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### ROLE OF INDIAN TV NEWS CHANNEL MEDIA IN HEALTH COMMUNICATION: FOCUS COVUD – 19

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**Keywords Coronavirus, Covid 19, health Communication, Mass Media, News Channels, Pandemic, social behavioural changes etc**

#### **Abstract:**

With the advancement of new technology changing every day, TV has become an essential part of human life. TV market of India is the third largest market in the world (In terms of revenue), TV industry of India with approx. 800 satellite channels is one of the largest broadcasting industry. Television has immense reach with wider influence on the minds of people across communities, society and everyday life in general. The Indian Government has supported the growth of TV by taking some initiatives like digitalization of cable networks and also by increasing the limit of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) i.e 74% to 100% in cable and Direct-to-home (DTH) satellite platforms.

Public health community and policy makers don't appreciate the importance and power of the media in shaping the health of the general public. As this research paper discusses, however, the media plays a number of roles in educating the public about health issues, media also aware the general public about the health problems and media also has a responsibility to report accurate health and science information to the public.

This research paper specifically discusses how the TV news media can place health issues on the national public agenda and can catalyze action at the national and local levels with special focus on COVID - 19.

### **Introduction**

The best investment of a country or a nation will be to invest in the health of its countries citizens. There are so many factors which influence health status of a country and its ability to provide good health services to its citizens. During this global pandemic, news channels are emerging as an effective and sustainable solution for awareness, precaution, prevention and updating.<sup>1</sup> The announcement made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's of complete lockdown of India for the concern related to coronavirus, It had 197 million views on television screens across 201 channels.

Coronavirus or Covid-19 is known as aviruses its symptoms are common cold to respiratory syndromes, but this virus has been not seen before to the people. The symptoms also includes fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

According to WHO till 25<sup>th</sup> March 20 there are 416,686 Confirmed cases, 18,589 Confirmed deaths and affected 197 countries all over the world.

The best possible way to prevent and slow down transmission of Covid 19 virus is to spread awareness about its causes and how it transmit and media play a very crucial role in it.

In this crucial time the Ministry of information and broadcasting, guided media to create awareness about the cronavirus and also broadcast important messages, information, current status which can help the viewers.

### **Objectives**

- Role and contribution of TV news channels for the awareness during Pandemic Coronavirus spread in India.
- Impact of TV News channels coverage related to COVID - 19 on viewers' minds.

### **Hypothesis of research study:**

People admire only Television news channels to get authenticated news.

- Television news channels are playing an important role as a source of information during Pandemic Coronavirus spread in India.

### **Literature review**

1. Tandon, P. (2020). COVID-19: Impact on health of people & wealth of nations. *Indian Journal of Medical Research*, 0(0), 0. doi: 10.4103/ijmr.ijmr\_664\_20

**Conclusion** -: It is also obvious that besides their disastrous effect on human morbidity and mortality, there are equally distressing socio-economic consequences for the affected countries and the whole world. It is essential to strengthen biomedical research, improve healthcare delivery system, establish a permanent ‘watch-dog’ body and create an improved communication and coordination mechanism for the diverse agencies responsible for mitigating the broader adverse consequences of pandemics. This will require not only national efforts but a coordinated global response through international agencies and development partners.

2. Bhatia, R. (2020). Need for integrated surveillance at human-animal interface for rapid detection & response to emerging coronavirus infections using One Health approach. *Indian Journal of Medical Research*, 0(0), 0. doi: 10.4103/ijmr.ijmr\_623\_20

**Conclusion**:-The success of One Health implementation shall depend on the extent of attainment of institutional collaboration, joint planning and coordinated comprehensive surveillance for the early detection and prevention of zoonoses, especially coronaviruses to mitigate any future outbreaks due to these viruses.

3. Global Media Accused of Bias in Coverage of Coronavirus. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/2020-02-07/how-the-global-media-covered-stories-about-the-coronavirus-outbreak>

**Conclusion**-Critics accuse the media of bias and over-coverage of the coronavirus outbreak.-: Sintia Radu, Staff Writer

#### **Theoretical framework:**

Basically this research is based on cultivation theory used in media that messages transmitted or broadcasted by television news channels influence the perceptions of the real world and in this crucial time during pandemic Covid 19 we get all the information from the media, correct information is the greatest responsibility today. TV news channels are trying to do their “duty” the enormous reach of the electronic media to urge, plead with viewers with one voice, ‘#Stay Home Stay Safe’.

Anchors spoke about “social distancing” and recited the entire history of the coronavirus which cultivated awareness in viewers mind and they took all precautionary measures to stay safe. In fact many Tv channels broadcast positive news like zee news had a show called ‘Corona pe good news’. The media should counter pessimism and panic through positive communication.

News channels serve as an important means of feedback and the government is constantly acting on this feedback.

#### **Research Methodology**

The Research study is descriptive in nature as it describes the respondents' perception towards the selected theme. Primary source of data collection has also been adopted. Data collection mode was questionnaire, sample size for the same was 80 (approx) .

#### **Source of data:**

We use the primary source of data which is collected from the online survey. A sample size of 80 random participants are considered and structured questionnaire have been used to record the responses.

**Secondary data-** Data collected for some other purpose in the past. This was done by referring to various studies, articles and websites.

**Method of sampling** - A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed out of which 80 were found useful on the basis of complete responses.

**Sample size** - For this research the sample size undertaken will be 80.

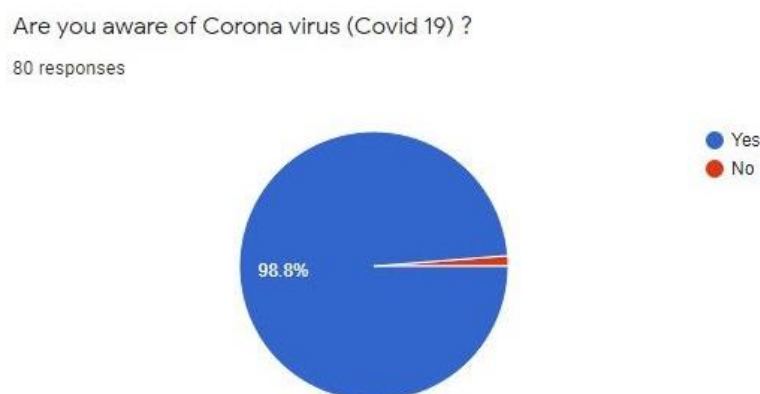
**Tool for data collection** - A structured questionnaire. consisted of 7 questions used for data collection.

#### **Descriptive statistics:**

#### **Data Analysis of Response:**

#### **Source: Prepared by author**

Figure 1 shows that awareness about Covid 19 disease. Majority of the respondents (98.8% ) said they are aware about this disease and only 1.2% people don't know about Coronavirus.



**Figure No. 1**

The respondent were then asked about their perception on what they think that the news or information provided by news channels on this

disease is authentic. Figure 2 shows that 50 % of the people said yes and 46.3% said to some extent.

Do you think the information provided by News Channels on Covid-19 is authentic?

80 responses

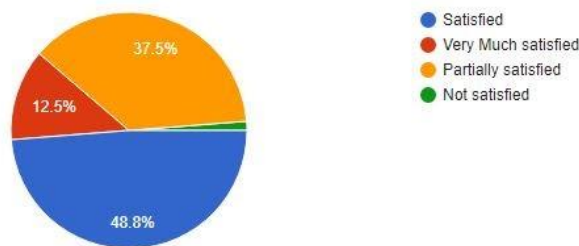


**Figure No. 2**

Further, Respondents were asked what they think about the satisfaction level of information given by media related to covid 19. Figure 3 shows that 48% out of the sample taken is satisfied with the information and 37.5 % partially satisfied and only 12.5% of people were fully satisfied.

Are you satisfied with the information given by Media related to Corona virus (covid 19)

80 responses

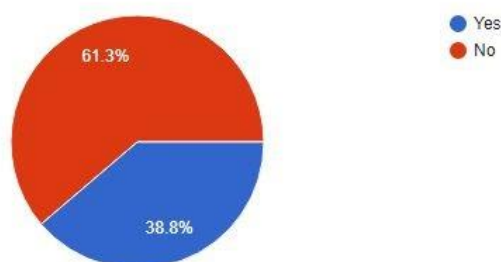


**Figure No. 3**

After that respondents were asked about what they think media creates hype or stretches this news about pandemic Covid 19 in this 61.3% people said no and 38.8% said yes.

Do you think presently media is creating hype or stretching the news about pandemic?

80 responses

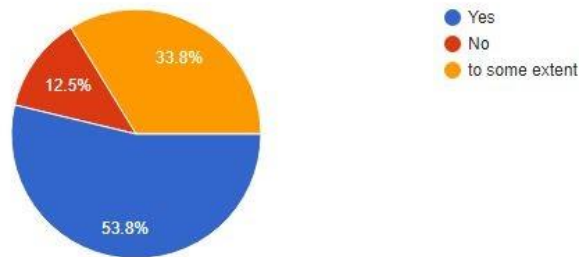


**Figure No. 4**

In response to our next question 53.8% of the people agree that due to coronavirus many major important issues getting less time and 33.8% of the people agree to some extent. Only 12.5 % of people disagree with this.

Do you agree that, due to corona virus updates the other important issues are not getting news slots?

80 responses

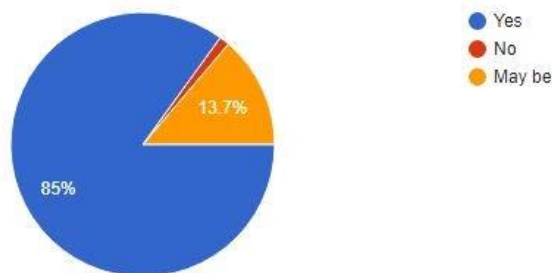


**Figure No. 5**

Further respondents were asked about that expert talks, doctors and suggestions related to coronavirus help them in their lives to prevent this disease and 85% of the people agree and only 13.7% of people find this useless.

News channels are also showing expert's talks ,doctor 's advice, suggestions related to Corona Virus, Do you think these are helpful to the viewers?

80 responses



**Figure No. 6**

**Result and Findings:**

News channels are considered as, they broadcast the content according the target audiences or what people like to watch, practically it is not correct. The basic motive of news channels needs to be present the truth as it is by not moulding and sensationalising the facts for the personal profits. News channels are in the race TRP circus. Because of this all Indian news channel's content, quality, credibility has deteriorated. But at the time coronavirus spread in India, Television news channels are playing a positive and responsible role according to do the above

research done on the sample size of 80. Approx 50 % of the respondents find the news coverage authentic and are also satisfied with the current news coverage. News channels are also showing expert advice, Doctor's suggestions and also they are broadcasting the testimonials of the survivals of corona virus patients and viewers are also finding that useful. The news channels which were criticized because of making hype and stretching the news , But during COVID - 19 most the viewers don't find the hype and stretching of the news, Somehow according to the above research respondents find other news are not getting the enough time on the news channels.

### **Limitations of Study**

- Online filled questionnaire obtained from a sample of 80. This limitation would obviously imply that we cannot meet them physically due to lockdown.
- Non probability - convenience and judgment sampling will be used.
- Some of the responses may be biased. The recently viewed news may influence the opinion of the respondents and therefore some responses may be biased. The statistical tools employed are valid under some assumptions and not fulfilling even one assumption can lead to varied results.

### **Conclusion:**

The media platforms like radio and television, know as a effective mediums which has effect and impact to its viewers and listeners, and also aware them about the current happenings ,crisis, and important information .

News also played a important role for health communication in the form of informing viewers about diseases and where, how they can get the help, they also update the public time to time regarding the diseases. Television considered as an effective medium of communication as it has audio-visuals both also reachable to the large number of audiences . Health communication is important to convey the health related messages with the help of public and social advertisements, News and other programs related to health. Advertising of public services are also powerful to address many health services and other social challenges facing by the country.

Citizens Good health, medical care, self care and safety are essential for the smooth functioning of any country. India has faced many problems which affect the lives of the people of this country. Some major public health problems like - human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), Swine Flu, Dengue, malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, and now Corona virus (COVID - 19). This all health problems have been addressed by the appropriate action of the government and this time also government is taking many steps to control the spread of COVID - 19

Media is also informing, updating and motivating people directly or indirectly, and also by including interactive user, viewer's feedback, and viewer's participation making the news more purposeful. Health communicators like

doctors, experts are also sharing their suggestions and advice through media to provide meaningful input in improving and saving lives.

The prime minister's also establish the emotional connect with the people, with the help of news channels by addressing the nation more frequently and include positive stories, In his latest address also he included testimonials of the patients who have recovered from COVID-19 for motivating others

The information reaching out to people through news channels are authenticated and helpful the content also includes the information on staying safe during the crisis.

People are getting authentic information from television news channels related to COVID-19 or corona virus at a time when there are multiple sources of unverified information and fake news.

Special phone-in programmes involving health experts and doctors, and live-streaming of videos all making news more authentic.

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