competitiveness and enter the uncertain foreign export markets.

Over the past two decades the Indian policymakers have been attempting to gradually introduce economic openness and industrial liberalization for greater economic growth and development of the country. To achieve this, the policymakers have put forward several policy strategies and targets such as the Five-Year Plan by the Planning Commission of Government of India. One such development strategies under the Nineth Five-Year Plan was cautious liberalization of economic regulations and controls imposed by the government (Planning Commission of India, n.d.). Also, furthering India's trade policy by increasing the country's engagement with Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA), Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Regional Trade Agreements has been a significant part of the development plan which includes EU-India FTA (Planning Commission of India, 2008). This was believed to initiate innovation and ensure rapid growth within the country (Planning Commission of India, n.d.). However, liberalization has proven to be a highly sensitive topic in the country. Quite similarly liberalization of trade under the India-EU FTA has also been a highly sensitive issue which has impeded the process of reaching a conclusion for the agreement.

This chapter seeks to establish a foundation for understanding the significant role the image of liberalization has played in determining the decisionmakers decisions to the start and the halt the India-EU Free Trade Agreement. In order to do so, the current research will present an analysis of the discourses of various institutional and non-institutional veto players regarding their believe towards the liberalization of the country’s foreign trade with the EU from the period between 2006-2014. The following section of this chapter would provide a brief overview of the descriptive data before moving forward with an in-depth discussion on the findings for the research study.

5.2. Descriptive Data

Although all efforts were made to ensure that the current data were collected from all relevant veto players mentioned in the preceding chapters, however, there were certain veto players whose data, and thus information on their ideologies, were inaccessible to the researcher. The overall number of coverages for each type of veto players between 2006 and 2014 are depicted in Table 12.

Table 12 – Total number of coverages by group (source: author’s own).

Type of Veto Player(s)	Number of coverages
<i>Group A</i>	
Executive actors	183
Private actors	15
<i>Group B</i>	
Legislative actors (center/state level)	101
Private actors	63

As shown in the table, of 198 coverages of Group A overall, 183 were of executive veto players which constitutes 92.4% of the entire coverage while only 15, i.e., 7.6% of the overall coverage, referred to private actors from organizations including Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Associated

Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog). On the other hand, of 164 coverages of Group B overall, 63 consists of the private sector thereby taking up 38.41% of the total coverage where it contains a diverse array of industries ranging from Automobile to Pharmaceuticals down to the Textile industry in India. However, for legislative veto players, 101 coverages amount to 61.58% of the overall coverage in Group B.

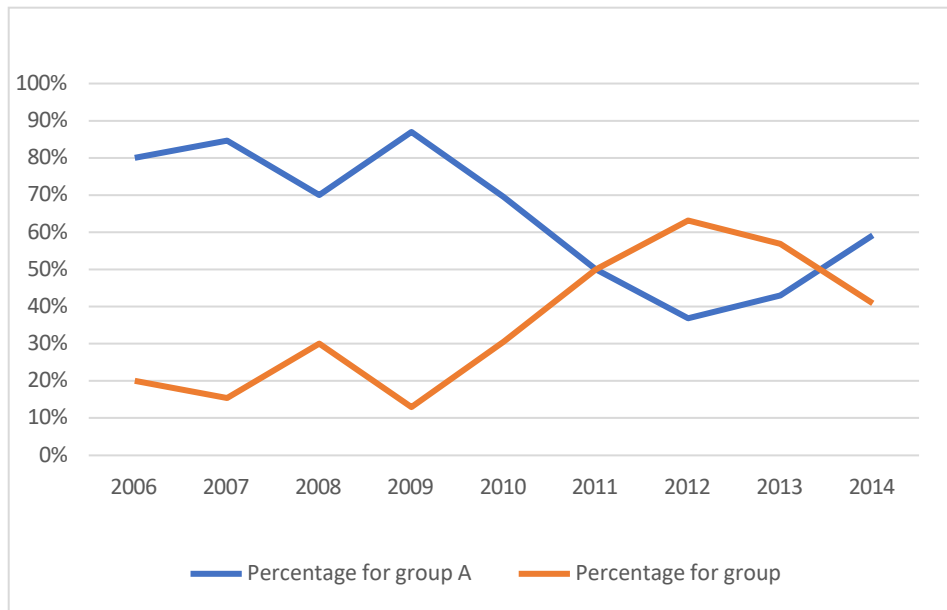
As depicted in Table 13, amongst all the documents collected for each group of veto players from legislative, executive and media sources of India, 190 documents were from the governmental sources and 172 documents from online media sources. Also, both the sources were analyzed in two different methods of analysis i.e., content analysis for executive and legislative documents, and frame analysis of media discourses for online news articles.

Table 13 – Total number of coverages by document type for each group (source: author’s own).

Document type according to Veto Player(s)	Number of documents for each group	Total number of documents (Per source)
<i>Group A</i>		
Government documents	108	190
<i>Group B</i>		
Government documents	82	
<i>Group A</i>		
Online News Articles	90	172
<i>Group B</i>		
Online News Articles	82	

Another characteristic of the data worth visualizing are the trajectories of online coverages between the two groups of veto players. The following chart is created in Microsoft excel by calculating the total number of online documents and articles present for each group between 2006 to 2014. Once the total number of articles per year was determined, the mean scores for each group were calculated on an annual basis to produce the following results (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Actors Featured in the articles retrieved (source: author's own).



According to the data, it was found that there were substantial differences in the proportion of online availability of data for both the groups during different stages of the negotiation. This tremendous difference in availability of data between the different stages of the negotiation demonstrates the executive-centric discussions on the India-EU FTA talks during the earlier phases of the trade negotiations. Furthermore, coupled by the constant unfolding situations at that time, details of the negotiation were not documented properly due to lack of government transparency. This issue has time and again emerged through several sources including the Indian Parliamentarians who has expressed their grievances about government maintaining secrecy about the EU negotiation talks. In fact, no legislative documents discussing the FTA could be retrieved during the period between 2006-2008 indicating a possible lack of involvement of the Parliament during the early phases of the negotiation. Similarly, data on private actors was also quite scarce compared to that of the executive documents. There are potential explanations for this gap, first is that FTA-related discussions were unsurprisingly scarce during the period prior to 2006 as studies were still being conducted by joint study groups on matters to enhance trade and investments to investigate the feasibility of an FTA.

However, the discussions gained momentum during early 2006 when a High-Level Trade Group (HLTG) was set up to study the potential cost and benefits of the FTA. Since the negotiation was in the initial stage and involved international sensitivities, it strictly remained confidential. Therefore, restricting the amount of information available at the public domain to the ones that were mostly shared by the executive department.

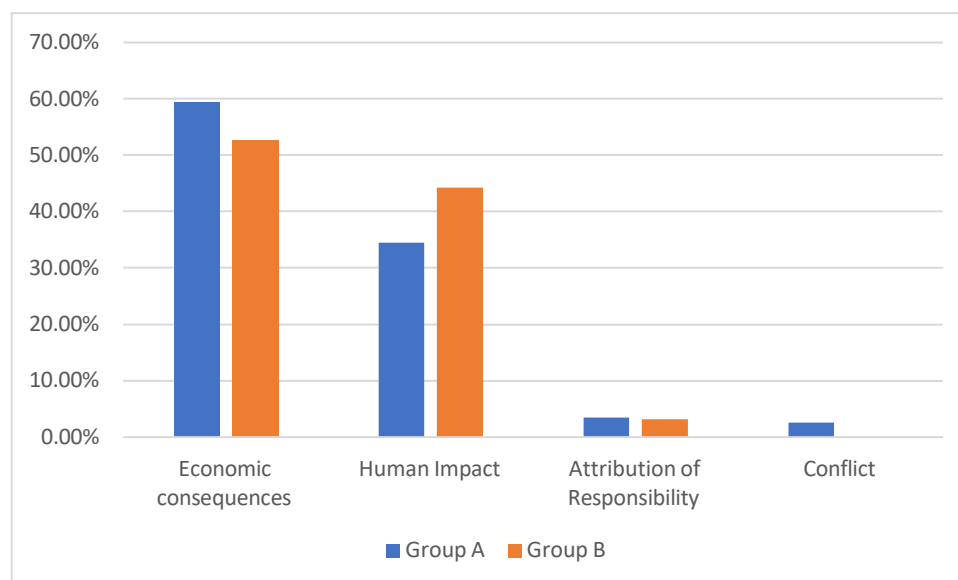
After 2009, the steep drop in executive-centric coverage of the trade talks was caused by the increased involvement of veto players from Group B. This suggests the growing relevance of the India-EU trade talks amongst Group B veto players where the negotiation talks began moving forward from the authorization stage to the formal start of the talks. At this negotiation stage, both India and EU started formulating and voicing their negotiation positions. This is also the stage where the executive actors obtain inputs through consultation with relevant stakeholders in order to inform India's developing negotiation strategy. The list of stakeholders includes industry associations, export promotion councils, research organizations, state governments as well as representatives from all other sectors of the economy (Rajya Sabha, 2010). Thus, there were sharp increases in involvement of these actors during the negotiation stage. Furthermore, as an increasing number of consultations took place between different stakeholders, people started to become aware of the negotiation demands from the European side and hence sparking a debate amongst various groups of stakeholders regarding the potential impact of the EU demands for the different sectors of country. This included concerns over EU's demands on issues related to the IPR and relaxing of the FDI rules that also saw large protests across the country. These debates and discussions took place in the parliament as well as several media outlets of the country. Therefore, shifting the focus of reporting from mainly executive-centric to being inclusive of different levels of actors such as the legislative and private actor.

In their analysis of media reports on European politics, Semetko and Valkenburg (2006) identified that the news was reported in six categories of frames for instance, the attribution of responsibility frame, the conflict frame, the economic consequences frame, the human-interest frame, and the morality frame. Quite similarly, in the present study, the frame analysis of the online news articles of the Indian media reports show that the discourses reported could be identified under four patterns of frames such as the attribution of responsibility frame, the conflict frame, the economic consequence frame, and the human impact frame. To reiterate, the attribution of responsibility frame refers to any discourses that are framed in such a way that it assigns responsibility to others for a problem or a solution to an individual, a group, or the government. The conflict frame is often a way of presenting a discourse that highlights the conflict between the stories of different actors, both individual and group. The Human impact frame is related to discourses that describe positive or negative impacts of an issue on the members of society. Lastly, the economic consequences frame is associated with discourses that suggests either positive or a negative economic impact of an incident or event to an individual or a group of individuals in a society. For the purpose of this study, these reported discourses would be of the veto players involved in the India-EU FTA and related to their opinions on how they feel towards the idea of liberalizing Indian trade with the European Union. These discourses are often present in the form of comments, statements, or opinions in the collected data.

In 172 online news articles a total of 237 such opinions were collected and categorized under the four aforementioned frames. The application of the frames in the reported opinions identified that the economic consequences frame was the most prominent frame that reoccurred multiple times in the opinions expressed by the group of actors. Nevertheless, one can notice a slight difference between the reoccurrence of the economic consequences frame between both the groups i.e., 59.48% for actors present in the authorization stage and 52.63% for actors who

joined in later during the negotiation stage of the India-EU FTA. The human impact frame was slightly more common in the reported opinions of the legislative and private actors who joined in for the second stage of the negotiation i.e., 44.21% for Group B, than in actors involved in the authorization stage which would be 34.48% i.e., Group A. The attribution of responsibility frame was one of the least common one appearing in the opinions reported in the online articles i.e., 3.44% for group A and 3.15% for group B. Finally, the least appearing frame was the conflict frame where only 2.58% of the opinions expressed by the group A related to a conflict frame whereas none could be attributed for group B. For an overview of the results, refer to Figure 4.

Figure 4: Overall frequency of Frames in online media article (source: author's own).



The result was produced in Microsoft excel according to the following steps. Firstly, out of the collected articles, the opinions were identified. Subsequently, the opinions were categorized under their relevant frames namely the economic consequences frame, the conflict frame, the human impact frame, and the attribution of responsibility frame. Thereafter, a frequency of opinions was calculated for each of the four categories of frames. Once that was accomplished, the frequency of each frame as well as its percentage was calculated separately for each group

in order to produce the results.

During the categorization of the opinions into four frames, it has been noted that the frequency of each frame present in the online media outlet varies according to the organization. When reporting on the opinions of the veto players on the India-EU FTA, the difference in frames indicates that there are different media approaches that varies from one organization to the other. The results discussed below are specific for each news organization (see Table 14) and are obtained by the following analytical steps.

Table 14 – Online media frames by news organizations (source: author’s own).

News Organization	Economic Consequences Frame	Human Impact Frame	Attribution of Responsibility Frame	Conflict Frame
The Economic Times	52.94%	27.46%	19.60%	0%
The Hindu	52.64%	36.84%	9.47%	1.05%
The Indian express	55.93%	35.60%	5.08%	3.38%
The Telegraph	51.72%	37.93%	10.35%	0%

Firstly, to produce the results for Table 14, all the opinions from the news articles collected were categorized under the four categories of frames. To identify and assess these media frames from online news articles a frame analysis in the media discourse was utilized. The present study combined three framing schemes used by Daichuk et al., (2021); Molotch, et al., (1992) and Jakopović (2017) for understanding newspaper discourses. Once all the comments and opinions were categorized under the four identified framing scheme, the data in the excel sheet was arranged according to their newspaper organization. Thereafter, the frequency of occurrences for each frame for each online news report was calculated. After the total number of frequencies of each frame for all four news organizations were obtained, the percentage for each category of frames was calculated to produce the results.

The results of the overall frequency of frames in online media are important because they provide an insight into the frames used by the actors involved in the negotiation of the India-

EU FTA.

As shown in both Table 14, the “economic consequences” and “human impact” were considered by the domestic actors as key themes with regards to the India-EU negotiations. Such identification of the frames and their relative prominence among different groups of veto players helped in understanding how these veto players perceived the issues at hand and what their priorities were during the negotiation process. These priorities allowed for the identification of the key themes that were likely to have influenced the outcome of the India-EU negotiations. For instance, after implementing the four frames for the online reported opinions, it was identified that the “economic consequences” frame was the most frequently reported in all the four news organizations and therefore considered a main concern in relation to the India-EU negotiations. The finding that the economic consequences frame was the most prominent frame among all actors, with a higher reoccurrence rate among group A actors in the authorization stage, suggests that these actors may be more concerned about the potential economic consequences of the FTA compared to the actors who joined later in the negotiation process. Considering that the present study is focused on opinions about the Free Trade Agreement, it is for this reason that the most frequently appearing opinions for all the four news outlets are related to the economic consequences. Since FTAs are primarily economic policy tools that is designed to promote economic growth by encouraging trade between the countries through more efficient and profitable ways (Cheng, 2019), this could explain why economic consequences is the most frequently identified frame compared to the other three frames. More specifically, the data revealed that these concerns are related to tariff reduction, non-tariff barriers, intellectual property rights, services sector and regulatory coherence. However, these agreements not only have an impact on the economy or the businesses of the countries signing the FTA, but also invariably have a direct impact on the people involved in the businesses. For instance, it can impact the human rights of the producers, manufacturers, consumers, workers, those who own small or big businesses, those below the poverty line and others, depending on the

government's ability to regulate and protect the rights of its people. Despite this, FTAs are often negotiated without much consideration or discussion of their impact on the fundamental rights of the people, and this is not only true for decision-makers, but all others involved in the negotiation process. Therefore, although the results show that the human impact frame is the second most identified frame in the FTA related discourses, however, the difference between the occurrences show that human impact frame is far less discussed compared to the economic consequences frame. Nevertheless, the higher prevalence of the human impact frame among group B actors who joined in later during the negotiation stage suggests that these actors may be more concerned about the potential impact of the FTA on the lives of the stakeholders compared to Group A. Moreover, the findings also indicate that the attribution of responsibility frame was one of the least common frames amongst all the veto players, suggesting that the veto players involved in the negotiation process may be least concerned with blaming each other for any potential negative consequences that may arise from the FTA. This finding holds significant implications for the negotiation process, as it shows that the veto players may be more willing to work together jointly towards finding solutions that would be beneficial and acceptable to all rather than engaging in a blaming one another. In media discourses, these types of frequency of occurrences of frames indicate what the concerns are and what a society mostly values. However, it is worth mentioning that the present research did not study any other domain except the discourses surrounding the FTA between India and the EU in the Indian media. The discourses analyzed are limited to a certain section of individuals in the society who are influential and involved in the negotiation process i.e., the veto players, and therefore the results are only representative of the values held by the Indian veto players with regards to the FTA with the EU.

In the online news reports of the Economic Times as shown in Table 15 for Group A, suggest most of the responses for Human Impact (26.92%) were positive, indicating that the group is likely to have a favorable view of the potential consequences of the FTA on people.

Additionally, more than half of the responses (53.84%) were positive in terms of economic impact, meaning that Group A is likely to view FTA as having a positive impact on the economy of the country. The attribution frame had a relatively low percentage of responses (3.84%), indicating that Group A may not assign responsibility for FTA-related issues to any specific aspect of the FTA.

For Group B, the distribution of responses was quite different. Only 18.51% of responses were positive in terms of coding for Human Impact, indicating that Group B may not view the consequences of FTA on people as positively as Group A. The economic impact frame had a relatively low percentage of positive responses (7.40%), suggesting that Group B may not view FTA as having a significant positive impact on the economy of India. In terms of the attribution of responsibility frame, Group B had a much higher percentage of negative responses (29.62%) compared to positive responses, indicating that they may want to assign responsibility for the potential negative impact of the liberalization to the FTA. Overall, it appears that there are significant differences in how Group A and Group B view the FTA and its impact, with Group A having a more positive outlook overall. In contrast, Group B appears to be more skeptical of the FTA, with lower percentages of positive responses in both frames and a higher percentage of negative responses in the Attribution of Responsibility frame.

Table 15 – Frequency of online media frames by The Economic Times (source: author’s own).

Groups	Coding	HumanImpact	Economic Consequences	Attribution of Responsibility	Conflict Frame
Group A	Positive	26.92%	53.84%	3.84%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	11.53%	3.84%	0%	0%
Group B	Positive	18.51%	7.40%	3.70%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	25.92%	14.81%	29.62%	0%

The results for Table 15 were obtained by assessing the individual opinion under each frame.

Therefore, once it was determined which category of frames opinions belong to (i.e., human

impact frame, Economic consequences frame, conflict frame, or attribution of responsibility frame) the direction and intensity of the opinions were assessed. With regards to this study, the direction and intensity of opinions on human impact is captured through identifying individual usage of words and phrases to describe the FTA and was further coded as positive, negative or neutral image. For instance, the negative image of the human impact frame would be represented through opinions that could be closely associated with statements such as ‘liberalization of trade to EU would adversely impact Indian consumers and producers’, wherein, the usage of the phrase ‘adversely impact’ is coded as negative opinion and the reference to consumers and producers is identified as an opinion related to individual members of society in India, therefore, categorizing it under the negative human impact frame. Conversely, positive image of human impact would be associated with opinions such as ‘loosening up of barriers would encourage competition and competition is good for man’. In this case, the phrase ‘encourage competition and competition is good’ suggests a positive opinion towards the liberalization of trade, while the usage of the word ‘man’ refers to the individual members of society and therefore categorized as positive human impact frame.

In case of economic consequences frame, the opinions were coded as positive under the economic consequences frame when they would closely associate with sentences such as ‘liberalization would be economically beneficial for the country’. Here, the word ‘beneficial’ would imply a positive opinion and would be coded as positive, while the reference to the economy through the usage of the phrase ‘economically beneficial’ would suggest that the individual is specifically referring to a consequence of the FTA on the economy of the country and therefore, would be categorized under positive economic consequences frame.

Conversely, the negative economic consequences were mainly associated with opinions such as ‘liberalization will have negative effects on all major components of the domestic economy’.

Here, the phrase ‘will have negative effects’ suggests that the individual believes that the FTA

will not be beneficial and therefore would be coded as negative opinion, whereas the usage of the phrase ‘domestic economy’ imply that the individual is referring to the negative impact on the economy of the country and hence will be categorized under the negative economic frame.

For attribution of responsibility frame the negative coding was assigned to an opinion when they would closely associate with statements that tends to blame the FTA or the EU’s role in stirring troubles in the Indian society. For example, the ‘EU pushing for FTA terms is a deliberate act of harassment’. Here, the use of the phrase ‘deliberate act of harassment’ will account for a negative opinion and the way the discourse is presented it tends to pin the blame on the EU for deliberately harassing the other through the FTA, and therefore will be categorized under negative attribution of responsibility. Conversely, the positive coding for attribution of responsibility frame was assigned to comments closely related to statements such as, ‘Increased market access would create healthy conditions for placing our two-way trade on an even keel’, wherein the phrase ‘increased market access would create healthy conditions’ describes the FTA as being a significant step towards encouraging trade that is free from any trade discriminations and protectionist trends which in turn would be categorized under positive attribution of responsibility. Once all the opinions in a frame were coded as positive, negative, or neutral, the frequency of these opinions was calculated in accordance with each frame and thereafter a percentage was produced.

The opinions collected from the online website of The Hindu are mostly regarding economic consequences i.e., 52.64 %, followed by human impact frame i.e., 36.84%, attribution of responsibility frame 9.47 %, and conflict frame 1.05 % (see Table 14). When it comes to the response of Group A, the results shown in Table 16 suggests that the Group has a generally positive view of the India-EU FTA, and believes that the liberalization of trade barriers under this agreement will bring positive results on human and the economy of the country, with over 23% of the groups’ members believing that the FTA will have a positive impact on people and

over 62% believing that it will have a positive impact on the economy. The members of Group A also appear to believe that any negative consequences should not be attributed to any specific party or agreement, which is evident in their lack of attribution of responsibility at 0%. Finally, the group's 0% score in the conflict frame suggests that the group does not see the FTA as being inherently conflictual. Therefore, based on the data it can be inferred that group A may have been more willing to support negotiations on the FTA.

On the other hand, the results produced from the data of Group B, seems to indicate that the group has a more negative view of the FTA, believes that the FTA will have a negative impact on humans and the economy, with over 34% of its members believing that it will have a negative impact on humans and over 20% of its members believing that it will have a negative impact on the economy. This group also appears to believe that responsibility for any negative consequences should be attributed to parties involved in the FTA, rating attribution of responsibility at over 15%. Finally, this group sees the FTA as potentially conflictual, rating the conflict frame at over 15%. Therefore, this suggests Group B, who have a more negative view of the FTA and believes that it will have a negative impact on humans and the economy, may have been more resistant to the India-EU FTA negotiations and less willing to compromise on issues related to the FTA. Additionally, as this group sees the FTA as potentially conflictual and believes that responsibility for any negative consequences should be attributed to parties involved in the FTA, which may have made negotiation talks more difficult.

Table 16 – Frequency of Online media frames by The Hindu (source: author's own).

Groups	Coding	Human Impact	Economic Consequences	Attribution of Responsibility	Conflict Frame
Group A	Positive	23.52%	62.72%	1.96%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	5.88%	5.88%	0%	0%
Group B	Positive	11.36%	13.63%	4.54%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	34.09%	20.45%	15.90%	0%

The results for Table 16 were also obtained by assessing the individual opinion under each frame. Therefore, after opinions were categorized in their respective frames i.e., human impact frame, economic consequences frame, conflict frame, or attribution of responsibility frame, the direction and intensity of the opinions were assessed. Similarly for the Economic Times, the direction and intensity of the human opinion is captured through individual usage of words or phrases towards the FTA, and was further coded as positive, negative, or neutral. Both the categorizing of opinions in frames and coding them followed similar methods as it was described for the Economic Times in the previous section. Once all the opinions for each frame were coded as positive, negative, or neutral, the frequency of these opinions were calculated and then a percentage was produced in accordance with each frame as previously exemplified for Economic Times.

The analysis of online news articles from The Indian Express indicates that the attribution of responsibility frame and the conflict frame were the least identified frames in the available reporting on the India-EU FTA (Table 14). The attribution of responsibility frame, which was identified in only 5.08% of the reporting, contained mainly negative opinions that blamed the FTA for being a "raw deal that is discriminatory, dangerous, and of no use to India" and that it "will hurt the interest of the country." This suggests that the responsibility for any negative consequences of the FTA was not being attributed to any specific party or agreement, but rather

to the FTA as a whole. On the other hand, the conflict frame, which was identified in only 3.38% of the reporting, was mainly negative (50%). The phrases categorized under the conflict frame represented the direction and intensity of negative opinions associated with the FTA. For example, the phrase "drug safety data provision on FTA is not to benefit India but to undermine India's visionary Patents Act" directly represents a conflict with ideologies that maintains that TRIPS Plus provisions being negotiated in India-EU FTAs are a beneficial tool for eliminating substandard and falsified medicines from the market, with the concerns of Indian stakeholders who see this provision as a threat to India's patent laws.

Table 17 – Frequency of Online media frames by The Indian Express (source: author's own).

Group	Coding	Human Impact	Economic Consequences	Attribution of Responsibility	Conflict
Group A	Positive	26.66%	50%	6.66%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	3.33%	13.33%	0%	0%
Group B	Positive	3.84%	15.38%	0%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	34.61%	38.46%	7.69%	0%

Similar to the other two newspaper articles, for group A in Indian express, it appears that they have a generally positive view of the FTA, with over 26% of the articles expressing a positive impact on human and 50% expressing a positive impact on the economy (Table 17). The positive economic consequences frame is frequently represented in online articles from The Indian Express through opinions that express a positive outlook on the economic impact of the India-EU FTA. For example, 'the FTA will lead to economic growth in India or result in increased employment opportunities. These opinions are generally certain about the positive economic impact of the FTA on the country. This group also seems to have a relatively low attribution of responsibility (6.66%) and conflict frame (0%) associated with the FTA negotiations, indicating that they do not see the negotiations as being inherently contentious or

that any negative consequences should be attributed to any specific party or the agreement as a whole. On the other hand, for Group B, the articles express a more negative view of the FTA negotiations, with over 34% of them highlighting negative impacts on humans and over 38% of them highlighting negative impacts on the economy. The human impact frame which is the second most reoccurring frame within the Indian express online articles, tends to contain more contents on the negative opinion on the human impact frame and tend to argue that liberalization with the EU ‘will only result in heaping agony on our farmers’ and ‘it will doom the Indian peasantry.’ The attribution of responsibility frame is relatively high for this group (7.69%), suggesting that they are more likely to attribute negative consequences to specific parties involved in the negotiations. However, the conflict frame is still relatively low at 0%, indicating that this group does not necessarily view the negotiations as being inherently contentious. Overall, the differing frames identified in the news articles for both groups suggest that there are varying opinions and perspectives on the India-EU FTA negotiations, and that these opinions between Group A and Group B can potentially cause disagreements while deciding on the policy position during negotiation talks and lead to a halt. As these groups represent significant veto players with conflicting interests, they could potentially stall the negotiation process.

Finally for the online news articles of the Telegraph the frame that was frequently utilized to express opinions on the India-EU FTA was predominantly economic consequences frame i.e., 51.72% (see Table 14), wherein, positive opinions towards the potential benefits of bilateral trade were identified the most in group A (58.33%) with statements suggesting the FTA would ‘boost exports’ or result in ‘greater investment flows.’ Moreover, Group A, who are identified as negotiating agents on behalf of CII and FICCI (principal), has a predominantly positive view on the agreement, with 41.66% of the coding related to positive human impact (Table 18). This suggests that they believe the FTA will have significant benefits for both human

well-being and economic growth in India.

Table 18 – Frequency of Online media frames by The Telegraph (source: author's own).

Groups	Coding	Human Impact	Economic Consequences	Attribution of Responsibility	Conflict Frame
Group A	Positive	41.66%	58.33%	0%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	0%	0%	0%	0%
Group B	Positive	0%	6.66%	0%	0%
	Neutral	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Negative	40%	46.66%	6.66%	0%

On the other hand, Group B, which is mainly composed of principals from parliament and other stakeholders, has a more negative outlook on the FTA. 40% of the responses are related to negative consequences to human impact and 46.66% to negative economic consequences. This indicates that they believe the FTA could have negative effects on the well-being of people in India, although it may not be as damaging to the economy as they anticipate. The negative responses of Group B regarding the India-EU FTA could be attributed to various reasons. Firstly, stakeholders and politicians may be concerned about the impact of the agreement on various sectors of the Indian economy, including agriculture, manufacturing, and services. The stakeholders fear that the liberalization of trade barriers with the EU could lead to influx of cheaper goods and services in India from the EU market, which in turn could harm Indian industries and lead to job losses. Hence, statements such as ‘we fear certain provisions in this FTA will open the Indian market to agricultural produce from Europe – this will hurt Indian farmers’ collected from the data reflect these concerns. This suggests that the stakeholders and politicians in Group B are concerned about the potential negative impacts of the FTA on the Indian economy, especially in for small businesses that may be vulnerable to competition from larger EU companies.

Additionally, stakeholders and politicians may be worried about the potential impact of the FTA on India's ability to regulate its economy and protect its national interests. They may fear that the

agreement could constrain India's policy space and limit its ability to use trade policy as a tool for development. Statements regarding human impact were overall the second most popular commonly appearing frame in the reporting of The Telegraph. Amongst the stakeholders and politicians in group B, statements such as "India-EU FTA may threaten the supply of generic drugs" suggests that stakeholders and politicians in Group B were concerned about the potential impact of the FTA on access to affordable medicines in India. This concern was because the FTA negotiations talks included provisions related to intellectual property rights and pharmaceutical patents that could make it harder for Indian generic drug manufacturers to produce and distribute cheaper versions of essential medicines. Such a perspective indicates that the stakeholders and politicians in Group B may view the FTA as potentially harmful to public health and access to medicines in India. This reflects a broader perspective that goes beyond the economic implications of the FTA and highlights the potential impact on people's lives and well-being. This suggests that policymakers may have taken a more cautious and deliberative approach to negotiating the terms of the agreement, given the potential social and health-related consequences. Overall, this ideological differences between the stakeholders, politicians in Group B and the stakeholders and negotiators in group A over public health, access to medicine or other economic concerns could have had the potential to negatively impact the India-EU FTA and contributed to the stalling of the FTA talks in 2013. These differences highlight the fact that there may have been differences in negotiating positions between the two groups as well as disagreements over some of the important issues discussed in the FTA such as the issue of opening vulnerable markets such as the dairy sector, the agriculture sector, the automobile manufacturing, and the retails sector to competitors from the EU.

The results for 18 were obtained following similar steps as for the previous news organization which included assessing the individual opinion under human impact frame, economic consequences frame, conflict frame, or attribution of responsibility frame, thereafter, the

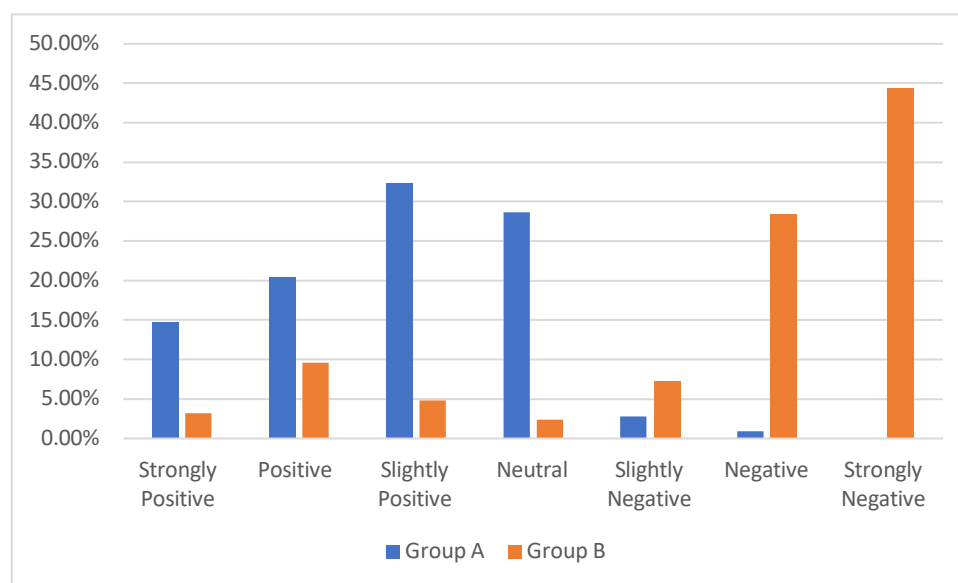
direction and intensity of the individual opinions were assessed and was categorized under positive, negative, or neutral. Once all the opinions were categorized and coded the frequency of these opinions were calculated and then a percentage was produced in accordance with each frame as previously exemplified for Economic Times.

The results from Table 15 to 18 also show that the opinion identified under each frame is either positive or negative whereas neutral images are almost completely missing. When reporting on the opinions of the veto players on the India-EU FTA, such differences illustrate the fact that many of these actors hold certain biases while decision-making (Vis, 2019). These biases often influence the way they perceive and present facts which creates disagreement and confrontations between different levels of actors, especially between individuals with opposing political ideals. To promote their points of view, these actors compete for media attention and tend to highlight their own biases while discrediting their opponent in their public and media discourses (Auter and Fine, 2016; van der Goot et al., 2022). Importantly, by means of these discourses, they attempt to influence the public in a way that suits their perceived reality (Chong and Drukeman, 2007). For these reasons the viewpoints in the media are polarized. In addition, this is exacerbated by the media where journalists often favor adopting polarized news reporting to fulfil their journalistic criteria of critical and balanced reporting (Bartholomé et al. 2015; Schuck et al. 2016; van der Goot et al., 2022) or because they favor conflict where journalists often focus on issues that highlights conflicts and drama (Althaus 2003; van Dalen, 2012), thereby creating a platform for more polarized news compared to neutral ones.

To counteract this issue, the current research incorporated official documents from the online archives of the Indian Government as further source of data. This includes government documents from the executive offices of India dealing with Trade and Foreign Affairs such as the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The documents were accessed from the online website of the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Commerce

and Industry and consisted of the Transcripts of Press Interviews, Transcripts of Media Briefings, Transcripts of Speeches and Statements, Annual Reports, India’s foreign relations Documents and Bilateral/Multilateral Documents. The data was also collected from the legislative sources that includes Parliament Question & Answer documents, Debate documents, Parliamentary Standing Committee Reports and Papers Laid on the Table of the House accessed from the online websites of the two houses of the Parliament. Using these sources differences in images between Group A and Group B were assessed. Thus, an overview of the images between the two groups throughout the period between 2006 to 2014 are depicted in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Negative versus Positive Images as expressed by Group A & B in government documents (source: author’s own).



It is important to note here that unlike online news articles, Figure 5 is the result of content analysis instead of frame analysis which is a variation specifically utilized to analyze media contents. To obtain the results for Figure 5, the documents collected from the government sources were divided into two groups – Group A for veto players involved in the authorization stage, and Group B for the veto players involved in the negotiation stage excluding those in Group A. Once the data was sorted according to their respective groups, a content analysis

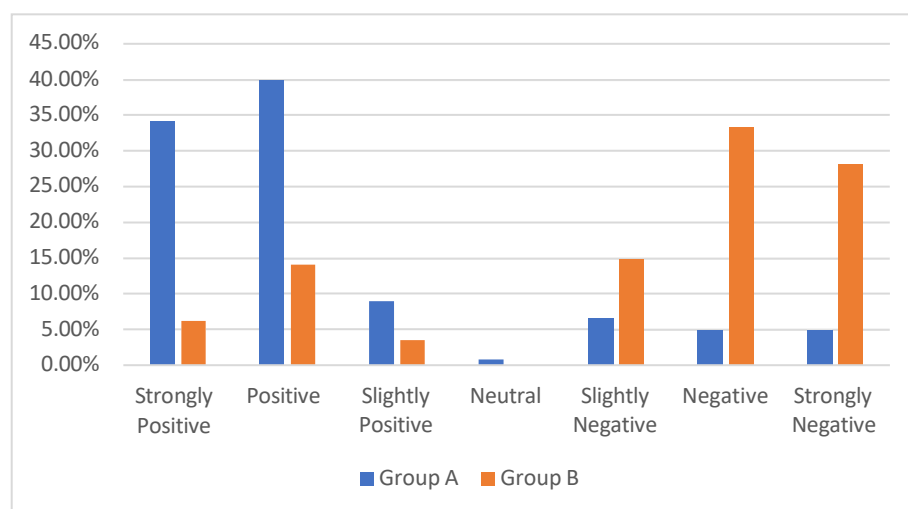
of their perception was conducted to identify their opinions on the FTA. The analysis was conducted on the statements/comments acquired from the collected data. In order to understand the direction and intensity of the opinions expressed by these actors, their statements were then categorized into images, i.e., positive, neutral or negative. This step is essential to identify the attitude the veto player have towards the India-EU FTA. These images (positive, neutral or negative) were primarily related to the India-EU FTA retrieved from the aforementioned textual materials. Therefore, the independent variable for the present research is the “Images of India-EU FTA within the veto players of India”. To study the variable, a coding framework was first constructed. Once the coding framework was ready, a unit of analysis was identified which were the individual words and phrases produced by an actor as mentioned in the article. Once all the words and phrases were analyzed and coded as positive, negative, or neutral, they were rated in accordance with the Likert scale constructed. The Likert scale that was utilized measured the phrases on a negative to positive image continuum ranging from 1 to 7 where 1 to 3 represents negative answers (1 – strongly negative; 2 – negative and 3 – slightly negative), 4 for neutral answers and 5 to 7 for positive answers (5 – slightly positive; 6 – positive and 7 – strongly positive). For this study the rating enabled a more precise measurement of the intensity of the words and phrases on a negative, positive or neutral basis. These images can be gauged by identifying and rating certain words or phrases that indicates the desirableness or harmfulness of the India-EU FTA towards India. After coding the images in document, a mean score was calculated for each image appearing in an article. This is because every article consists of multiple opinions that are rated differently according to the choices of words used in the opinion. Therefore, a mean of all similar opinions was calculated for all the ratings and if the mean score for each image is between 1 to 3 the opinion is categorized as negative images, 4 for neutral and 5 to 7 for positive images. Following this, the total frequencies of images appearing per group were calculated i.e., 108 for Group A and 83 for Group B. Thereafter, the frequency of each image (strongly negative; negative slightly negative; neutral; slightly

positive; positive and strongly positive) for both the groups were calculated. Finally, the percentages were calculated separately for Group A and B to produce a bar graph in Figure 5.

According to the results, veto players from group A are more likely to possess positive images of the liberalization of trades with the EU, i.e., 67.58% (where 14.81% is strongly positive, 20.37% is positive and 32.40% is slightly positive). This indicates that these members are more likely to challenge the status quo as their ideological position is more in favor of liberalization and less in favor of protectionism (status quo). On the contrary, the results for veto players in Group B indicate that these members are more likely to possess negative images of liberalization, i.e., 79.51% (where 43.37% is strongly negative, 28.91% is negative and 7.22% is slightly negative). This stark contrast can be linked to Group B veto players' ideological preferences that is relatively closer to the current policy status quo of India, i.e., favoring a protectionist trade policy for economic growth and development for the country. This suggests a clear distinction between the overall ideological position of the veto players in each group based on their views on the potential impact of entering an FTA with the EU.

A similar pattern is also observed in the data for news articles (see Figure 6) where positive opinions i.e., 82.93% (where 34.15 % is strongly positive, 39.84% is positive and 8.94% is slightly positive) could be largely associated with veto players from Group A. On the other hand, negative opinions were more identified for veto players in Group B, i.e., 76.33% (where 28.08% is strongly negative, 33.34% is negative and 14.91% is slightly negative). The results indicate that there exists an ideological difference between both groups of veto players when it comes to liberalization of trade with the EU. This observation ties in directly with the core argument of the present study whereby the ideological conflict between both groups plays a significant role in India's foreign policy decision-making. For this reason, the proceeding section (section 5.3) will present the empirical evidence to test the proposed hypotheses of the present study.

Figure 6: Negative versus Positive Images as expressed by Group A & B in online news articles (source: author's own).



As shown in Figure 6, the graph is produced from a total of 237 online news opinions of veto players that were collected from 172 online news articles. Of the 237 opinions, 123 are for veto players of Group A and 114 for veto players of Group B. To chart the results, the scores were obtained by calculating the distribution percentage of the Likert scale ratings for all four frames between Groups A and B. For instance, the ‘positive’ image ratings scored the highest percentage across all the ratings of Group A, whereas the ‘negative’ image ratings scored the highest percentage across all the ratings of Group B in the online news articles.

Additionally, it is worth noting that there were instances where more than one opinion was present in a single news article released and these opinions belonged to separate categories of frames. In such a case, all the opinions were taken into consideration and categorized under its relevant frame. For example, if an article from The Hindu consisted of 7 statements or opinions on the FTA, all seven statements were rated according to the direction and intensity of their opinion aiming to understand the attitude of the speaker towards the India-EU FTA. For this, a Likert scale of 1 to 7 was utilized where 1 to 3 indicated negative answers for a particular frame (1– strongly negative; 2 – negative and 3 – slightly negative), 4 for neutral answers and 5 to 7 for positive answers (5 – slightly positive; 6 – positive and 7 – strongly positive).

Thereafter, the frames for each corresponding opinion were identified. To identify a frame for an opinion, questions were asked such as ‘while expressing the view on the FTA, was there a reference to any economic consequences, such as job creation, economic growth, GDP of the country, opportunities for businesses?’. If yes, the opinion was categorized under economic consequences frame. Similar steps were followed for the categorization of opinions for the other three frames as well. Once all the opinions were categorized under their relevant frame the frequency of each frame appearing in an article was determined. For example, if out of the 7 statements in a Hindu online news article, three opinions are identified as economic consequences, and the direction and intensity for each is coded as slightly positive, positive, and neutral a mean is calculated for all the three ratings and if the mean is between 1 to 3 the opinion is categorized under its relevant negative economic frame (i.e., strongly negative, negative or slightly negative economic frames), 4 for neutral and 5 to 7 for positive economic frames (such as strongly positive, positive or slightly positive economic frames). Likewise, similar steps were taken to rate the other opinions before categorizing them under their relevant frames.

The following section will be testing the hypotheses in the following way: the first section will begin with a discussion of the images of the Indian central governmental veto players (also referred to as the institutional veto players) regarding the liberalization of trade India-EU FTA. Likewise, the second part will then present the discussion of the images of the non-governmental veto players (also known as the partisan veto players) of India regarding the liberalization of trade with the EU. These images have been captured by analyzing the direction and intensity of the veto players statements and opinion relating to the FTA and analyzing the usage of words in a sentence to describe the impact of such liberalization for the country.

Lastly, the third part will showcase the clashes of ideology between multiple levels of decisionmakers with veto power to analyze the key factors behind the halt of the India-EU FTA

negotiations.

5.3. Hypotheses Testing

As mentioned previously, the multi-player framework of the country lengthens the process of decision making, oftentimes making it difficult to reach an agreement on policy outcome. This fragmented domestic framework has severely challenged the central government's ability to bring about policy amendments needed to conclude the FTA with the EU.

While there exists a wide range of studies on veto player turfs in numerous policy areas within the EU, there is very little work that has examined such rifts on the Indian side. The majority of the players previously mentioned have taken part in the process of decision-making both by being an agenda setter for international negotiations and executor of the agreed policies under the concluded agreements. Budget battles, agenda-setting competitions, and project implementation battles are now an integral part of their interaction. Many of them have succeeded in taking advantage of such collaborations as a rare chance to increase their political power. Whereas other players have been marginalized as a result of a lack of adequate and suitable resources to play a significant role in such international collaboration. This study will analyze the role of influential veto players. The following section will utilize the India-EU FTA as case study to illustrate how the similar ideology of the veto players involved in the authorization stage largely shaped the decision to participating in the India-EU collaboration on the Free Trade Agreement.

As previously mentioned, this research aims to analyze the potential reasons behind the start and halt of the India-EU FTA negotiation. In order to do so, the research proposed to look deeper into the role of different levels of players involved in such decision-making process. In sum, the following overarching research question was formulated as:

To what extent the India's decision to start and halt the India-EU FTA talks are predominantly influenced by the ideology of a diverse range of domestic actors with veto power?

In an effort to find an answer, the study utilized two arguments presented by George Tsebelis's Veto Player Theory: firstly, a veto player would always approve a policy proposal that can bring change in the status quo only when the policy is closer to the players ideal policy position and secondly, ideological distance between veto players has the potential to cause difficulty to reach a policy agreement required for an international treaty to be concluded. (Tsebelis 1999).

As the present research is based on a case study of India-EU FTA, the study attempted to analyze the ideology of the veto players on the liberalization of trade with the EU. Analyzing the ideology on liberalization would help to determine whether or not the veto players are content with the present protectionist policy status quo. If ideologically the veto players are content with the status quo would undoubtedly not want to bring about any policy change, i.e., liberalization of barriers. Whereas the veto players who are discontented with the present status quo would want to opt for options that would bring a change to the status quo. In this case, the trade policy in India for the EU imports is the status quo, and it is presently protectionist in nature. While the policy proposal offered by the EU for the executive government to accept or reject is a complete liberalization of trade. Therefore, to accept the policy proposal and to start an FTA negotiation, the veto players at the authorization stage must have ideology (i.e., preferred policy position) in favor of the policy proposal from the EU i.e., liberalization compared to the present protectionist policy status quo that led them to seek policy reform.

Consequently, two hypothesis was developed, the first of which is hypothesized as follows:

H1: During the authorization stage of the India-EU FTA negotiation process, the negotiators, and the organizations, including the CII and the FICCI, had an ideological position that was closer to the alternative policy proposal than the existing protectionist policy status quo. Specifically, the negotiators and the principal organizations favored trade liberalization, which surpassed the protectionist status quo, leading to the decision to initiate policy change and formally start the India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007.

For Hypothesis 1, the prediction that the present research draws from the conceptual models of Tsebelis is that a veto player would always approve a policy proposal that can bring change in the status quo only when the policy is closer to the players ideal policy position. Therefore, to determine whether the policy proposal of the EU was closer to policy preference of the veto player of Group A, it is important firstly to state the policy proposal and then compare it with the ideal policy position of the veto players of Group A and B to test the Hypotheses. The following table (Table 19) shows the list of policy proposals from the EU (Eberhardt, and Kumar, 2010).

Table 19: List of EU policy proposal (source: Eberhardt, and Kumar, 2010, pgs. 26-27)

Policy Area	EU's Proposal for FTA
Tariffs	<p>“Elimination of more than 90% of tariffs on manufactured and agricultural products; tariff liberalization for all industrial products; Zero tariffs on chemicals, textiles and probably also dairy, automotives, processed food and beverages”</p> <p>“Prohibit export taxes and other export restrictions for raw materials.”</p>
Service and Investment	<p>“Liberalisation of services and investment emphasis on the following sectors: banking, insurance, retail, accounting, legal and postal services... full liberalisation of capital movements no limits on risky forms of investment.”</p>
Government procurement	<p>“Progressive liberalisation of procurement markets at national, regional, and, where appropriate, local levels; as well as in the field of public utilities” “gradual market access on the basis of the principles of non-discrimination and national treatment”</p>

Intellectual Property Rights	<p>“This chapter shall complement and further specify the rights and obligations between the Parties beyond those under the TRIPS Agreement” (art. 8.1); introduction of data exclusivity in India (art. 18) extent patents from the standard 20 to up to 25 years (art. 17.3); border protection provisions that allow the seizure of products suspected of infringing IPRs at the Indian border (art. 36) training of personnel for the enforcement of IPRs.”</p>
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As shown in Table 19, the EU has proposed a number of policy demands, such as the complete liberalization of trade in industrial products, the removal of nearly all tariffs associated with agricultural imports from the EU, complete liberalization of trade in service sector and removal of restrictions on investment for sector like the retail, banking, insurance, telecommunication, and postal services and the liberalization of government procurement markets and stricter IPR regime that goes beyond the TRIPS agreement. Therefore, for the negotiations to formally begin, the veto player in the authorization stage requires to favor liberalization which can the beat the protectionist status quo.

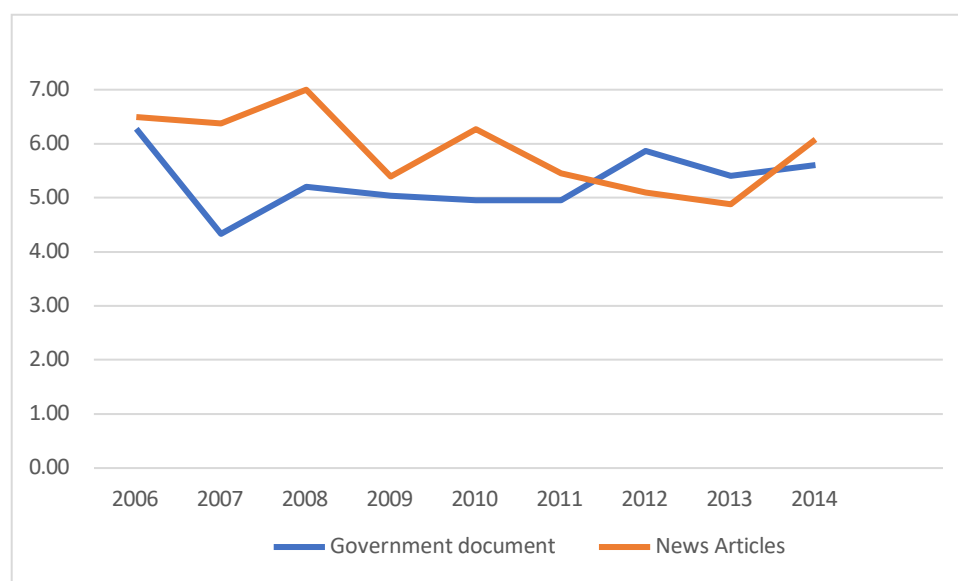
Moving on to testing Hypothesis 1, a bar chart is presented in the following section which was generated to visualize the trajectory of the veto player ideology of Group A (see Figure 7). As previously mentioned, the ideologies were studied in forms of images within the statements collected from the executive, legislative and media sources in India. These statements are opinions expressed by the veto players on the potential impact of liberalization of trade for

India with its largest trading partner.

To produce the results for the executive and legislative source, i.e., the government documents, a content analysis was conducted. The unit that was coded from the statements in the collected data were individual phrases produced by the veto player who appeared in the article. The phrases that were considered to be correlating with the positive image were similar or equivalent to the following phrases: 'FTA will provide Indian companies with larger and better businesses opportunities', greater trade and investment flow will be the result of this agreement' and liberalization 'would help the country to get out of negative export'. Each phrase was then marked on a 7-point Likert scale according to the direction and intensity of the veto players statements. Once all such phrases were rated, each actor's level of positivity was gauged by calculating the mean score of all its Likert scale ratings. Likewise, a mean score of all the Likert scale rating of the veto player in Group A were also calculated to study their yearly projection of ideological position with regards to the liberalization of trade with the EU.

To produce the results for the news articles, a frame analysis was conducted wherein the statements collected from all four the online news websites were categorized under frames i.e., economic consequences, human impact, conflict, and attribution of responsibility frame. Once the statements were categorized under its relevant frame, the statements were rated on a 7-point Likert scale similar to the government documents. This was done to analyze the direction and intensity of the opinion under each frame. Thereafter, to produce the trajectory in Figure 7, a Mean of all the Likert scale ratings was calculated for a yearly projection of their ideological position.

Figure 7: An overall trajectory of Group A opinions on liberalization (source: author's own).

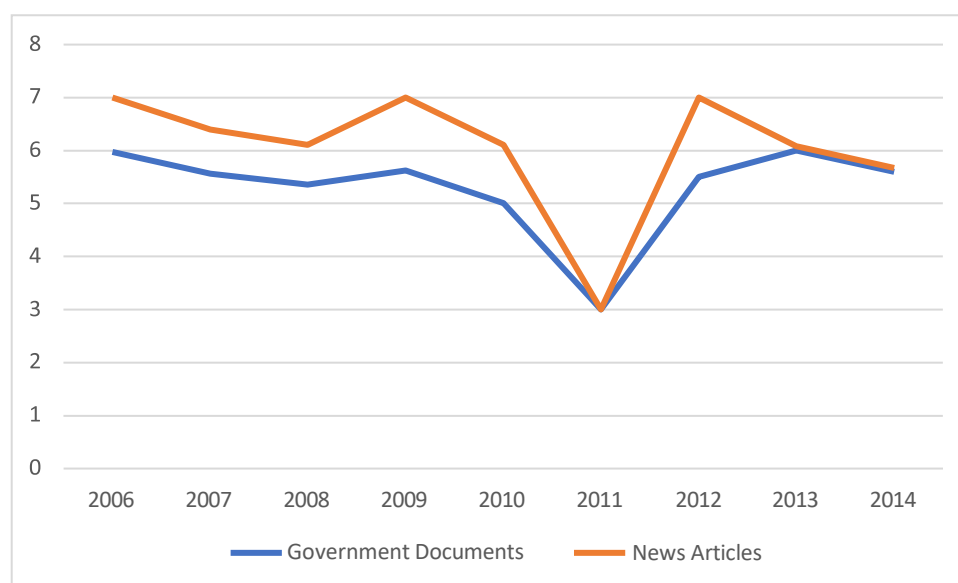


According to Hypothesis 1, the present study predicted that for the negotiation to formally start and the authorization phase to move forward into the negotiation stage, the ideological distance between Group A and the policy status quo has to be sufficiently far apart. This means that the ideology held by the actors involved in the first stage of negotiation i.e., the veto player of Group A, had a positive outlook towards the liberalization of trade with its largest trading partner i.e., the EU. As shown in Figure 7, Group A does hold a positive image of trade liberalization indicating sufficient ideological distance from the policy status quo, thereby providing support for Hypothesis 1. However, to present a deeper analysis of Hypothesis 1, the proceeding section will demonstrate ideological differences between specific veto players of Group A with the policy proposal and the status quo. By analyzing the view of individual players, it would be possible to determine if there is a sufficient level of ideological distance to support the start of the formal negotiation.

In India, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is responsible for conducting trade related negotiations. However, the Ministry usually relies on the approval of the Prime Minister before

proceeding with the negotiation, making Prime Minister the most important veto player amongst all the other members of veto players of both group A and B. Therefore, a bar chart is presented in Figure 8 which was generated as a means to visualize the trajectory of the Prime Ministers' ideological position during the period between 2006-early 2014.

Figure 8: Prime Ministers ideological position (source: author's own).



According to Hypothesis 1, for India to accept the EU's policy proposal at the authorization stage, the Prime Minister as a veto player must hold a positive image towards the liberalization of trade with the EU. To investigate this, the study analyzed the government and media documents and assessed the results between 2006-2007. The study found (as shown in Figure 8) that generally, while there is a slight difference between the mean scores of the government and media documents, but the trajectories exhibit similar positive ideology patterns during the authorization stage i.e., 2006 to 2007. This indicates that the Prime Minister had a consistent positive outlook towards trade liberalization with the EU during the authorization stage of the negotiation.

Furthermore, the study cites statements made by the Prime Minister that suggest that there was a positive view towards trade liberalization with the EU. For instance, the Prime Minister noted

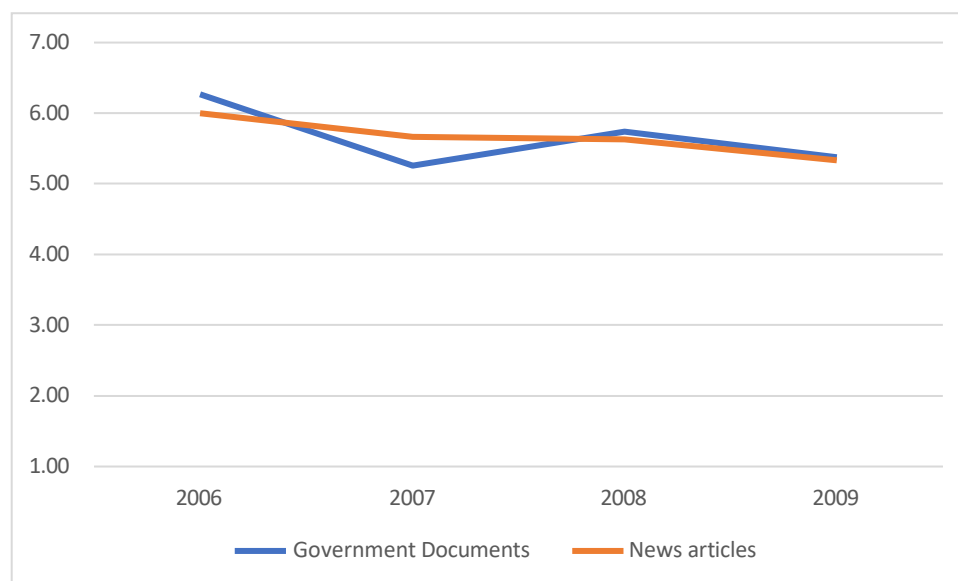
that the joint initiatives will lead to ‘strengthening of the existing bond’ and the gradual lowering of the barriers to bilateral trade and investment will result in ‘healthy conditions’ for a balanced trade and ‘increase the trade and capital flows’ for the country (India-EU Business Summit, 2005, p.3). Likewise, such collaborations between the two were considered to be in many ways advantageous in initiating agendas for further collaborations and development of new initiatives to accord greater opportunities for both sides (India-EU Business Summit, 2005; Ministry of External Affairs, 2006). Therefore, based on the evidence, the study concludes that the Prime Minister’s ideological position is arguably closer to the policy proposal of the EU compared to the protectionist policy status quo. In other words, the Prime Minister supported the idea of a free trade agreement with the EU, which aligns with the Hypothesis 1 that argues a positive ideology towards a liberalization of trade between veto players is necessary for the negotiation process to proceed to the next phase.

While the previous section discussed the Prime Minister’s ideological position towards liberalization of trade with the EU, this section will discuss the importance of the next group of veto players i.e., the HLTG in the India EU negotiation process, specifically their role in initiating the formal start of the negotiation of the FTA in 2007.

In 1974, India and EU (then known as EC) first strengthened their economic partnership through a comprehensive agreement which elevated their partnership to the ministerial level by establishing a Joint Commission to address any business-related issues such as trade, economic cooperation, industry, services, energy, telecommunication, tourism, private sector, investment, science and technology, intellectual property, agriculture, development cooperation, environment, and human resource development (Sachdeva, 2007, p. 45). Since then, Indian government has expressed a strong desire to work together with the EU. In fact, both India and EU established several discussion platforms to achieve a better business climate. Moreover, the Indian government expressed that the economic cooperation especially in the

area of trade and investment with the EU can lead to significant achievements (India-EU Business Summit, 2005). Therefore, institutions of high-level annual summits were established to maintain regular exchange of ideas and information on topics of shared interest between India and the EU especially in the area of economic cooperation to further deepen existing economic relations. It is during the seventh India-EU annual summit it was both the partners decided to take trade talks seriously to create an agreement that would benefit both India and the EU alongside the wider world (Sachdeva, 2007). Soon this resulted in the appointment of a high-level trade advisory group by the Minister of Commerce and Industry to assess the potential for an FTA with the EU. In 2007, under the advice of this high-level trade advisory group the formal negotiation of India-EU FTA started, making them a very important veto player in the research scenario. These trade advisory groups generally consist of Foreign Secretary, Foreign policy Advisor, Director General of Foreign Trade, Commerce Secretary, Chairman of Quality Council of India, Ambassador of India, Joint Secretary of Ministry of External Affairs, Secretary West, Secretary East, Secretary General of Europe India Chamber of Commerce. Therefore, the following section will present a visual of the trajectory of the High- level advisory groups ideological position during the period between 2006-early 2014. It is important to note here that although all efforts were made to retrieve the reports of the high- level trade advisory group during the authorization stage, none could be retrieved from the government websites. Therefore, some of the opinions of the members from the high-level trade advisors cannot be included. Those that could be included are named in the present research, i.e., Commerce Secretary; the Directorate General of Foreign Trade; Foreign Secretary; Secretary East and Secretary west of Ministry of External Affairs and Secretary General of Europe India Chamber of Commerce.

Figure 9: High-level Trade Advisory group ideological position during the early years of negotiation (*source: author's own*).



The research predicted that in order for the negotiation to move forward from authorization stage to the formal negotiation stage the veto players of group A should hold a positive view of liberalization of trade with the EU, and a wider ideological distance from the existing policy status quo. The HLTG, which was appointed by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry to study the potential for an FTA with the EU, was an important veto player for the present study. The results presented in Figure 9, both the mean score for the government and the media sources reveal that the High-Level Trade Advisory group also exhibit similar trajectory of positive ideological patterns during the authorization stage i.e., 2006 to 2007. This means that the ideology held by the High-level Trade Advisory group involved in the first stage of negotiation had a positive outlook towards the liberalization of trade with its largest trading partner i.e., the EU, which indicates sufficient ideological distance from the policy status quo. Therefore, this finding further supports the present study's Hypothesis 1.

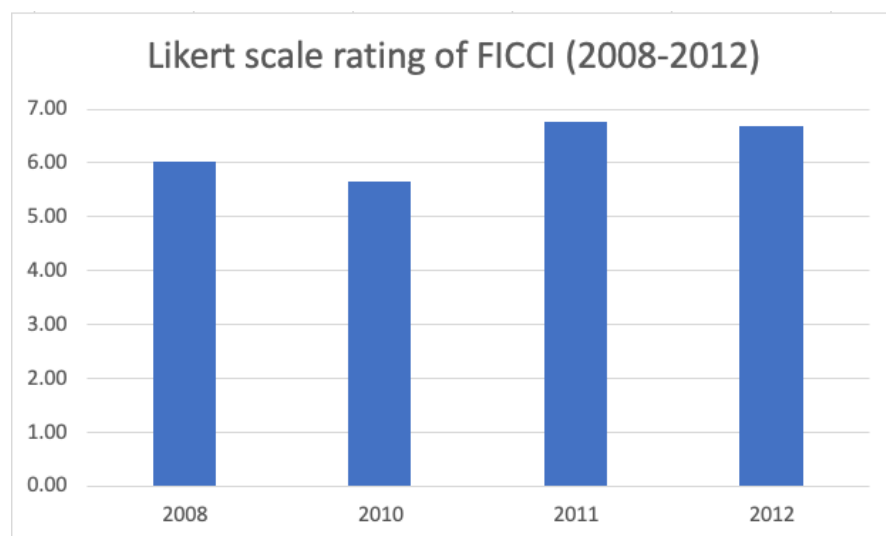
The previous section discussed the ideological position of HLTG, this section would therefore focus on the role of influential business associations like FICCI and CII as a principal veto player, in shaping the negotiators policy position towards the FTA. It is a well-known fact that

both the Ministry of Commerce and the Prime Minister held regular seminars and consultation sessions with the influential industrialists of the country to receive advice on the matters of trade and industry which included recommendations for the FTA. In fact, in the year 2004 the Prime Minister restored the Council of on Trade and Industry constituting some of the most influential business tycoons of India for example, Mr. Ratan Tata the chairman of TATA group, Mr. Mukesh Ambani chairman and managing director of India's largest private company Reliance, Mr. Rama Prasad Goenka the chairman of a multi-sector Indian industrial conglomerate, Mr. Keshub Mahindra the chairman of Mahindra group, Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla the chairman of Aditya Birla Group, Mr. Sunil Mittal the chairman of multinational telecommunications services company Airtel and so on (Prime Minister's Office, 2004). In this, several industries are actively involved in influencing the government's policy position. One such influential business association is the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). It plays a direct role in influencing trade policies, has closer interaction with the executive policy makers and was part of the HLTG during the authorization phase. Prior to 2006, the federation has also initiated joint group studies to explore the possibility of a free trade agreement between India and the EU (Financial Times, 2004).

A Likert scale average of the retrieved the EU for the FICCI shows a highly positive image towards the liberalization of trade with EU (see Figure 10). These findings are significant as they suggest that influential business associations such as the FICCI have been actively pressuring the government to enter an FTA for over a decade. And the fact that the government has been holding a regular seminar consultation session with these influential stakeholders to receive advice on the matters of trade and industry, including recommendation for the FTA, indicates that the positive ideological position of the HLTG during the authorization stage must have been influenced by the recommendations and pressures from these influential stakeholders. It is important to note here that the produced results are based on the frame analysis of the media sources since no governmental

sources were found.

Figure 10: FICCI ideological position as retrieved from news articles (source: author's own).

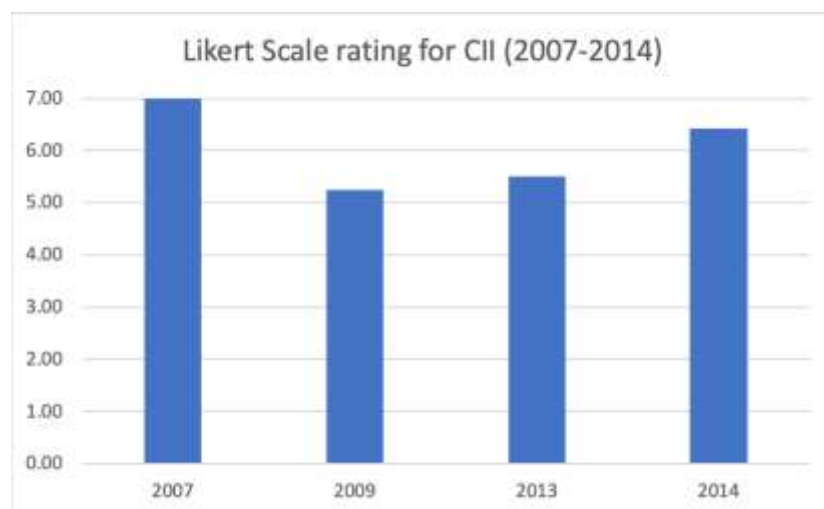


The involvement of FICCI in influencing the trade policy under the FTA and having closer interaction with the negotiators cannot be understated. Prior to the formal start of the FTA talks, the FICCI was given an opportunity to voice their interest in the formal negotiation agendas. While EU under the FTA was negotiating for a 90% elimination of tariffs in goods, the federation had voiced concerns that *"This 90 per cent coverage will not guarantee any real market access for products of export interest to India in the EU,"* and it believes that the FTA could only be beneficial to the Indian side if the EU provided *"meaningful market access to the products of export interest to India"* (Economic Times, 2008). The federation proposed an expansion of the scope of the negotiation to 95% to cover such merchandise goods. Following this, the negotiators began advocating for an asymmetrical deal in which the EU would require to eliminate 95% of their tariff lines while India would remove 90% of theirs. This proposal of the negotiators was a direct result of the involvement of FICCI in the negotiation talks. In fact, prior to the formal re-start of the negotiation talks in 2017, the chamber has been requesting the government to resume the FTA talks with the EU, highlighting the potential benefits of the agreement (Economic Times, 2016). This illustrates how influential business associations can play a significant role in shaping the agenda and the outcome of the agreement.

Likewise, another such principal veto player involved at the authorization stage from Group A who worked as a close consultant for the Commerce Ministry in creating future negotiation agendas for both India and EU were the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). Alongside the FICCI, the CII is the only other associated chamber of commerce that often-accompanied high-level trade delegations for India-EU trade talks. The data retrieved from them suggests that around the authorization phase, images held by the chamber were highly positive towards the liberalization of trade with the EU. The CII is also well-known for their anti-protectionist stance regarding trade with the EU. In the context of the liberalization of trade barriers between India and EU, the CII has proposed a tariff reduction of 90% on exports. In much the same way as the FICCI and the CII, this view was also adopted by the Department of Indian Commerce during the formal talks with EU as evidenced by a statement from the Commerce Minister of India: *“India intended to offer 90 per cent of its tariff lines (products) for duty free imports from the EU. In return, India expects the EU to eliminate duties on 95 per cent tariff lines.”* (Bhuyan and Zarabi, 2013). This indicates that there was a shared perspective on the trade liberalization between CII, FICCI and the negotiator. Furthermore, it also suggests, the proposal of the two chambers must have played an important role in shaping the negotiators stance on the trade liberalization with the EU as they are prominent industrial chambers and close consultant for the Commerce Ministry of India. Likewise, their average score across the years demonstrates their converging views regarding trade liberalization (see Figures 11). Overall, the involvement of the two chambers in the India-EU FTA negotiations and their positive ideology towards trade liberalization with the EU lend support to the research hypothesis that the Indian veto players from group A had similar ideological position that was closer to the alternative policy proposal than the existing protectionist policy status quo. Specifically, the negotiators and the principal organizations favored trade liberalization and view it as a means to enhance economic growth and development for the country, which surpassed the protectionist status quo, leading to the decision to initiate policy change and

formally start the India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007.

Figure 11: CII ideological position as retrieved from news articles (source: author's own).



Any trade related policies, domestic or international, are formulated and implemented primarily by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry under the leadership of the Minister of Commerce. Therefore, in order to gain better understanding of the country's decision related to the FTA, it is important to analyze the ideological position of the Minister of Commerce who is responsible for formulating the trade policies. The commerce minister's position can play a crucial role in influencing the stance the country takes on the EU FTA, making the minister's view on liberalization and protectionism essential to study. Therefore, this section will analyze the ideological position of the Minister of Commerce as revealed by the research findings.

Figure 12: Minister of Commerce and Industry ideological position as retrieved from news articles (source: author's own).

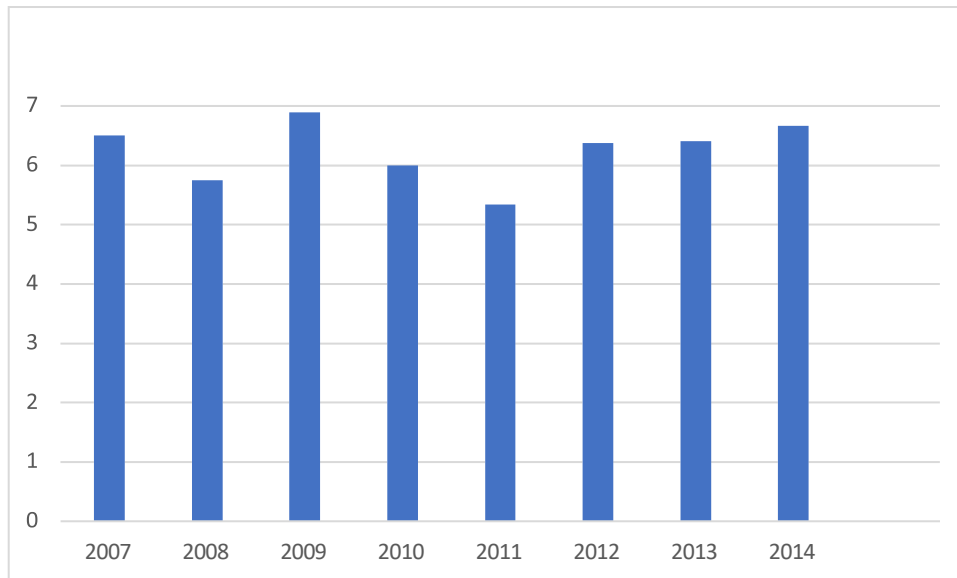
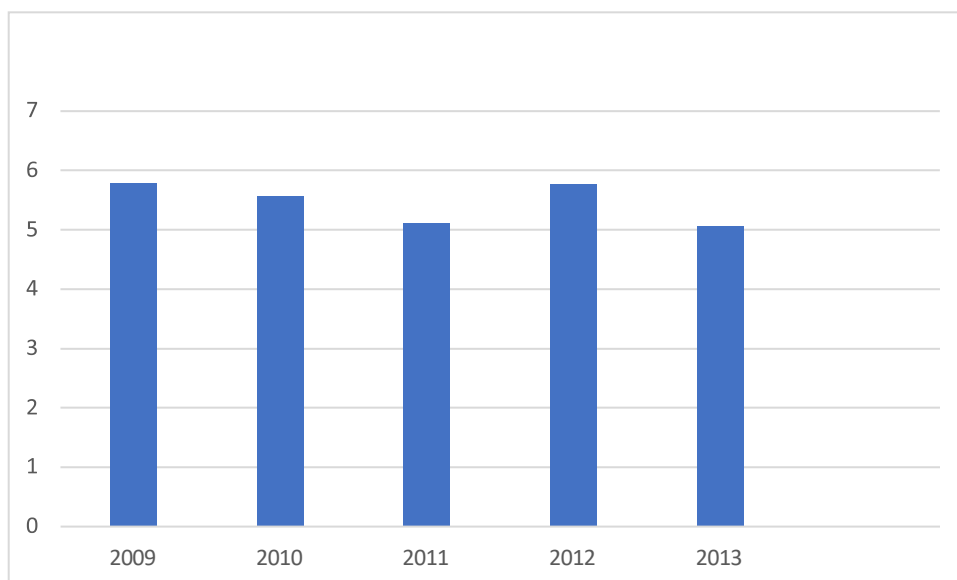


Figure 13: Minister of Commerce and Industry ideological position as retrieved from government documents (source: author's own).



The section notes that while from 2007 it was visible that the Minister of Commerce maintained a positive image during the early phases of the negotiations, however, around 2010-2011 there

was a slight dip which could also be noticed in the graphs for FICCI and CII (Figures 10,11, 12 and 13). This could be explained by the increasing pressure from the EU to adopt external norms and values through the FTA. For instance, EU's interference in India's human rights matters, labor standards and environmental issues through the trade talks was not accepted by the Indian actors who occupy key positions in the foreign policy decision-making. In an interview with Times of India, the Minister of Commerce stated that there were no possible chances of “commas and semi-colons on labour law” (Despande, 2006). He further stated that EU's continuous insistence to include such clauses in the FTA might act as “a deal breaker” (Despande, 2006). The same was said by another commerce minister who asserted that non-trade issues are “extraneous” matters and including it in the FTA could prove to be “counterproductive” (Sharma, 2009). The EU is thought to have been imposing its own norms and values to its trade partners without taking into consideration the historical and political background, as well as the socio-cultural legacy of India. It is believed that such acts were meant to safeguard international and economic interests in favor of EU as opposed to having any genuine beliefs in the norms themselves (Jain and Pandey, 2013, p. 117; Jain, 2009, p. 179). The FICCI echoed this viewpoint where they mentioned in similar fashion about leaving “extraneous” matters out of the FTA which are considered “counterproductive” (The Hindu, 2010). While these are ongoing issues with the India-EU FTA, the aforementioned actors especially the Minister of Commerce remained optimistic in concluding the negotiation talks. This is indicated in the results as shown in figures 12 and 13, which suggests that the Minister despite certain issues with the EU maintained a positive attitude towards liberalization trade with the EU. This aligns with the present study's Hypothesis 1, which suggests that during the authorization stage of the India-EU FTA negotiation process, negotiators and principal organizations favored trade liberalization, which surpassed the protectionist status quo leading to the start of the negotiation phase.

Finally, it is important to investigate the ideological position of the Cabinet of Ministers. Cabinet being the apex decision-making institution of the country, regulates the course of foreign relations of India by providing necessary directions. Therefore, while formulating trade policy the Ministry of Commerce and Industry holds Inter-Ministerial consultations with the Cabinet of ministries. The information gathered through consultation is then utilized to inform the country's international trade policy agenda. Consequently, approval on matters relating to international trade policy is also gained from the Cabinet before they are implemented. For foreign trade negotiation oftentimes, specialized cabinet committees are set up to look into specific issues areas and report the observations and recommendations to the Cabinet of Ministers for consideration. However, the decision to accept or reject the suggestions depends fully on to the Cabinet. For this reason, it is essential for the present research to investigate the ideological position of the Cabinet of Ministers such as, Minister of Agriculture and Farmers welfare, Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Minister of Finance, Minister of Heavy Duty, Minister of Textiles, Minister of Health and Family welfare, Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Science and Technology. With that being said, the opinion of the Minister of Commerce and Industry was excluded as it has been previously analyzed in the previous section.

Figure 14: Cabinet of Ministers ideological position as retrieved from government documents (source: author's own).

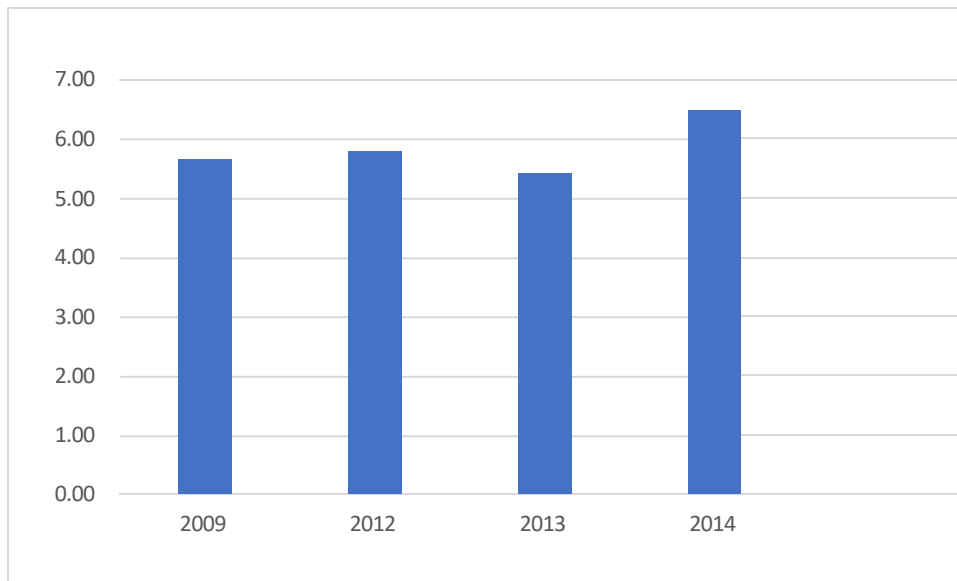
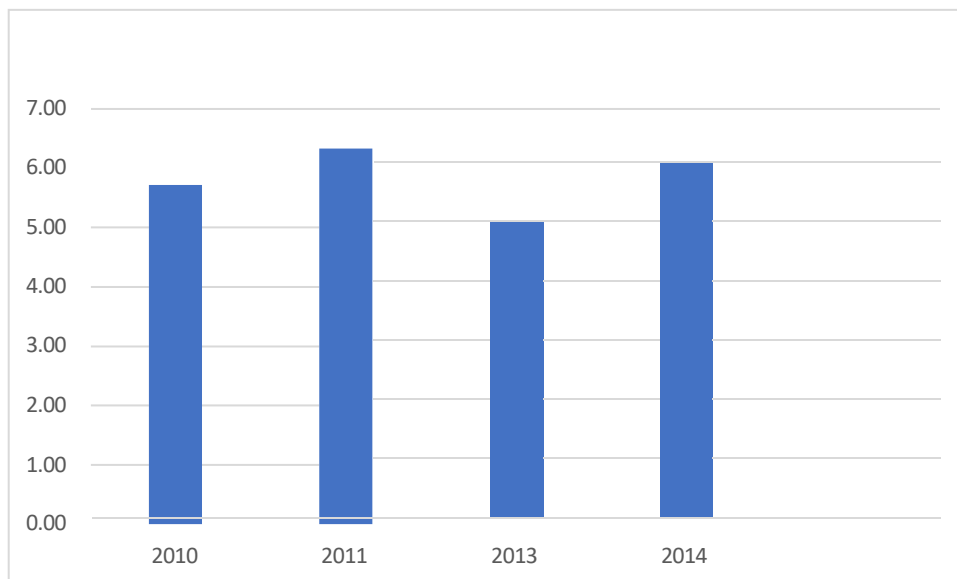


Figure 15: Cabinet of Ministers ideological position as retrieved from online news articles (source: author's own).



The findings shown in Figure 14 and 15, suggest that both the mean score for the government and the media document reveal show similar positive ideological patterns for the Cabinet as the other veto players during the early years of the negotiation. This means that the Cabinet of Minister had a positive outlook towards the liberalization of trade with the EU indicating

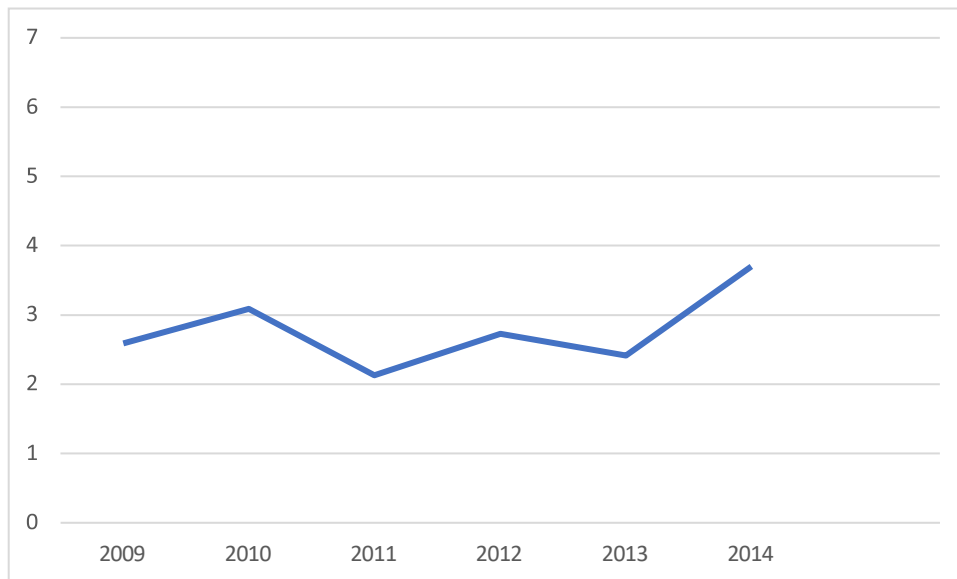
sufficient ideological distance from the protectionist policy status quo, which was a necessary condition for initiating policy change towards trade liberalization. Their positive outlook also suggests that there was a shared belief amongst the group A veto players that EU FTA can bring economic benefits to the country and improve their relations with the other international partners. Therefore, the positive ideology of the Cabinet Ministers alongside other veto players from group A, played a crucial role in the decision to initiate policy change and start the India-EU FTA negotiation in 2007.

To answer the second section of the research question i.e., ‘to what extent India’s decision to halt the India-EU FTA talks were predominantly influenced by the ideology of a diverse range of veto players’, let us now turn to hypothesis two which is as follows:

H2: During the negotiation phase, the domestic veto players - including coalition and opposition members of the two houses of the Parliament, as well as influential businesses and service organizations - had a closer ideological distance to the policy status quo. This ideological difference came into conflict with the negotiators and other veto players, who favored liberalization of trade with international partners. The result was the halt of negotiation talks in 2013 due to the inability of the negotiators to bridge the ideological gap with the domestic veto players who preferred protectionism.

To investigate the second hypothesis, the study utilized a second arguments presented by George Tsebellis’s Veto Player Theory which is: ideological distance between veto players has the potential to cause difficulty to reach a policy agreement required for an international treaty to be concluded. (Tsebelis 1999).

Figure 16: Ideological position of veto players in Group B as retrieved from government documents (source: author's own).

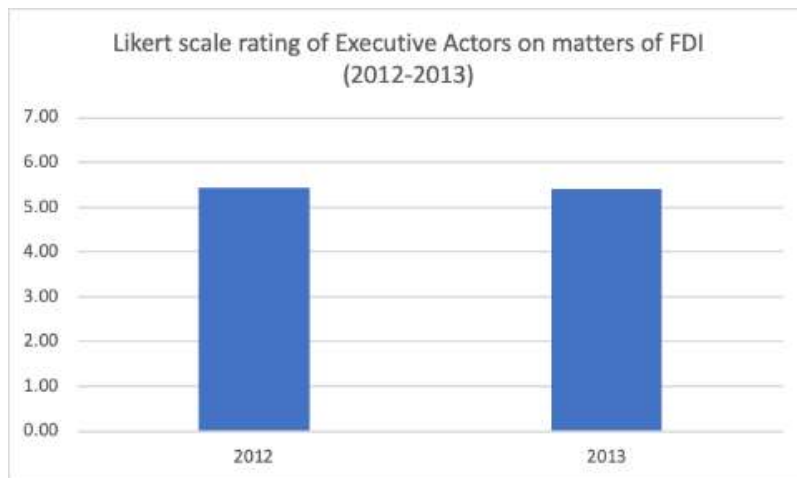


For Hypothesis 2, it is predicted that increases in the quantity of veto players will lead to higher policy stability, i.e., the current status quo becomes more difficult to change due to the ideological distance between the different groups of veto players (Tsebelis, 2014). In other words, the present study contends that the trade negotiations were halted as a result of the ideological differences between the Group A and B actors. This means that the Group B actors during the ongoing negotiation phase should have a negative image towards the liberalization of trade with the EU. As shown in Figure 16, Group B does hold a negative image towards liberalization indicating hostility towards trade liberalization while favouring protectionism. This is especially true from the year 2007 onwards where there is a sharp deterioration in Group B's image of the potential economic impact of the EU trade negotiations. For this reason, Hypothesis 2 was supported by the current data. With that being said, the proceeding sections will delve deeper and elaborate on where the ideological cohesions and distances lie between the actors on several occasions related to the FTA.

In contrast to the overwhelmingly positive images held by the actors in Group A, Group B on

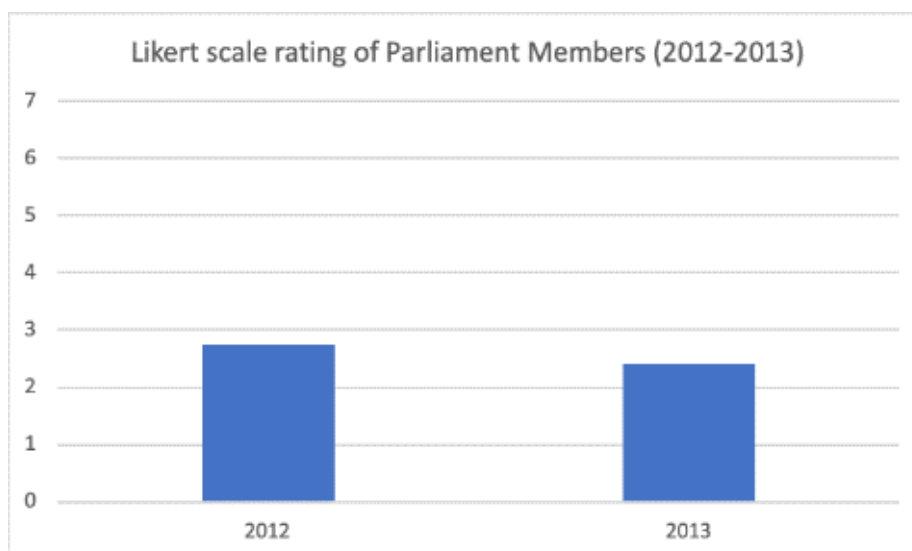
the other hand was demonstrably opposed to the liberalization as evidenced by their consistently low ratings. The images collected from Group B include views from actors who joined the trade consultations at a later stage i.e., after the formal negotiations started. This includes the Parliamentarians and stakeholders such as India's leading manufacturers from all sectors as well as food marketing associations, federations and organizations. During the period between 2010-2013, when the negotiation talks were facing a roadblock, one of the major issues was the EU's demand for liberalization of FDI in sectors such as banking, insurance and multi-brand retail businesses. The proposal was well received by the eminent industrialists of India who are members of FICCI, the CII and the Prime Minister's Council on Trade and Industry. The most significant advocate from this council includes Sunil Mittal – the head of CII and his younger brother Ranjan Mittal – the president of FICCI, who expressed their support for the liberalization of FDI (NDTV Profit, 2011). Consequently, the executive government agreed for the liberalization of FDI. In fact, if seen the government ideological position when expressing opinion on liberalizing the FDI cap for foreign investment in Parliamentary debate between 2012 and 2013, it indicates a positive image (see Figure 17).

Figure 17: Likert scale rating of executive actors on matters of FDI (source: author's own).



However, any amendments of the FDI required ratification from Parliament as it was directly involved with bringing changes in FDI-related laws within the country. While the notion received support from certain Parliament members, however, most remained hostile towards it as shown by their strong negative image between 2012 and 2013 when the Parliamentary debates were ongoing (see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Likert scale rating of Parliament Members (2012-2013), (source: author's own).



The liberalization was thought to be detrimental for the domestic sectors of the country as it was believed that the massive tariff reductions would threaten vulnerable sectors of the country. More specifically, the liberalization of FDI would encourage multinational companies such as Tesco, Walmart and Ikea to import large amounts of cheap quality products into the Indian market. This will devastate local fishermen, farmers and small businesses who will be outcompeted and pushed into poverty and unemployment (Lok Sabha, Debate Matter Under Rule 377, 2009; 2010 and 2012). Such statements provided supports the hypothesis 2 that veto players of group B, which includes members of the coalition and opposition in the Indian Parliament, had a closer ideological distance to the policy status quo and favored protectionism opposed liberalization during the negotiation phase of the India-EU FTA. The opposition to liberalizing FDI in sectors such as insurance and multi-brand retail, despite the positive position of the negotiators, highlights the ideological conflict between different domestic veto players or the negotiating agents and their parliamentary principal. As a result of this conflict between the veto players the negotiators had to abandon their plan to liberalize FDI (Economic Times, 2011). This proves that it was highly challenging for the negotiators to bridge the gap between their liberalization goals and the protectionist preferences of Parliamentary veto players. This lack of ideological cohesiveness is highly likely to have eventually resulted in the Parliament exerting their power and influence to halt the India-EU FTA. They did so by using their political leverage to block the proposed policy change. As the change in FDI required parliamentary ratification, their strong opposition to the proposed policy during the parliamentary debates made it difficult for the negotiators to implement changes related to FDI. Majority of the Parliament members remained hostile towards the idea as they believed such changes would bring negative impact on the vulnerable sectors of the country, which includes local fishermen, farmers, and small businesses. As a result, the proposed policy change failed to gain enough support to be implemented. This opposition was particularly significant for the EU lobby which

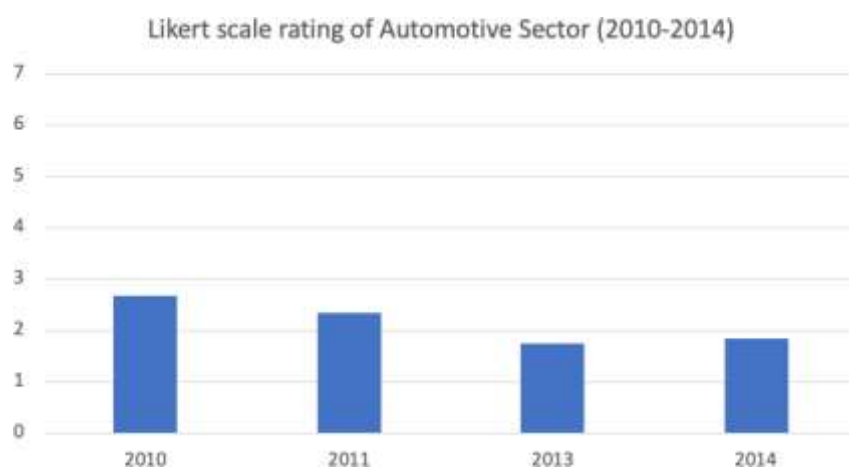
has made the demand for a higher FDI limit for banking, retail, and insurance a priority during the negotiation (Eberhardt and Kumar, p. 22, 2010; Nataraj, p.5, 2015). The failure to liberalize the FDI in retail could have resulted in lack of progression in the negotiation talks.

The negotiations on liberalization of tariff in the Automobile sector has also been a big issue for the negotiation. Presently, European cars face 60% of tariff barriers in India and for the FTA, EU has proposed to reduce it to 30% for all passenger cars. Automobile company giant TATA motor's president who is also a member of Prime Minister's Council of Trade and Industry has expressed support for this position. Similar to the views of TATA group president, the Commerce Ministry had also expressed a willingness to compromise in this sector as evidenced from the statement of former Commerce Secretary "why should we be taxing a customer if 30% duty is a good enough protection.... we can come down to 30% which is also substantial, I would say I don't think that all the rejected European cars will be flooded into the Indian market" (Rajya Sabha TV, 2014).

However, the automotive sectors have opposed this as evidenced by their consistently negative image averaged across all retrievable data (see Figure 19). Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), an apex industry association, was particularly vocal in opposing the reduction of tariff. This opposition was rooted on the belief that opening the sector would "kill investment and technology inflow" (Doval, 2012) and would completely divert from the targets set by the government through its own flagship program 'Make in India' (Zee News, 2015). While the SIAM perceived the liberalization would have an adverse impact on the domestic automotive manufacturing sector, the negotiator expressed support for the proposed reduction and believed that the liberalization of the Automobile sector would instead be beneficial for customers in India. The ideological clash rose from their divergent view with each group seeking to promote their own interest and blocking any proposal from the other, thereby culminating policy stability (Tsebelis, 2014) in the form of stalled FTA talks. SIAM utilized

their influence and lobbying power to stall the progress of the negotiation by pressuring the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for exclusion of the labor-intensive sectors from the proposed pact. Moreover, they used their influence to reach different media platforms and disseminate a negative image of the proposed FTA by highlighting the potential loss of investment in the sector if tariffs were reduced and presented this as a significant risk to the industry (Doval, 2012). This strategy helped them to frame the debate in a way that was favorable to their interest and gain support from other stakeholders from within the automobile industry to strengthen their bargaining position making it difficult for the negotiators to reach an agreement. SIAM along with other auto companies such as Indian multinational automobile manufacturing corporation, Maruti Suzuki and Toyota together presented a united front and resist any proposed reduction in tariffs (Economic Times Now, 2012). This alliance of both the Indian and the foreign auto companies collectively utilized media platform to promote their shared interests of protecting the domestic automotive manufacturing sector from potential harm of the India-EU FTA. As a result, the negotiators faced significant opposition from a powerful group of stakeholders who were aligned against any policy changes that could threaten their interests. By presenting a united front and using their influence to gain support against the proposed reduction in tariffs, these veto players effectively impacted the progress in negotiation talks. This highlights the significant role the veto players can play in shaping policy outcomes, especially when they are able to gain significant public support for their policy position.

Figure 19: Likert scale rating of the Automotive Sector (2010-2014), (source: author's own).



In Agriculture, the EU has demanded for zero tariff on dairy products, which has been a subject of issue in this FTA. India's largest food marketing organization, the Gujrat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation has opposed saying that the proposed trade deal would "rob the domestic dairy industry and 80 million farmers that are connected to it, from their rightful access to a growing market within India" (Sen, 2017). Dairy giant Amul has also launched campaigns to halt talks with the EU (Ganguly, 2013; La Via Campesina, 2013). Taking into accounts the interest of the dairy producers and agricultural sectors in India, the Indian Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture expressed concerns about the proposed agriculture and dairy demands of the Free Trade Agreement as evidenced in the forty eighth report for Demands for Grants of 2013-14, the department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries. In the report presented to Parliament, the committee stated that it does not agree to move forward with any demands for tariff concessions on dairy products and the decision has been conveyed to the Department of Commerce (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2013). This suggests that the Indian Parliament is not a passive observer but an active participant in the EU-India FTA negotiation process with a clear stance. Furthermore, the report states that "the matter is under negotiation" which implies that the Parliament is still discussing the matter with the negotiators and there

was difference in opinion between both the veto players that may not have been fully resolved at the time of the enquiry. This suggests that the veto players were unable to come to a consensus on the issue which could have led to the stalling of the talks. However, it is important to point out that disagreement over specific issues in an FTA negotiation involving multiple players is common, and it can be challenging to formulate an agreement that satisfies all the parties involved. If veto players such as the parliament and the negotiators have disagreement over matters related to the agreement, it must have created additional challenges to reach a consensus, as the Parliamentary support is crucial for any ratification of the agreement leading to the temporary halt in talks until consensus was reached on specific issues that caused the disagreement.

In the service sectors, EU is demanding for the Indian government to provide wider access to Indian professional market especially for accountancy and legal services (the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, 2012), while the Indian government is facing strong opposition from the domestic professional sectors, like the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) which is the largest Indian professional accounting body of India under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India, the Bar Council of Indian (BCI) and the Council of Architecture, making it difficult for the government to provide EU with greater Mode 4 access under the FTA (Khorana, n.d; Modwel, and Singh, 2012). This suggests that these domestic professional bodies as veto players, were concerned about the potential impact of increased competition from EU professionals on their own industries and were therefore resistant to any proposed policy to liberalize the sector to EU. Similarly, giant pharmaceutical companies under the European Pharmaceutical Industry Association (EFPIA) have been lobbying with the EU to push India for stricter rule on IP protection (EFPIA, 2011). Two Pharmaceutical giants of India, i.e., the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) and Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA), urged the government not to include patent infringement issue in the FTA (Das, 2013). The fact that the IPA and IDMA urged the negotiators not to include IPR issue in the

FTA indicates that there was significant opposition from the Indian pharmaceutical industry relating to stricter rules on IP protection. While the Commerce Ministry did not support the IPR demand, the PM's office requested the relevant ministries to debate this proposal, indicating that there may be some level of interest and willingness to consider the proposal (Reddy, 2010; Shankar, 2011). It is also possible that the negotiators were attempting to balance the interests of different stakeholders, including the pharmaceutical industry and other domestic sectors, as well as the EU's demands for stronger IP protection. This suggests that veto players had conflicting interests on issues related to intellectual property rights, and the disagreement between could have made it more difficult for the negotiators to reach a consensus and make progress in the negotiations, leading to a halt in the negotiations. These conflicting positions on trade liberalization were influenced by various interests and ideologies held by different veto players. This context of the present study this finding supports hypothesis 2, which suggests that during the negotiation phase, domestic veto players of group B which includes influential businesses, service organizations, and coalition and opposition members of the two houses of Parliament, had a closer ideological distance to the policy status quo, which favored protectionism. And the failure of negotiators to bridge the ideological gap with these domestic veto players led to the halt of negotiation talks in 2013.

While veto players from different sectors in group B has strongly opposed the trade deal for several reasons, the textile manufacturing is the only sector within Group B that has maintained a moderately positive image of trade liberalization with the EU and has pressurized the government to create free market access to with the EU. Its support was largely based on the belief that widening of market access for the Indian Apparel in EU was imperative for the growth of the sector. This finding supports hypothesis 2 of the present study as it shows that different veto players of the domestic sectors had varying levels of support for or opposition to the FTA negotiations with the EU. The textile industry's positive attitude towards trade liberalization with the EU contrasts with the negative attitude of the other veto players who are

opposing liberalization of domestic sectors, such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), the Bar Council of Indian (BCI), and the Council of Architecture. This also came into conflict with the ideological position of the negotiators and other veto players who also favored liberalization of trade with EU. Overall, the different ideological positions of veto players in different sectors may have contributed to the inability of the negotiators to bridge the ideological gap with the domestic veto players who favored the policy status quo ultimately leading to the halt of the negotiation in 2013. For an overview of the average score for the aforementioned sectors, see Figure 20.

Figure 20: Average Likert scale rating by sector across 2006-2014 (source: author's own).



Overall, the study revealed that there was relatively consistency in the perception of Group A negotiators and stakeholders throughout both the authorization and negotiation stages. These negotiators and stakeholders consistently exhibited a positive stance towards liberalization, emphasizing the potential economic benefits of a comprehensive FTA. This suggests that their perception remained consistent, indicating a continuity of their pro-liberalization position. On the other hand, Group B stakeholders, who were more actively involved during the negotiation stage, displayed negative stance towards India-EU FTA. While they were not engaged during

the authorization stage, their involvement in the negotiation stage brought forth divergent views that ultimately caused a range of complexities leading to a halt in the negotiation talks in 2013. The findings highlight the significance of considering the multidimensional nature of stakeholders and the influence of ideological differences among the veto players. Therefore, it can be concluded that while there was limited change in perception within Group A negotiators and stakeholders, the significant shift in the decision to halt the talks in 2013 occurred primarily due to the inclusion of Group B stakeholders and their divergent views during the negotiation stage. The increased number of veto players and the ideological differences among them contributed to a more complex and dynamic negotiation process which ultimately made reaching a consensus more challenging.

5.4 Discussion

Taking all the evidence together it can be argued that during the authorization stage of the India-EU FTA agreement, there was a clear alignment of ideological perspective between the negotiators as well as the influential business organizations such as the FICCI and the CII in Group A. The convergence of ideology was characterized by a shared positive outlook towards liberalization of trade with the EU. This shared positive ideology played a crucial role in laying the foundation for the initiation of the negotiation in the authorizing stage and influenced the decision-making process leading up to the establishment of the HLTG. They supported their stance towards liberalization, with economic arguments that highlighted the need for enhanced trade relations with the EU in order to unlock potential economic benefits that could be derived from a comprehensive FTA. In their public discourse the negotiators and business organizations emphasized the potential economic benefits, including increased market access, technology transfers, and export opportunities, that a comprehensive FTA could bring to India. Their positive ideology towards liberalization, especially driven by the perceived economic benefits, played a crucial role in their decision to start the negotiation talks, as they believed that engaging in discussions with the EU was a strategic step towards realizing their objectives of expanding

trade and reaping the advantages associated with a comprehensive FTA. This positive stance resonated with the broader economic vision of the Indian government at the time, which recognized the importance of international trade and integration for sustainable economic growth. This alignment of ideologies between the negotiators and the business organizations helped to garner support and justify the authorization of the FTA talks through the HLTG. The HLTG provided a platform for engaging in substantive discussions and deliberations on the FTA. The positive ideology towards liberalization served as a guiding principle during the HLTG meetings, shaping the negotiation agenda and setting the stage for exploring mutually beneficial trade-related issues.

As the negotiation talks progressed from the authorization stage to the negotiation stage of the India-EU FTA talks, it was evident that the number of veto players increased, subsequently exerting a significant influence on the decisions-making, and ultimately contributing to the stalemate in the negotiation process. This increase in veto players can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, differing policy preferences and goals of various stakeholders with that of the negotiators regarding liberalization. As seen in the results, the negotiators and some stakeholders actively advocated for extensive liberalization, driven by their belief in the economic benefits and opportunities it could bring. Therefore, they staunchly supported the notion of increased trade openness and actively promoted policies aimed at expanding market access, fostering economic growth and capitalizing on new opportunities presented by the trade agreement. Conversely, other stakeholders voiced concerns over potential negative consequences associated with such liberalization. These concerns were related to various aspects of the trade agreement, such as the potential impact on small scale domestic industries, employment, market access and other socio-economic impact such as unfair industry competition and income distribution. The presence of these divergent created a situation wherein stakeholders held conflicting views regarding the desired level and scope of liberalization within the trade agreement. The clash of perspective introduced complexities into

the negotiation process and played a crucial role in the emergence of veto players. These veto players, driven by their own desire to safeguard their own interests, utilized their influence to shape the negotiation outcomes and protect their respective constituencies.

Secondly, the lack of effective communication between the negotiator and the stakeholders, coupled with diverging preferences contributed to a situation where multiple veto players emerged, with each group seeking to protect their own interests and preferences. From the evidence acquired it can be inferred that the negotiators from Group A were motivated by their own ideological beliefs and preferences towards liberalization. Consequently, their focus on liberalization led them to prioritize reaching a comprehensive agreement with the EU over having discussions and consultations with the stakeholders who would be directly impacted by the agreement. Notably, the negotiators appear to have selectively consulted with only two business organizations, namely the CII and the FICCI, while excluding other important stakeholders. This selective consultation process could be seen as a reflection of their ideological belief and preferences towards liberalization, where they viewed the CII and the FICCI as more supportive of their agenda, and therefore, considered them as sufficient representative of the broader stakeholder community. However, this approach neglected the diverse perspective and interest of the other stakeholders from both Group A and B who held different opinions and concerns regarding the potential impact of liberalization of trade with the EU. This lack of communication between the negotiators as agents and the principal created a situation where the latter were no longer aware of the decisions being taken on their behalf, rendering the negotiation process unrepresentative. The fundamental differences in policy preferences and goals between the negotiators and the stakeholders were not sufficiently addressed through regular communication, wherein a significant section of the stakeholders accused the negotiators of pursuing their own interest that is contrary to the benefit of the principal. In this context, various stakeholders started to demand transparency and participation in the negotiation process. These demands played a crucial role in the emergence of veto

players, as stakeholders sought to protect their interest and ensure their voices were heard. This increase in the number of veto players during the negotiation stage had significant implications on the negotiators, who now faced increasing pressure from the stakeholders to align policy positions with the best interest of the stakeholders. This mounting pressure made the negotiation process increasingly complex and difficult, ultimately leading to a prolonged stalemate to reach a comprehensive agreement with the EU.

Lastly, the challenges faced by the negotiators were further intensified by the political landscape in India at that time. The UPA government in power during the negotiation period, was already struggling to maintain its alliances over several issues and had barely survived a vote of confidence in the parliament in 2008. As noted earlier, with lack of simple majority in parliament, the government relied heavily on external support to maintain Parliamentary confidence and govern effectively. However, the government's failure to communicate effectively and involve its own allies in the decision-making process regarding the FTA exacerbated the situation leading to the loss of confidence in the government among the members of the House. Consequently, the Parliament unanimously passed a resolution demanding scrutiny of the FTA (Mishra, 2013) and the members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee in Commerce including members of the ruling party and its allies' issued warnings to the government to not sign the FTA with the EU until a thorough discussion over concerning matters were addressed in the Indian Parliament (The Third World Network, 2013). Therefore, despite the negotiators positive ideology towards liberalization of domestic sectors aligned with the demands of the EU, the lack of support from the parliament hindered the negotiators' ability to secure necessary backing for the liberalization of the sectors in the India-EU negotiation. One such demand that faced significant resistance was the elimination of FDI restrictions in the retail sector (European Parliament, 2013). This dynamic highlight the complexities and challenges of a negotiation process. It emphasizes the intricate interplay between political alliances, parliamentary support, stakeholder consensus and decision-making within a

democratic framework.

Taking these results together, the present study provided empirical evidence which reinforces the idea that domestic politics hold significant influence over a government's policy position and thus has substantial impact on the possibility of a government joining or leaving an international negotiation. The empirical evidence presented in this research reinforces the idea that domestic factors, particularly the presence of veto players, played a crucial role in shaping India's trade policy decisions related to the EU FTA. The findings of this research emphasize the non-unitary nature of the foreign policy decision-making, especially when we consider India's democracy and the resultant political intricacies involved. More specifically, the present study identified the role of different levels of domestic veto players and their ideological position in shaping India's trade policy decisions related to the India-EU FTA. The cohesiveness between the veto players involved in the authorization stage led to India's decision to formally initiate the negotiation in 2007. However, the presence of ideological gap throughout the negotiation phase from 2008 to 2014 made it challenging for the actors to reach a mutually acceptable position for both domestic and international counterparts. Ultimately, this ideological difference among India's executive, legislative and private actors resulted in the halt of the negotiations. In conclusion, these findings contributed to our understanding of the complexities involved in foreign policy decision-making, shedding light on the non-unitary nature of decision-making processes and the impact of domestic factors on international negotiations.

In the following chapter, the focus will shift towards the introduction of the conclusion, where the key findings and insights from the research will be summarized. This will be followed by a brief discussion on the contribution of the study to the existing literature on the field of trade-related foreign policy decision-making. Furthermore, the limitations of the research will be acknowledged and addressed, providing a comprehensive evaluation of the study's scope and boundaries. Finally, the chapter will conclude by proposing future directions for research,

identifying areas that warrant further investigation and potential avenues for expanding upon the current findings.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Thesis Summary.

In conclusion, the present research has contributed to the understanding of the complex and challenging nature of trade-related foreign policy decision-making, specifically within the context of the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations. The primary objective of this study was to explore the underlying factors that contributed to the initial progress followed by the subsequent prolonged stalemate in the India-EU FTA talks. Similar to many other trade negotiations, the negotiation process of the India-EU FTA is also characterized by several complexities and intricacies. It involves discussions that span across diverse policy domains, necessitating continuous negotiation and cooperation among numerous actors. These actors include interest groups, stakeholders from different sectors such as health, finance, legal, construction, manufacturing, and agriculture, as well as bureaucratic entities and political figures.

To comprehensively analyze the decision-making process within the context of the negotiation talks, the present study adopted George Tsebelis's concept of Veto Player. This theoretical framework offered the study with a systematic approach to understanding the interactions and influences of the actors involved in the shaping of the policy outcomes. By employing the framework, the study aimed to identify the key players and their ability to veto or block policy proposals, thereby shedding light on the inherent complexities of the negotiation process.

A significant advantage of utilizing the Veto Player Theory is its consideration of the ideological positions of different actors involved in decision-making. Within trade negotiations, domestic actors often represent diverse policy domains and sectors, each with their own ideological position and policy goals. By examining the ideological positions of these veto players, the study was able to gain a deeper understanding of how the preferences and

priorities of such actors can influence the negotiation process.

Moreover, the Veto Player theory also facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the power and influence of these actors. It allowed the study to explore how various actors, based on their ability to block or veto certain policy proposals, can either facilitate or hinder progress in negotiations. By studying the interactions and power dynamics among various veto players, the research was able to uncover one of the underlying reasons for the prolonged stalemate observed in the India-EU FTA talks.

Additionally, Veto Player Theory offered the present research with a comprehensive analytical framework that accounts for the intricacies of decision-making and the complexities of multi-level governance. It helped the study to capture the interplay between different levels of decision-makers within India. This approach also facilitated a nuanced understanding of the factors shaping the negotiation process, the obstacles encountered, and the underlying reasons for the prolonged stalemate. In summary, the application of Veto Player Theory enhanced the study's ability to comprehensively examine the decision-making process within the India-EU FTA negotiations. It enabled a thorough exploration of the interactions, influences, and power dynamics among the diverse actors involved, shedding light on the complexities of trade-related foreign policy decision-making.

The findings of this research highlight the intricate nature of the India-EU negotiation. It is evident that the negotiation has been characterized by both high expectations and significant challenges. The involvement of multiple actors with overlapping interests across various policy domains created a dynamic environment where different levels of veto players actively compete to shape policy outcomes according to their own political goals. Initially, Indian decision-makers displayed optimism and positive stance towards the negotiation. However, as the time progressed slower progress and missed deadlines started to overshadow the initial enthusiasm. The presence of divergent ideological positions among veto players emerged as a

significant factor contributing to the obstacles encountered during the negotiation process. These ideological differences hindered the alignment of interest and impedes the parties from reaching consensus on crucial issues, ultimately leading to a standstill in 2013.

The study's findings highlight the significance of ideological cohesiveness among veto players, as evident in the early stages of the India-EU negotiations. The results suggest that when veto players share similar ideological positions, it can facilitate the formal initiation of talks. On the contrary, broader ideological distance among veto players in later stages of the negotiation can impede agreement and hinder the ratification process. The divergent ideological positions may lead to increased polarization, making it challenging to find common ground and compromise. The results underscore the importance of considering domestic interactions and the influence of veto players in shaping a government's policy position during international negotiations. The ideological coherence among domestic actors plays a crucial role in determining a country's engagement or disengagement from such negotiations. The alignment of veto players' interests and ideologies can greatly impact the overall negotiation process, including the likelihood of successfully concluding an agreement and ensuring its smooth ratification.

Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of trade-related foreign policy decision-making by emphasizing the complexities and competing interests that exist within the process. It demonstrates the need for comprehensive analyses that go beyond simplistic assumptions and acknowledge the multi-dimensional nature of decision-making. By uncovering the dynamics of domestic struggles and interactions between veto players, this study provides an insight for policymakers, negotiators, and researchers.

Moving forward, it is crucial to continue exploring and understanding the complexities of trade-related foreign policy decision-making, particularly within the context of evolving global trade dynamics. Future research can build upon the present study by further investigating the specific interests and influences of different veto players, analyzing the impact of shifting political

landscapes, and examining the role ideological difference with external partners on the trade negotiations. By deepening our understanding of the complexities and dynamics inherent in trade-related foreign policy decision-making, policymakers can develop more informed strategies, and negotiators can strive for more inclusive and mutually beneficial outcomes. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discourse on international trade and diplomacy, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities that arise in navigating complex trade negotiations.

In the following section of this chapters, the present study will proceed to a discussion of its contributions to the current literature as well as delving into its research limitations. Finally, future directions will be offered in order to map out the next steps forward for this burgeoning field in employing the non-unitary actor approach to Indian political affairs.

6.2 Contributions, Limitations and Future Directions

The existing literature on the India-EU free trade agreement often overlooks tend to “black box” or overlook the intricate process of Indian foreign trade policy decision-making, by assuming that India’s foreign policy approach is the outcome of the decision taken solely by the governmental representatives of the state. However, the present research adopted a “non-unitary” understanding of foreign policy decision making (Dreher and Jensen, 2013). This non-unitary understanding of foreign policy decision-making reveals that India's trade-related foreign policy is influenced by multiple levels of decision-makers. By adopting a non-unitary approach, this research recognizes that decision-making process in India’s trade-related foreign policy involve competing interests and positions within Group A and Group B. Group A consists of negotiators and influential business organizations, while Group B comprises various stakeholders and Parliamentarians. Acknowledging the existence of competing interests and positions emphasizes the complexity and dynamic nature of India's trade-related foreign policy, going beyond a simplistic view of decision-making driven solely by governmental

representatives. Instead, the non-unitary understanding of foreign policy decision-making sheds light on the influence and role of various actors and stakeholders in shaping India's trade policy decisions. It recognizes that decisions such as these are shaped by competing interests and diverse perspectives, rather than being driven by a single governmental authority.

Such an approach highlights the complexity of trade-related foreign policy decision-making in India. As different actors with different ideological positions and policy goals strive to shape the outcomes, acknowledging the existence of competing interests and positions within India's trade-related foreign policy decision-making process provides a more nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in the decision-making process. It recognizes that decisions to both start and halt the negotiation talks from the Indian side is the result of regular interactions, discussions and negotiations among various actors and stakeholders. These actors represent their own interests and perspectives, each seeking to advocate for an outcome that aligns with their goals. This emphasizes the dynamic nature of decision-making, requiring constant engagement and persuasion among actors. It also highlights the need for transparent and inclusive processes that consider the concerns and viewpoints of all relevant actors. Through the analysis of the authorization and negotiation stages, several key findings have emerged, shedding light on the role of stakeholders, ideological differences, and the challenges faced in the negotiation process. One of the main findings of this research is the presence of divergent ideologies among the stakeholders involved. Group A, comprising negotiators and influential business organizations, demonstrated a positive stance towards liberalization, emphasizing the potential economic benefits that a comprehensive FTA could bring. In contrast, Group B, consisting of various stakeholders, held a negative ideology, voicing concerns over potential impacts of the negotiation. The present study highlights the importance of addressing and reconciling these divergent ideologies to foster effective decision-making. Effective decision-making requires active communication and dialogue among the stakeholders to address their

diverse interests and perspectives. The absence of such inclusive processes, as evident in the Indian side due to a lack of communication, can hinder the effectiveness and legitimacy of the decision-making process. By understanding and addressing these differences, future trade negotiations can strive for more balanced and mutually beneficial outcomes.

In conclusion, by analyzing the discourses of relevant veto players, the present research identified different levels of multiple levels of decision-makers (as seen in Group A and B) in positions of authority who compete to push for a policy decision that is closer to their own ideal policy position (Hudson and Day, 2019; Kier 1997; Legro 1995; Stien 1993; De Mesquita and Lalman, 2008). These findings provide empirical evidence that supports the proposed hypotheses of the research. Moreover, they contribute to the existing literature, which has primarily focused on the EU's perspective and policy decision-making. The present study offers a India-centric perspective on trade-related foreign policy decision-making which, at present, lacks sufficient research attention (e.g., Eberhardt, and Kumar, 2010; Baru, 2009; Mohan, 2009; Kumar, 2016; Saha, 2013). By emphasizing the complexities and dynamics of domestic struggles and the competition between decision-makers, the study sheds light on the intricacies of India's negotiation decisions and highlights the significant influence of domestic politics on a government's policy position. The research also fills a gap in the literature by addressing the limited attention given to the non-unitary actor approach in Indian political affairs, which is crucial considering the country's democracy and the associated political intricacies. By providing a new perspective, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of trade-related foreign policy decision-making and its implications for India's engagement with the EU. Overall, this study's empirical evidence and non-unitary approach highlight the complexities of Indian foreign trade policy decision-making and the significant influence of domestic politics. By uncovering the intricate interplay between different actors, the research provides valuable insights into the negotiation process, contributing to the existing literature and offering

a foundation for future research in this field.

With that being said, the research methodology adopted by the present research is not without its flaws. For this reason, the following section will delve into its methodological limitations and offer potential directions for future research.

To reiterate, as the goal of the present study is to accurately examine India's perception of EU and of the India-EU FTA negotiations by employing a data source triangulation which involves drawing data from three secondary sources including documents from the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Commerce and Industry, legislative records from both the Houses of the Parliament, i.e., the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha as well as online newspaper articles from four media organizations of India namely The Hindu, The Economic Times, The Telegraph, Indian Express.

Accordingly, it can be argued that, especially with regards to newspaper reports, researchers have no control over the quality and accuracy of the data. In other words, since these sources are collected by a third party's or individual which may have introduced bias by either over emphasizing or understate certain opinion, statements or views of the relevant veto players in accordance with their prejudice or political partiality. Furthermore, another limitation worth mentioning is the missing archives. More specifically, since many of these documents are records of events that occurred nearly two decades ago, this has led to some becoming either inaccessible to the researcher or have been lost in the archives for all three sources. This issue is further compounded by the fact that certain sections of the archives are considered classified by the government and not readily available for the general public. As a result, this may call into question the representativeness of the data collected in the research. Not only that, the issue of representativeness may also be affected by the fact that since the collected reports were secondary in nature and thus were not gathered for the specific purposes of the present research question, there were many other relevant veto players such as the Ministers of the Cabinet,

independent Ministers of the state from the Commerce and Industry and other important official from the Prime Minister's Office who were not included in the data collection. As a result, their image of FTA with the EU could not be considered. Furthermore, some relevant veto players were anonymized in the aforementioned sources for confidentiality purposes and therefore had to be excluded. Finally, due to the wealth of documentation available, the researcher had to introduce selection criteria (e.g., time periods, terminologies, language) which may have led to accidental exclusions of certain important data.

Another limitation for the present research is the use of Likert Scale rating that are self-reported by the researcher. Consequently, this introduces subjectivity which may potentially lead to a biased finding, and most relevant to the present research, the issue of *projection* (Drapeau, 2002), i.e., where the researcher risks attributing false beliefs or opinions to the veto players.

Moving on to the limitations of analyzing secondary data, a major criticism is that it merely allows for an indirect measure of the beliefs and opinions held by the Indian veto players which may not entirely reflect their reality as scholars have claimed that politics is heavily characterized by a "process of rationalization" (Mayer et al.1997). For this reason, a potential recommendation for future research would be to supplement secondary data analyses with primary data. This would mean conducting qualitative interviews with the relevant veto players in order to counteract the limitations of the present research.

Turning our attention to the limitations associated with the findings of this study. While the present study provided valuable insight into the complexities of trade-related foreign policy decision-making in India and discussed dominant ideological trend within different groups of actors involved in the decision-making process, it is crucial to acknowledge that these categorizations sometimes oversimplify the diverse range of perspectives held by stakeholder. Within both group A and B, the present study observed instances where individuals exhibited variations in opinions, showcasing the multidimensional nature of their positions. This

highlights the importance of delving deeper into the various factors that shape a stakeholder's position such as sector-specific interests, regional dynamics, and socio-economic considerations. Such an approach would enable future research to navigate the complexities of trade negotiations more effectively and encourage further questioning of the prevailing assumptions and narratives, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of the underlying factors driving policy decisions.

Moving forward, it is crucial to continue exploring and understanding the complexities of trade-related foreign policy decision-making, particularly within the context of evolving global trade dynamics. The international trade landscape is constantly changing, with new challenges and opportunities emerging. Future research can build upon the present study by further investigating the specific interests and influences of different veto players, analyzing the impact of shifting political landscapes, and examining the role of ideological differences with external partners on trade negotiations. To further advance our understanding of trade-related foreign policy decision-making, future research can delve into the specific interests and motivations of various veto players involved in trade negotiations. Each veto player represents a particular sector or stakeholder group with its own set of priorities and objectives. Investigating their specific agendas and power dynamics can shed light on how they shape and influence trade policies. Additionally, analyzing the impact of shifting political landscapes on trade negotiations is vital. Political transitions, changes in leadership, and evolving geopolitical dynamics can significantly affect the trajectory and outcomes of trade negotiations. Understanding how these external factors interact with domestic veto players can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of trade-related foreign policy decision-making. Furthermore, exploring the role of ideological differences with external partners is crucial. Trade negotiations often involve multiple countries or regions with varying political ideologies and policy objectives. The study of how these ideological differences interact with the positions

of domestic veto players can offer a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities in international trade negotiations. Moreover, as digitalization and technological advancements continue to reshape global trade, it is crucial to explore the implications of these trends on foreign policy decision-making. The rise of digital trade, e-commerce, and new technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain introduce novel challenges and opportunities for trade negotiations. Understanding how these factors influence the decision-making processes and strategies of governments and veto players is essential for effective policy formulation. To conduct future research on trade-related foreign policy decision-making, interdisciplinary approaches are necessary. Moreover, as digitalization and technological advancements continue to reshape global trade, it is crucial to explore the implications of these trends on foreign policy decision-making. The rise of digital trade, e-commerce, and new technologies such as artificial intelligence and blockchain introduce novel challenges and opportunities for trade negotiations. Understanding how these factors influence the decision-making processes and strategies of governments and veto players is essential for effective policy formulation.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discourse on international trade and diplomacy, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities that arise in navigating complex trade negotiations. It highlights the need for policymakers and negotiators to be cognizant of the diverse interests and influences of veto players, as well as the impact of ideological cohesiveness or differences on the negotiation process. The findings of this study can be utilized by policymakers and negotiators to enhance their understanding of the complexities involved in trade-related foreign policy decision-making. By recognizing the competing interests and power dynamics among veto players, policymakers can devise strategies that effectively address and accommodate diverse perspectives. Negotiators can leverage this knowledge to foster dialogue, build consensus, and find mutually beneficial solutions that satisfy the various stakeholders involved. Moreover, the research findings can

serve as a basis for refining negotiation tactics and approaches. Understanding the role of veto players and their ideological positions allows negotiators to anticipate potential roadblocks and develop strategies to mitigate conflicts. By proactively addressing divergent viewpoints and seeking common ground, negotiators can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of trade negotiations. The insights gained from this research can also inform the design and implementation of trade policies and agreements. Policymakers can utilize the findings to assess the feasibility and potential impacts of different policy options. By considering the interests and positions of veto players, policymakers can craft policies that strike a balance between domestic priorities and international obligations. This can result in trade agreements that are more equitable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of various stakeholders. Additionally, the study underscores the importance of fostering dialogue and collaboration among veto players throughout the negotiation process. By creating avenues for meaningful engagement and consultation, policymakers can promote transparency, accountability, and legitimacy in decision-making. This can help build trust among veto players and enhance the chances of reaching mutually acceptable outcomes.

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