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SOCIAL MEDIA DURING THE PHASE OF PANDEMIC COVID 19

Ruhi Grewal* and Prof. Tarvinder Jeet Kaur**

*Research Scholar Department of Home Science, Kurukshetra University, Haryana (India)

**Department of Home Science, Kurukshetra University, Haryana (India)

INTRODUCTION

LETHAL COVID 19 DISEASE:

The uncontrolled, prevalent covid 19 has become a hypercritical ultimatum for the citizens across the globe which is a huge menace and it signals that there is no conclusion of it. Due to this, whole world is going through the unprecedented changes which have turned the globe upside down. The rampant pandemic covid 19 has affected the number of lives of people from rich to poor at social, economic and psychological level throughout the globe, shattering the condition of normalcy and decaying perception of sanity. The perils and unfavorable phase of covid 19 has demolished the society which has posed a serious challenge of strength and survival for public. To trounce the threat faced by whole globe, national and international level of health organizations is making a huge endeavor to invent or modify different kind of vaccines to demolish the virus but still in vain.

METHODOLOGY

Present study is derived from the method of secondary data collection. Various publications of different scholars have been cited from internet which have imparted the information and data related to role of social media in the pandemic time of covid 19.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SOCIAL MEDIA: A BLESSING

Social media is one of the finest and vital medium in disseminating information about pandemic disease. During the adverse condition of pandemic disease, different social media platforms like face book, whatsapp, twitter, etc are propagating expeditious, unswerving and authentic information to public about this deadly contagious disease (**Chan AKM et al**). It guides and informs the users about the method to control the spread of contagious virus, employing the safety tips directed by the government like social distancing, use of masks and gloves, washing hands for 20 seconds and application of sanitizers (**Hernández-García I and Giménez-Júlvez T**). Now days, hospitals or different institutes are providing quarantine services for the patients who are at the risk or suffering from the problem of covid 19 so as to control the spread of deadly virus (**Pappot N et al 1-3**). This type of information is gained and utilized through the source of social media only. Hence, social media has become a huge origin of proclaiming medical information to different users to a limitless extent (**McGowan BS et al**).

SOCIAL MEDIA: A BANE

Unfortunately in many situations, social media can be severely worse. Due to the flare up of corona virus, excessive news and information hit the headlines through different social media platforms like facebook, twitter, whatsapp etc making people stirred by the data they receive (**Lima L D et al**). The cause of the stir is not about the different or excessive data acquired but the issue is which news or information is unimpeachable. On social media platforms, epidemic disease is used as a political warfare where different experts have divergent proposals or recommendations on the same issue creating bewilderment and puzzlement among public that which news or information is trustworthy (**Lima L D et al**). Weighty repercussions of social media on outspreading the fear and panic of pandemic covid 19 has resulted in cases of mental health and psychological crisis among citizens of different countries. A study conducted on Iraq citizens reported facebook as the most operative social media in over spreading fright, fear and anxiety during the phase of covid 19. Constructive statistical relation was ascertained between the use of social media and spreading fear, panic and stress which ended up to the complication of psychological anxiety (**Ahmad R A and Murad R H**).

SOCIAL MEDIA: INFODEMICS

It is perceived that the main chauffer of the apprehension, dread, sadness and fear among the public is particularly derived from social media which combust up the deceptive, forgery and repetitive information. Its uncontrolled vulnerability can create the problem of **infodemics** which means excess of diverse and forgery information can engender fuss, annoyance and groundless fear among the public in discovering the bonafide source of information thus decaying the mental status. So humans not just exist in the era of pandemic disease but they are also surviving in the phase of **infodemics** where counterfeit information is becoming more recurrent. (**Llewellyn S**). WHO has proclaimed that nowadays, they are combating against not only nocuous covid 19 disease but grappling with the issue of social media infodemics which is generating havoc among the public (**Hao K, Basu T**).

SOCIAL MEDIA: TENSITY

During the modern era of digitalization and urbanization, humans have become parasite on the social media as it satisfies and attains their needs and wish list. The latest, renovated and streamlined information is obtained from social media in a quick and swift manner. During the lockdown interval, paying attention to the surplus information repetitively and tirelessly perceived from the social media has engendered the people to live in the state of consternation and nervousness (**Brewer K**). It is the verity that apprehension and perturbation of corona virus is unfurling sprightly as compared to virus itself and the source of apprehension is mainly derived from social media only (**Muwahed J**). In some instances, it has been comprehended that social media platforms puzzle the users with hybrid of factual and nonfactual information as there are number of countries which have availed the different types of social media filters (**Cellan-Jones**). In the present epoch of digitalization, it has been claimed that number of

Chinese citizens are totally reliant on social media for dispensing erroneous videos, photographs and information as they could not acquire certitude data for pandemic disease (**Victor D.**)

SOCIAL MEDIA: ECONOMIC CRISIS

Apprehension, stress and fright of covid 19 gleaned from social media has deconstructed the minds of public in a such a way that it has repelled the public from purchasing any kind of item from market leading to the purchasing crisis thus impacting the economic growth of country to some extent (**Hernandez S.**)

SOCIAL MEDIA: PUBLIC AS A GAFFER

In the 21st century of digitalization and democratic era, people have totally become reliant on online broadcasting technologies i.e. social media which is a huge platform for public for communicating, expressing and discussing their thoughts or opinions on different aspect of life in a broader or a perspective way. They give opportunity and right to each and every individual from all sections of society to share their information on a large platform (**Kent S**). But this right given to people has turned obnoxious during the covid 19 phase, as it creates and overspreads fright and dread among social media users by seeing the lethal and deadly condition occurring across different parts of world. People what perceive or believe about the life threatening pandemic disease post it on social media without any conception which can be false or fake creating trepidation, dread, angst among other individuals resulting in the negative and fatalistic impact on mental health (**Gold H.**). It was proclaimed that social media is creating panic among people about coronavirus, but it is the public itself which has given authority to social media to engender alarming anxiety and fuss among the public by publishing or sharing unrestricted extravagant monotonous information which can be inaccurate, invalid or fallacious (**Garret**).

INITIATIVES ON KNOCKING DOWN THE FALSE INFORMATION AND INFODEMICS:

Scrutinizing the agitation, fear and stress unfurled by social media, government of different countries or mass media companies have taken the initiative and authority for dispensing and contributing the veracious information which can replace the panic and stress with enlightened intellect of citizens (**Gesser-Edelsburg A**). Number of social media companies have taken initiative in withdrawing all the forgery and false information after WHO professed and put down allegation against social media companies for outspreading erroneous and inaccurate news (**Frenkel S et al.,**). Indian government has urged prime and foremost social media companies like Facebook, YouTube and Twitter to cease the deception as it creates fright among people (**Victor D**). Different social media platforms like Facebook has diverged the users to World Health Organization (WHO) websites for obtaining authentic and certified information (**Merchant RM and Lurie N**). It was enumerated that even the Vietnam's Ministry of Health has taken a weighty, admirable lead in handling the social media by

generating accounts on different prime social media networks and delivering rational and bona fide information to public about COVID-19 through those accounts (**La et al**).

During the critical phase of destructive disease, as the mental health problem of public is escalating, it is the duty of media workers and educators to guide and enlighten media users by accounting them with high quality and authentic information and edifying their brains on how to seriously deliberate the information acquired from different sources of social media. As today's younger generation is very instant and prompt in disseminating the information through social media to their acquaintances, media workers can train and up skill these young students by organizing different seminars or symposiums in schools, college or universities, to explore and gauge health information in the case of any epidemic or plague occurring in future. It is vital and indispensable that Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education should be betrothed and occupied with media workers in the effort of occurrence of future pandemic to make sure and certify that only scrutinized, undisputed and bona fide information is disseminated to public (**Ahmad R A and Murad R H**).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Social media- a source of communication is considered as a chief medical arbitration during the period of public health calamity. But this gear should be used in a sagacious manner so that the apprehension of pandemic is overpowered from the public (**Tworek H**). It is salient and favorable that government, media workers and health care authorities needs to pay more attention towards the mental health issue of people unfurled by social media while combating the problem of Covid 19 disease.

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