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MADRAS

XXI A STUDY ON ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT By: Dr.C.Sahila, Dr.C.Nithya	170-176
XXII A STUDY ON ROLE OF MADITSSIA IN DEVELOPMENT OF ENTERPRENEURS IN MADURAI CITY By: Dr. Maheswari. P, Dr.Vijayalakshmi .D	177-187
XXIII ENTREPRENEURIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE By: Dr. Jayshri Kapse	188-193
XXIV "A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON THE PERCEPTION OF WOMEN CONSUMERS TOWARDS ONLINE SHOPPING IN NAGPUR DISTRICT, INDIA" By: Dr. Snehal Godbole	194-203
XXV MANAGING WORKFORCE EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY IN TIMES OF COVID ADVERSITY By: Supriya Krishnan, Aditya Bharti, Sudhanshu Kumar Bharti	204-209
XXVI ANALYTICAL STUDY OF PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION ABOUT TELEVISION MEDIA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC By: Dr. Usha Vishnu Bhandare	210-222

ANALYTICAL STUDY OF PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION ABOUT TELEVISION MEDIA DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC*

BY

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Abstract:

The World is facing an extensive spread of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. As of 23rd May 2021, India has the second-largest number of confirmed cases in the world after the USA. It was very difficult to tackle the situation which was happened unexpectedly but simultaneously, it was necessary to inform people about its precautionary measures. And hence, mass media played a very important role in creating awareness among the general public and dissemination of the medical expert's guidelines to the general public. It is a powerful tool of communication with aimed to inform, persuade, entertain and transmit culture. But it is also true in the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of misleading news, false rumors, and wrong statistical data, increased fear and anxiety among the people. However, few cases have been reported around the world where people out of fear of getting COVID-19 infection, social stigma, isolation, depression, anxiety, emotional imbalance, economic shutdown, lack and/or improper knowledge, financial and future insecurities took their lives. The present study has focused on the perception about the trustworthiness of satellite media during the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on the general public as well. Primary data were collected through the online platform and the data was tested through chi-square method.

Key words: COVID-19 Pandemic, Perception, Mass Media

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1. Introduction

1.2 Origin of COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has put the world in threat for a long time. It was first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and has been declared a pandemic by the WHO. This disease is mainly caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). People were panic because no one knows how to take precaution and symptoms of this disease. The Health care experts started to find out the medicine. Day Night, the health organization worked to find out the medicine. Initially, it was essential to provide handle the pathetic situation which occurred during COVID-19 Pandemic all over the world. The proper guidance and precautionary measures need to finalize with consultation of health expertise.

1.2 Role of Mass Media during Lockdown

People were threatened more when, lockdown was announced by the Government of India, everything was shut down; it feels like everything has vanished because people were caught in cage-like birds. No one was allowed to move outside. Many organizations instructed their employees to work from home. Under such unprecedented circumstances, the media has the potential to unite people and end discrimination by spreading awareness. The mass media including television, newspapers, Internet, Social Media, Radio played a very important role during the COVID-19 Pandemic to disseminate the proper guidelines prepared by Health Experts and the Government of India to the general public.

1.3 Critical Views about Mass media during COVID-19 Pandemic

People tend to turn to the media for information if there is an outbreak. No doubt, media played a very significant role, but unfortunately, sometimes media broadcasted misleading and wrong information to destroy the peaceful environment in the society. Hence, it was found very difficult for the people to whom to believe. Different Medias exposed different statistical data about infected people with COVID-19 disease.

1.4 Role of Television media during COVID-19 Pandemic

Television has been playing a crucial role in the COVID-19 pandemic. The people feel emotionally connected with television and feel secured & safe with daily updated information about corona infected people as well as safety measures to be applied to prevent this disease. Television has played a very significant role not only in educating people about this dangerous virus, but also alerted people about how to make our life safe and healthy. Television has a wide variety of channels in each language and each channel whether showing movies, news, songs have commercials of how to stay safe from corona virus. Television media is very popular and reaches to masses. It is source of medium where audience can view, read and listen news. This paper discusses about the perceptions of the general public towards satellite media. It also covers the impact of media news on general public and their health.

2. Statement of the Problem

Mass media's role changing day by day, the spreading honest and fair information to the ultimate viewers, readers, and listeners is transforming into spreading of information for popularity. Media is the fourth pillar of democracy in India which is responsible for controlling the activities of other pillars and keeping the public informed about them. It represents the eyes and ears of the general public. But, unfortunately, in today's competitive era media has forgotten its role. Now a day, media created information for their channel to become popular and to increase TRP. Hence, it is essential to find out the changing role of media as well as the perception of people towards mass media.

3. Review of Literature

Dhanashree (2020)ⁱ - The main objective of this study was to understand the role and impact of mass media in the general public during COVID-19 Pandemic. The study conducted through online Google spreadsheet. The semi structured questionnaire was circulated to the known contacts. Researchers found that through the study that the use of internet/social media was the highest followed by TV and Newspapers. Researchers tried to find out the gravity of COVID-19 pandemic among the different age groups by considering variables such as anxiety, stress, fear and panic. It is found that anxiety was felt highest in the age group of 40-49 followed by stress and fear. Researchers suggested that the mass media created awareness but, some misleading and wrong information need to verify and check before dissemination in the large public interest.

Ayesha Anwar (2020)ⁱⁱ - The researchers discussed the positive and negative impacts of media and proposed steps that can be taken to use of media effectively in outbreaks. The researchers aim was to find out the role of mass media in community people during COVID-19 Pandemic. They recommended that creating a model to evaluate the media's response at the end of each epidemic is essential and will help to develop more effective strategies to control and prevent subsequent outbreaks.

Heena Sahni (2020)ⁱⁱⁱ - In the present study researchers reviewed both positive and negative impact of social media during corona virus epidemic on health care and on the general population. Researchers were focused on the responsibilities public health experts and suggested some measures to control the pathetic situation occurred during epidemic. It is the responsibility of health institution experts to correct misconception and provide timely expert advice along with regular public health awareness through programs.

Chandan Maji (2020)^{iv} - In this study, researcher formulated a mathematical model for the COVID-19 outbreak by introducing a quarantine class with media induced fear in the diseases transmission rate to analyze the dynamic behavior of this epidemic. In researcher's view, people will be more aware of COVID-19 infection, if they learn more about the transmission of the disease through media and as a result they will change their behavior. Researcher used all mathematical formula and correlates with media induced fear to analyze the epidemic. At the end, researcher concluded that if the rate of fear increases through media, then it can reduced the infection rate and thus increasing the amount of fear can stabilize the system.

Jaffar Abbas (2021)^v - The study focuses on how educating people through social media platform successfully reduce the mental health consequences of the COVID-19 to manage the global health crisis . The study based on secondary data available on different research based site. The statistical data collected by the WHO, John Hopkins University and Pakistan, Ministry of Health. Researchers found that the more use of social media supports to improve the mental health. More social media use leads to more sustained level of health related information accessible to the people. This study argues that mental health issues are critical factors in everyday public health. The implications of this research specified that a series of protective measures such as wearing masks, social distancing, washing hands, reduce the spread of contagious diseases.

4 Objectives of the study

1. To study the Role of Media during COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To find out the perception of general public towards media in COVID-19 Pandemic.
3. To study the impact of media news on general public and their health.

5. Hypothesis of the Study

H₀. *There is no significant relationship between gender and adverse impact on mental health of the people of the COVID-19 Pandemic news.*

H_a. *There is significant relationship between gender and adverse impact on mental health of the people of the COVID-19 pandemic news.*

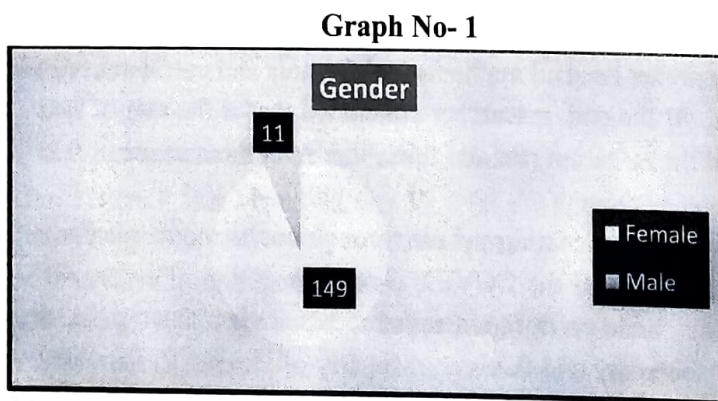
6. Research Methodology

Primary Data as well as secondary data were considered for the present study. Primary data was collected online through structured questionnaire using Google platform. The sample respondents were known people whom conveniently and randomly contacted to obtain authentic feedback on the framed objectives. The collected data has been analyzed and presented with the help of tables and graphs. The chi- square test is applied to test hypothesis to ascertain the relationship between the categorical variables. The researcher has used excel software to do both descriptive and inferential analysis. Newspaper article, Research papers on different website, Wikipedia, News published in Broadcasting Ministry website was considered for the study related literature as part of secondary source of data.

7. Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

7.1 Profile of Respondents:

7.1.1 Gender-wise Respondents

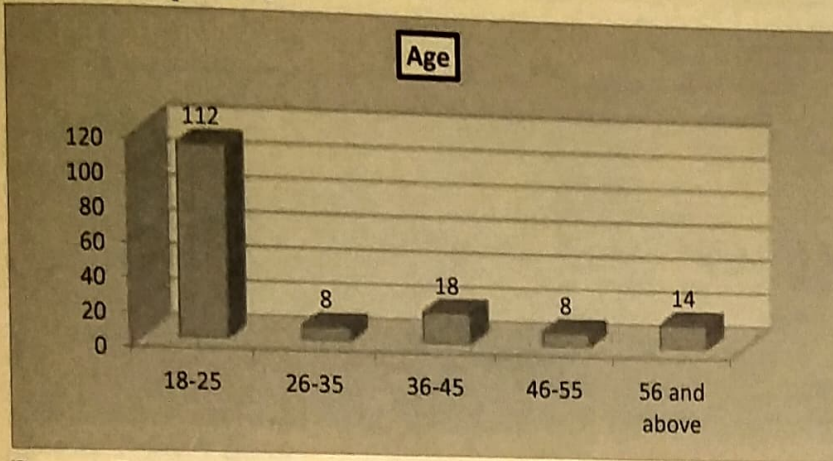


(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation: Maximum 93.1% of respondents are females and only 6.9% are males.

7.1.2. Age group-wise respondents

Graph No-2

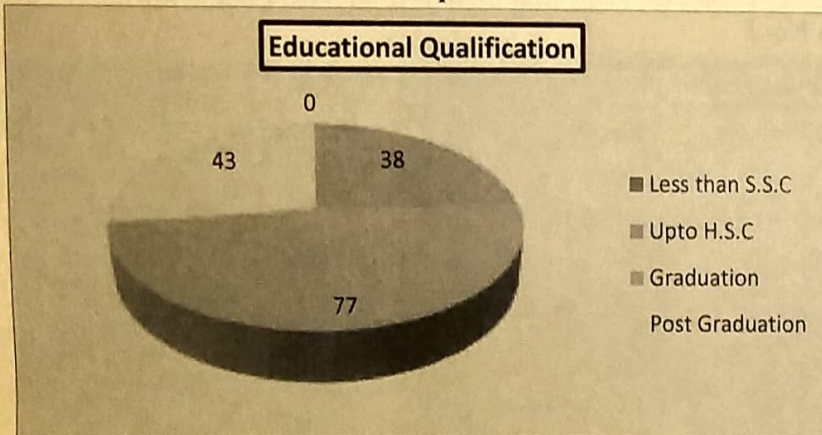


(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation: The highest, 70% respondents are from the age group of 18-25 whereas the lowest 5% are from the age group of 26-35 and 46-55.

7.1.2 Educational Qualification-wise Respondents

Graph No -3

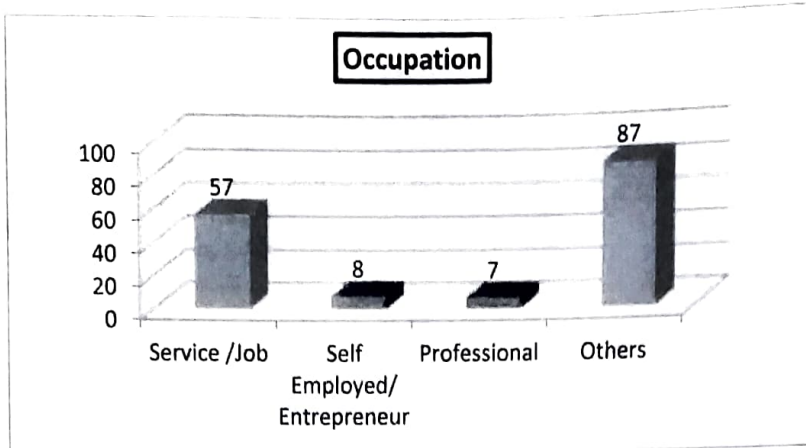


(Source: Primary Data)

The majority of respondents (48.7%) are graduates whereas 24.4% are educated up to HSC followed by 27.2% are post-graduate respondents.

7.1.4 Occupation-wise Respondents

Graph No- 4



(Source: Primary Data)

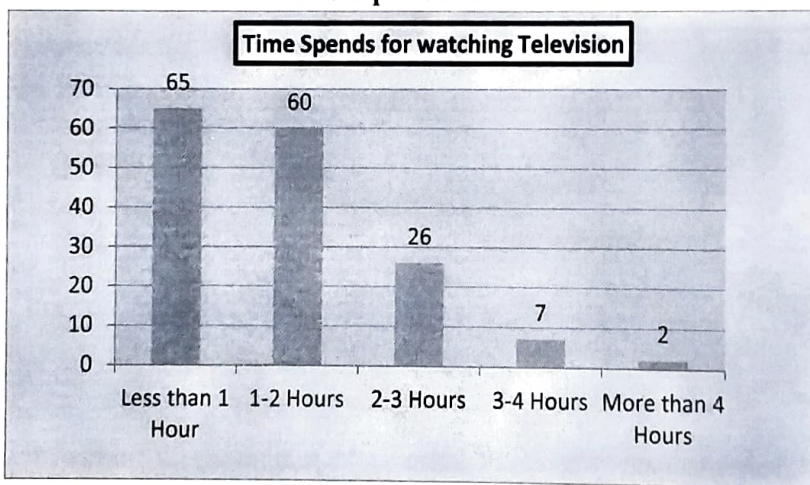
Interpretation:

A majority (54.5%) of respondents are belonging to another category whereas a very few respondents 4.4% belonging to the professional category of the occupation.

7.2 Respondents Feedback

7.2.1 Views of respondents on Time Spends for Watching Television

Graph No- 5



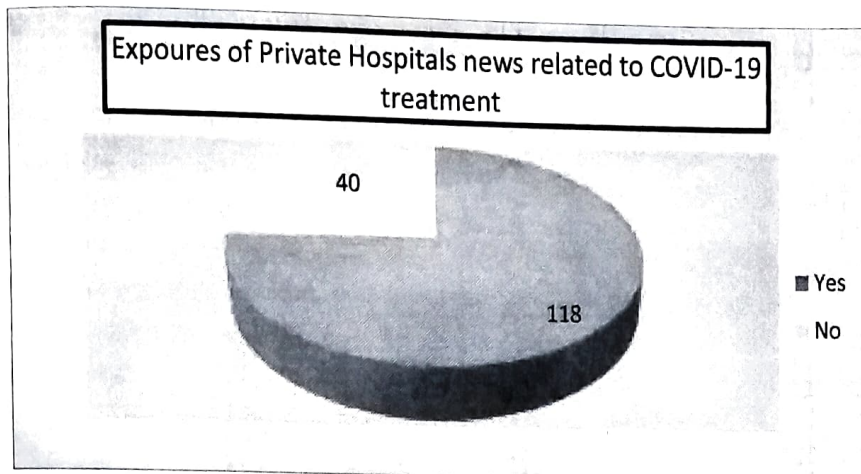
(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation

The highest, 40.6% respondents are spending less than one-hour watching television, whereas a very few 1.2% respondents are spending more than four hours watching television.

7.2.2 Views of respondents on exposures of private hospitals news related to COVID-19 treatment:

Graph No-6



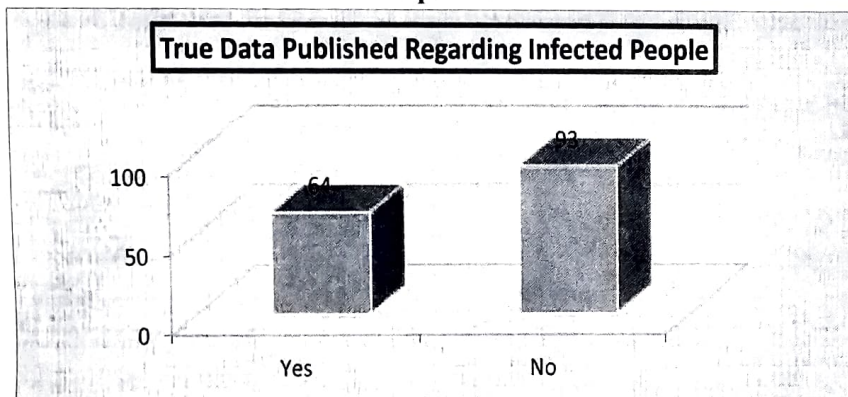
(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation

It is found that out of 158 respondents, a majority [118 (74.7%)] responded positively that television media exposed private hospitals' money-making business in the name of the COVID-19 treatment. On the contrary, only 40 (25.3%) respondents negatively answered to this question.

7.2.3 Views of respondents on true data published regarding infected people

Graph No- 7



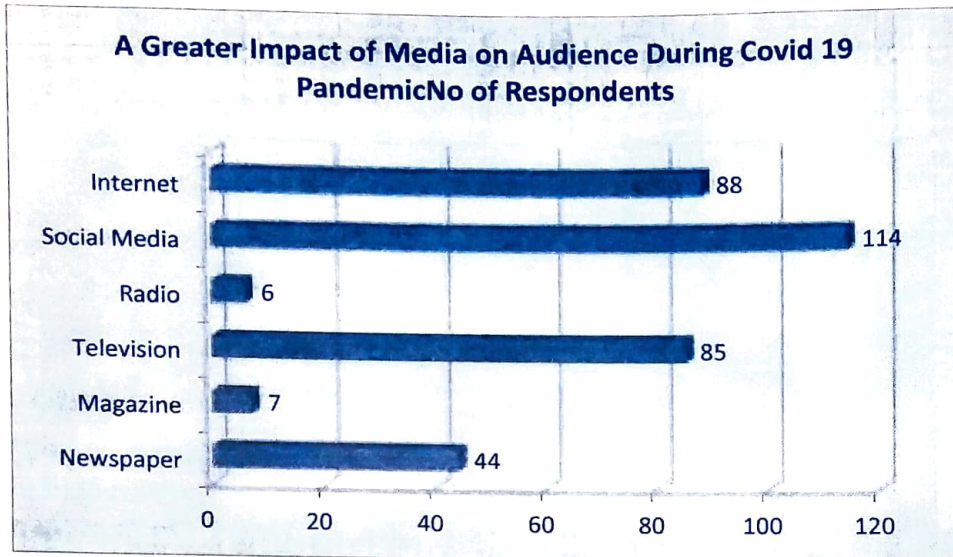
(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation

About true published data regarding infected people, out of 157 respondents, the highest 93(59.2%) said that television media has not published true data regarding infected people of COVID-19. Whereas only 64(40.8%) respondents answered that television media has published true data regarding infected people.

7.2.4 Respondent's views on a greater impact of Media on audience during COVID-19 pandemic

Graph No- 8



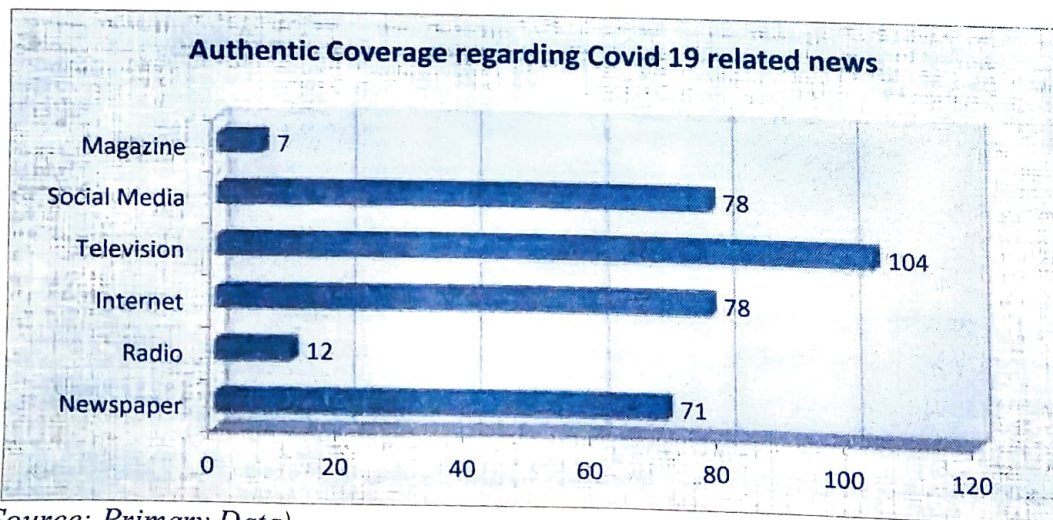
(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation

It is observed that a majority of respondents 114 (71.3%) said that Social Media impacted more during the COVID-19 Pandemic followed by Internet media 88(55%) on their minds. On the opposite side, only Radio 6 (3.8%) followed by magazine 7(4.4%) has created a greater impact on their mind during COVID-19 pandemic.

7.2.5 Views of respondents on authentic coverage regarding COVID-19 related news

Graph No -9



(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation

From the above table, it is observed that out of total of 160 respondents, a maximum of 104 (65%) mentioned that television media providing authentic coverage regarding COVID-19 related news followed by 78 (48.8%) respondents who agreed that social media & the internet also provides authentic news about COVID-19. Even 71(44.4%) were said that newspaper media also provides detailed news about COVID-19. Magazine & Radio media received very poor 7(4.4%) and 12 (7.5%) feedback respectively for authentic coverage regarding COVID-19 related news.

7.3 Following questions were asked to verify different objectives of the study on five points Likert scale to the sample respondents, following feedback received: (SA- Strongly Agree, SwA- Somewhat Agree, N-Neutral, SwD-Somewhat Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree)

Table No- 7.1

Statement	F & %	SA	SwA	NAN D	SwD	SD	Total
1. Television media has been honest in disseminating information about COVID-19 infected people.	F	41	52	48	10	8	160
	%	25.6	32.5	30	6.3	5	100
2. Television media increased the fear among the people by highlighting exaggerated picture about the victims of COVID-19 pandemic.	F	64	50	29	11	4	158
	%	40.5	31.6	18.4	7	2.5	100
3. All medias appeared aggressive for increasing their TRP (Television Rating Point) at the cost of false and misleading information.	F	67	44	30	11	5	157
	%	42.7	28	19.1	7	3.2	100
4. Television Media's scary news about COVID-19 pandemic impacted adversely the mental health of most of the people.	F	86	39	21	5	7	158
	%	54.4	25.7	13.3	3.2	4.4	100
5. Television media was successful to increase pressure on Ministers, Government & Municipal authorities to act promptly for addressing COVID-19 issues	F	52	54	34	7	11	158
	%	32.9	34.2	21.5	4.4	7	100
6. Television media is chasing behind advertising revenue and popularity at the cost of COVID-19 Pandemic.	F	54	54	38	8	5	159
	%	33.8	33.8	23.8	5	3.1	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Interpretation: From the above table it is observed that

- 1) Out of a total of 160 respondents, together 93 (58.1%) have either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that television media has been honest in disseminating information about COVID-19

- infected people. On the contrary, together 18 (11.3%) were somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 48(30%) respondents were neutral.
- 2) Out of a total of 158 respondents, together highest 114 (72.1%) have either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that television media increased the fear among the people by highlighting exaggerated picture about Victim of COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, together 15 (9.5%) were somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, whereas 29 (18.4%) respondents were neutral.
 - 3) Again, together the highest 111 (70.7%) respondents have either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that all media are aggressive for increasing TRP at the cost of false and misleading information. Whereas, together 16 (10.2%) were somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement and 30(19.1%) respondents were neutral.
 - 4) Out of a total of 158 respondents, together highest 125 (79.1%) have either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed there is adverse impact on their mental health due to scary news about COVID-19 pandemic. On the contrary, together 12(7.6%) were somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, whereas 39 (24.7%) respondents were neutral.
 - 5) Again, together the highest 106 (67.1%) respondents have either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that television media was successful to increase pressure on Ministers, Government & Municipal authorities to act promptly for addressing COVID-19. Whereas, together 18 (11.4%) were somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement and 34(21.5%) respondents were neutral.
 - 6) Out of a total of 159 respondents, together highest 108(175.6%) have either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that television media is chasing behind advertising revenue and popularity at the cost of COVID-19 Pandemic. On the other hand, together 13(8.1%) were somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, whereas 38 (23.8%) respondents were neutral.

8. Hypothesis Testing

H₀. There is no significant relationship between gender and adverse impact on mental health of the people of the COVID-19 Pandemic news.

H_a. There is significant relationship between gender and adverse impact on mental health of the people of the COVID-19 pandemic news.

a) Observed Value

Table No-8.1 (a)

Count of Television Medias Scary news about COVID-19 pandemic impacted adversely on the mental health most of the people
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Row Label (Observed Value)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Grand Total
Female	81	36	19	4	7	147
Male	5	3	2	1	0	11
Grand Total	86	39	21	5	7	158

Source: Primary Data

a) Expected Value

Table No-8.1(b)

Count of Television Medias Scary news about COVID-19 pandemic impacted adversely on the mental health most of the people

Row Label (Expected Value)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Grand Total
Female	80.0126582 8	36.2848101 3	9.53797468	4.65189873 4	6.51265822 8	147
Male	5.98734177 2	2.71518987 3	1.46202531 6	0.34810126 6	0.48734177 2	11
Grand Total	86	39	21	5	7	158

b) Chi Square Value

Table No- 8.3 (c)

Count of Television Medias Scary news about COVID-19 pandemic impacted adversely on the mental health most of the people

Row Label (Chi Square)	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Grand Total
Female	0.01218361 9	0.00223558	0.014813038	0.09135451 6	0.03646775 2	0.1570544 8
Male	0.16281745 9	0.02987518 8	0.197966052	1.22082853 9	0.48734177 2	2.0988190 1
Grand Total						2.2558734 9

Formula of Chi Square testing = $X^2 = (fo - fe)2/fe$

R-1 = (2-1)=1, C-1=5-1=4

Degree of Significance =4

Observation

CV	2.25587349
P-VALUE	9.4877

Critical value (CV) approach: Chi square value is smaller than CV, hence we fail to reject the Null hypothesis, and thus both the variables are independent. Thus, we conclude that there is no relationship between the gender and adverse Impact on mental health of the people of Covid-19 pandemic.

P Value Approach: P-value is greater than the level of Alpha i.e.0.05, hence we fail to reject the Null hypothesis, and thus both variables are independent. Thus, we conclude that there is no relationship between the gender and adverse Impact on mental health of the people of Covid-19 pandemic.

9. Result and Findings

- A majority of respondents are of the view that television media has been honest in disseminating information about COVID-19 infected people.
- A good number of respondents stated that television media increased fear among the people by highlighting exaggerated pictures about victims of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- All Medias found aggressive for increasing TRP at the cost of false and misleading information.
- The highest respondents were of the opinion that there is an adverse impact on their mental health due to scary news about COVID-19 shown on television media. The majority of respondents have mentioned that Television media was successful in increasing pressure on Ministers, Government & Municipal authorities to act promptly for addressing COVID-19 issues.
- Television media is chasing behind advertising revenue and popularity at the cost of COVID-19 Pandemic- viewed the highest number of respondents
- It is also observed that a large number of respondents said that television media providing authentic coverage about COVID-19 related news followed by internet and social media.
- The majority of respondents have agreed that television media exposed private hospitals' money-making business in the name of COVID-19 treatment..

10. Limitation and Scope for further study

The majority of respondents are females of the present study and the researcher focused only on Television media. Other scholars have scope to undertake study upon other types of Medias. One can do a comparative study on more than two different Medias and find out the perception of the people on various parameters.

11. Conclusion

It is said that Media is a fourth very important & powerful pillar of Indian democracy that can strengthen the constitutional values by being the unbiased publication of facts and incidents of any area. Its responsible and honest role in disseminating news and facts is going to impact the general public either positively or negatively. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, some media did their job with proper care and precaution but few media's behaviors were biased and in favor of the existing government. Some Medias were not bothered in spreading scary news carelessly. Even there are Media who highlighted reality about pandemic situation in such a nice

manner that the governments of different states had to act promptly. The researcher has made an honest attempt to identify the role played by television media during the on gong COVID-19 pandemic.

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