

# Role of Media in Dissemination of Information during COVID-19

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The word “mass media” means a variety of media technologies used to reach a large audience via mass communication; media plays a vital role in the distribution of COVID-19 information. The public gets the information more efficiently through different sources of media [1]. When there is an outbreak, individuals prefer to seek information from the media for gaining more knowledge. The essential requirement to control any endemic or pandemic is to create awareness of its risk factors and control measures. In the current past, the effects and control measures of the pandemic are well addressed through the media [2]. Information dissemination started from symptomology to prevention [3]. The media has conveyed information regarding COVID-19 and has supported citizens in understanding the pattern of disease and its severity. Media has become a critical source of health information and a place for exchanging experiences, ideas, and concerns about health, disease, and treatment [3]. The media has informed the public about disease spread and the use of concepts like isolation and quarantine to save people from getting the virus [2].

But unfortunately, news coverage may also disorient the population and may disseminate unscientific and unauthentic information through instant messaging technologies which in turn may cause fear among people. Social media has a significant impact as it is a rapid source of transmission and circulation of information and influences the young population. The majority of the audience which uses social media is the young population of the world [1, 4]. The most challenging part of information dissemination is the appropriate source of media being used to reach the most vulnerable populations who are at higher risk of contracting this disease [1].

In recent times social media has become increasingly important for improving health risk communication during outbreaks and pandemics. Healthcare agencies

currently use multiple social media platforms to offer ‘real-time updates and clarify uncertainties with the public. The media promotes awareness, influences attitudes, and persuades people to improve their health practices during pandemics [5].

Responsible and appropriate use of media can be a potential source of information dissemination. There is a need to use proper, accurate, and refined language while reporting the risk factors of COVID-19 using the media [2]. A well manageable, accountable, and appropriate information system can be utilized to prevent and control the spread of disease and save the precious lives of people [6]. Further, providing free and quick access to the most accurate information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and its control measures through the most verified sources is of great value and can support the global response to the current pandemic crises [7].

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