

Role of Newspapers in combating COVID 19 in Jharkhand: A Study

By

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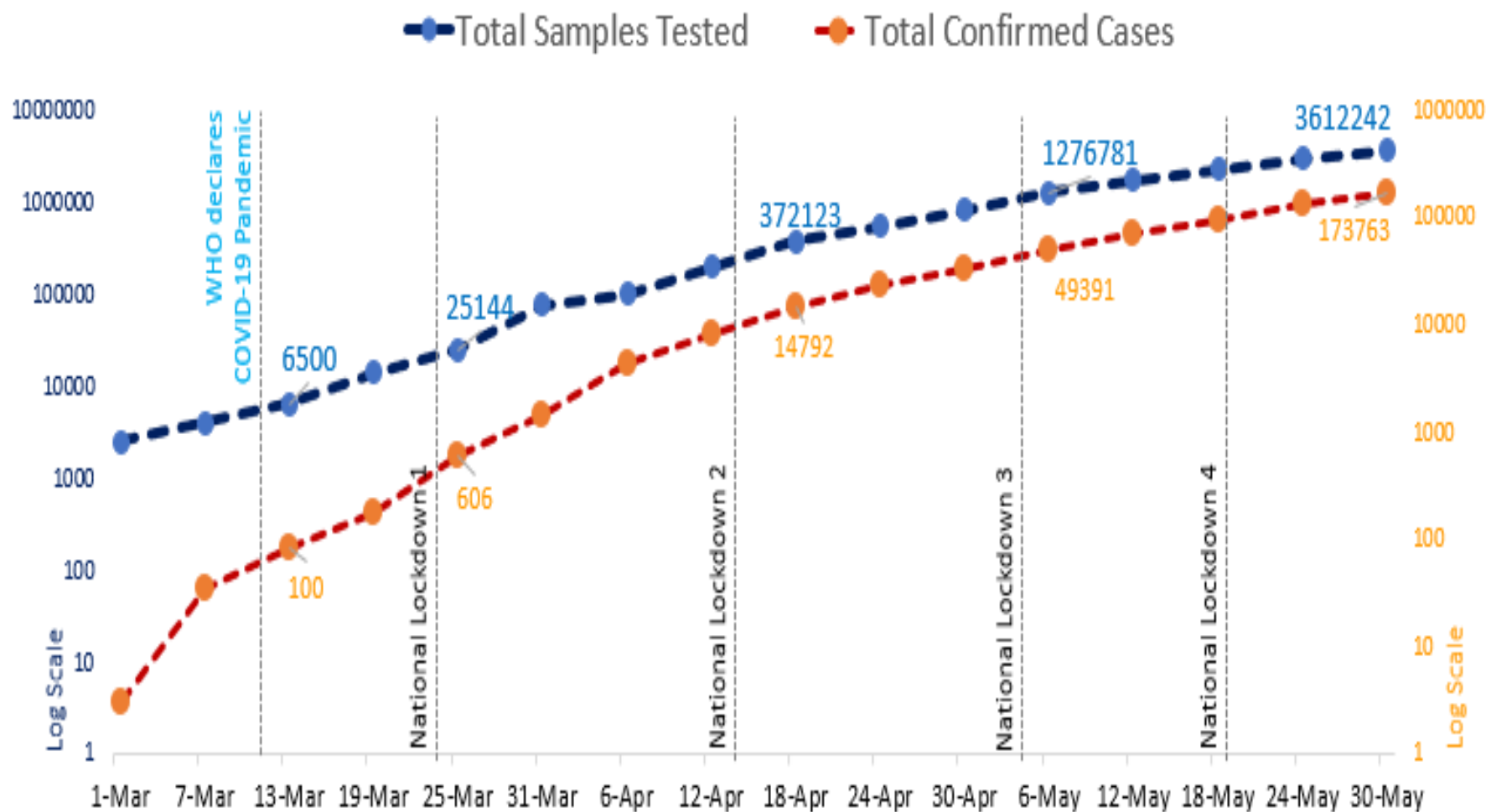


Introduction

- Newspaper – Important media for fact related information, opinion on a matter and analysis of a situation.
- In Jharkhand, 42 % men and 16 % women (NFHS-4) - Read newspaper/magazine at least once a week.
- Readership of Dainik Bhaskar in Ranchi - 116,292 (MediaAnt), among top 6 most circulated newspapers in the district.
- Monitoring local newspapers – close to the local context of a community, forum for public and community leaders

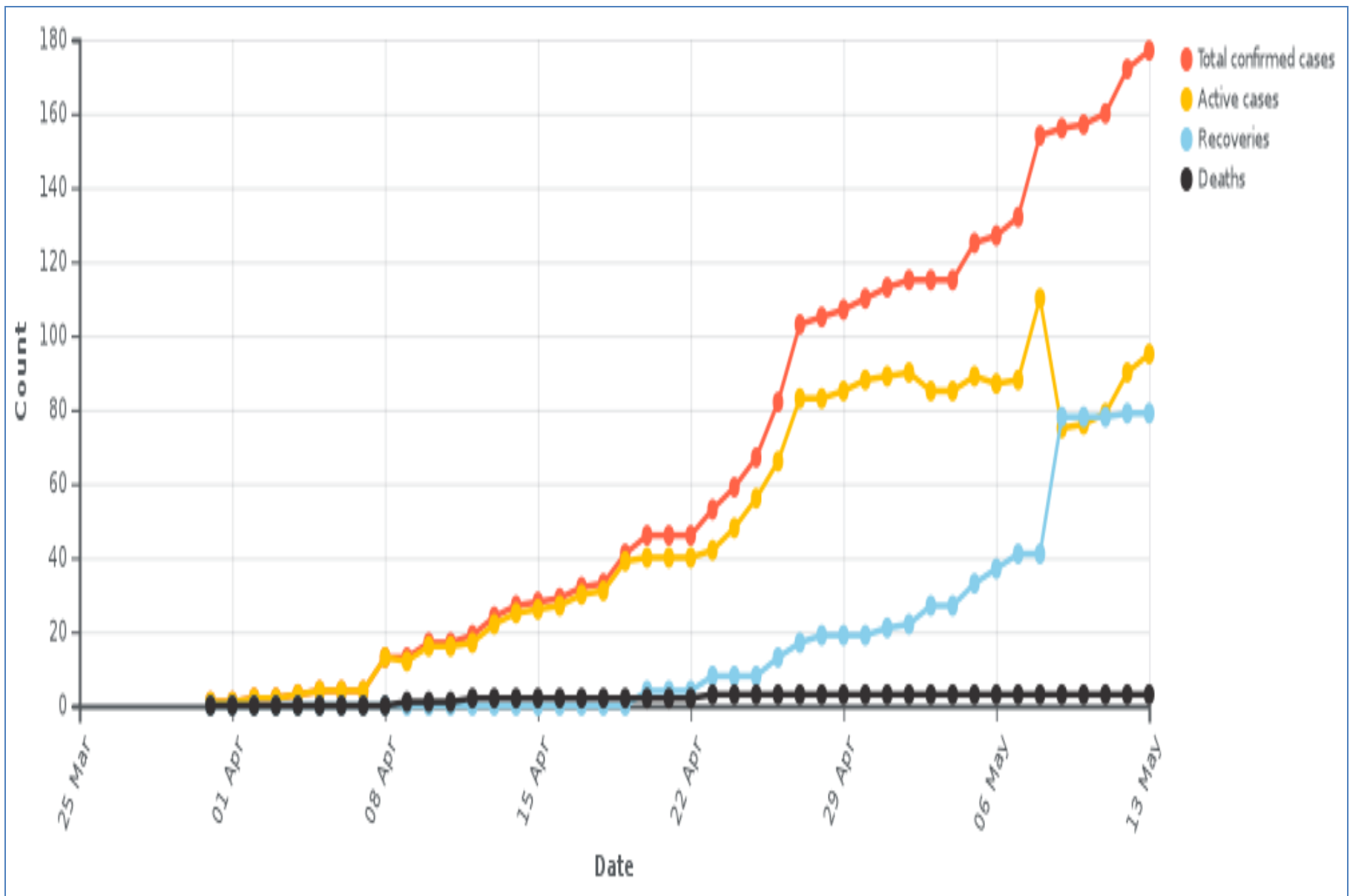
COVID-19

- Viral infectious disease – Caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus 2 (SARS-CoV2)
- WHO declared COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on 30 January 2020
- World's first outbreak – Wuhan, China on 31 December 2019
- India's first outbreak – on 30 January 2020
- Jharkhand's first outbreak – on 31 March 2020



Source: MoHFW and ICMR (Updated on 30th May 2020, 08:00 AM)

Trend of total samples tested and total confirmed cases in India (1st March – 30th May, 2020)



Trend of cases in Jharkhand from 1st April – 13th May, 2020 (source: covid19india.org)

Literature Review

S. No.	Title of the study (Author/s, year)	Objective/s	Key findings
1.	“Content analysis of press coverage during the H1N1 influenza pandemic in Germany 2009–2010” (Sabine Husemann & Florian Fischer, 2015)	• To show how press coverage changed over the course of the pandemic. • To identify how far information provided by the media was linked to the current situation. • To identify what types of information were mainly published by the media.	• The changes in number of news articles were somewhat similar to the changes in the number of infected people. • There were only a few articles that had information about the agent of the influenza or support measures.

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2.	“Understanding newsworthiness of any emerging pandemic: International newspaper coverage of the H1N1 outbreak” (Katherine C. Smith, et. al., 2012)	• To assess H1N1 newsworthiness from newspaper home pages in 12 countries during the initial outbreak month. • To identify factors predicting news coverage volume following the outbreak.	• H1N1 news was initially extensive but declined rapidly. • The number of news was high in the countries having the history of the avian flu, indicating that the H1N1 newsworthiness was bolstered by past experiences. • The coverage of H1N1 increased after a first in-country case, thereby interrupting the pattern of coverage decline.

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3.	“Media Coverage of a Global Pandemic in Japan: Content Analysis of A/ H1N1 Influenza Newspaper Articles” (Mio Kato & Hirono Ishikawa; 2016)	• To explore the topics covered during the pandemic by Japanese newspapers. • To measure how much is covered in those newspapers • To find out whether these newspapers provide information on preventive measures to the individuals.	• More of factual information was reported in the Japanese national newspapers. • However, despite its importance for the society, the information on preventive measures was less frequently reported.

Objectives

- To review COVID-19 related guidelines and advisories issued by Government of India and Government of Jharkhand
- To study role of print media in creating awareness of COVID 19

Methodology

- Study Setting – Ranchi district, Jharkhand
- Study Type – Descriptive Study
- Sample Size – 25 newspapers of Dainik Bhaskar from the month of April, 2020, excluding 5 newspapers which could not be found in a readable state.
- Sampling Technique – Purposive Sampling. Out of 44 newspapers circulated in Ranchi, Dainik Bhaskar was selected for the study due to its availability and accessibility during the pandemic. 25 Dainik Bhaskar newspapers were chosen from 1st April to 30th April, 2020, since the first case of COVID-19 in the state.
- Data Collection Method – Review of government guidelines and newspapers.
- Data Collection Tool - Checklist

Components of Awareness of COVID-19

- Reports on factual data – No. of positive/detected, cured and death cases, survey reports, government guidelines.
- Preventive measures – Screening, sanitization, hand-wash technique, mask-wearing technique, no touching of face, social distancing, and quarantine.
- Curative measures - Diagnostic, isolation, medicine and drugs, vaccination
- Pandemic/lockdown effects – Effects on daily wage workers or migrant workers, transportation problems, barriers in health services
- Corona warriors motivation and respect – Corona warriors like health staff, police, cleaning staff, survivors and patients.

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- Logistic and supplies – Supplies of PPE kits, gloves, mask, and PDS and donation of ration by the government.
- Management – By state, centre or local administration, and management models like Bhilwara model or Agra model.
- Stigma and discrimination – Rumors, fake news, discriminating a particular community or gender, misbehavior or disrespect towards any professional like healthcare workers or police.
- Lockdown violation – Not following lockdown rules/laws during the pandemic lockdown.
- Social work – Donation of ration, foods or PPE by NGOs, political parties and individuals.

Coding criteria for news items

S. No.	Variables	Explanation
News Item Details		
1.	Newspaper Name	Name of the newspaper in which the piece of information is issued
2.	Newspaper Date	Day of COVID-19 since the first case in the state
3.	Headline	Main headline of the news item
5.	News item Description	Brief description of the news item
News Item Variables		
1.	Total number of news item by dimension of awareness	
2.	Total number of COVID-19 related news items on awareness per issue	

S. No.	Variables	Explanation
3.	News item Type	News and crime reports - news articles; feature and pictorial - feature articles; editorial and opinion column - opinion; facts and data - data; and advertisements.
4.	Coverage (global, national, state, district etc)	Whether the news item majorly covers international, national or local angle with respect to Jharkhand.
5.	Component of the news item/ piece of information	1. Reports on factual data 2. Preventive measures 3. Curative measures 4. Pandemic/lockdown effects 5. Corona warriors motivation and respect 6. Logistic and supplies 7. Management 8. Stigma and discrimination 9. Lockdown violation 10. Social work 11. Others (specify)

S. No.	Variables	Explanation
Quality indicators of News item		
1.	News item by its place (page number and section title)	Whether the news item is found on front page of a newspaper section (Yes/No); P.S. – Dainik Bhaskar in Ranchi has Ranchi Front Page and General Front Page, so the first pages of both the front pages will be considered.
2.	Presentation	Placement of the beginning of the title or top of news item/figure/picture (left, above fold; right, above fold; left, below fold and right, below fold)
3.	Space coverage	It will be measured by summing the square inches from across all parts of the story, including text, headlines, bylines, and visuals.
4.	Headline Size	Small, (<0.7 cm); medium, (0.7-1.2 cm); large, (>1.2 cm).
5.	Visual Inclusion	Whether photograph or other visuals are included in the news item(yes/no)

Results

1. Review of government guidelines and advisories

To deal with the pandemic, the Government of India had been issuing guidelines and advisories with time to time in the following categories –

- Travel Advisories
- Citizens
- Hospitals
- Human Resource Management
- States/Departments/Ministries
- Employees
- Awareness

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Travel Advisories

- First travel advisory – on 17 January 2020
- Primarily for the travelers to China – To take precautions while travelling to China
- Indian travelers refrained from travelling to China
- All the existing visas no longer valid for any foreign national travelling from China.
- Indians restricted from non-essential travel to other affected countries.
- Visas to the affected countries were suspended

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- People arriving from/having travel history to affected – 14 days quarantine
- People arriving from non-restricted countries – medical screening at port of entry
- Passengers from Italy or Republic of Korea – show a certificate of having tested negative for COVID-19 from authorized laboratories.
- Additional Travel Advisory on home isolation, self-monitoring of health and self-imposed quarantine for 14 days.
- Maximum travel time of 20 hours for international commercial passenger aircraft to land in India
- Relaxations allowed in the later lockdowns – guidelines for domestic travel and international arrivals.

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Citizens

- Mass gatherings, use of masks by public, home quarantine, dead body management, social distancing and disinfection of common public places
- Guidelines for issuing of medicines during the pandemic – for 3months at a time, for special circumstances - elder beneficiaries aged 60 years/above, beneficiaries undergoing immuno-suppressive treatment, any illness compelling stay at home
- The use of homemade protective cover for face and mouth, quarantine facilities and for handling, treatment and disposal of waste generated during treatment/diagnosis/quarantine of COVID-19 patients.
- Dialysis and discharge policy for COVID-19 patients

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Hospitals

- RT-PCR based Pooled Sampling
- Surveillance system
- Rational use of PPE
- Rapid antibody test in Hotspot area (by ICMR)
- Re-processing and re-use of eye protection goggles.

Human Resource Management

- Training materials for different classes of healthcare professionals.
- guiding the capacity building, surveillance, clinical management, management of quarantine, isolation facilities, logistic and supplies, and psycho-social care.

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States/Departments/Ministries

- Sample collection, packaging and transportation, and surveillance for human infection with 2019-nCoV
- Revised guidelines/strategy for COVID-19 testing (by ICMR)
- Quarantine of migrant workers
- Safe drinking water during lockdown, and voluntary blood donation

Employees

- Preventive measures to contain spread in the workplace settings
- Disinfection of offices

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Awareness

- Video guidelines for Home Isolation of very mild/ pre-symptomatic COVID-19 cases
- awareness materials in different languages for frontline workers, and other health service providers
- About stigma and discrimination.

Guidelines and advisories by Government of Jharkhand

- Guidelines for public as well as frontline workers.
- Management of suspect/confirmed cases of COVID-19
- Telemedicine Practice Guidelines (by Board of Governors) – enable registered medical practitioners to provide healthcare using telemedicine
- COVID-19 Preparedness and Control in Ranchi (CPCR)
- Operating guidelines of 'Bazar Mobile App' – connecting buyers and traders

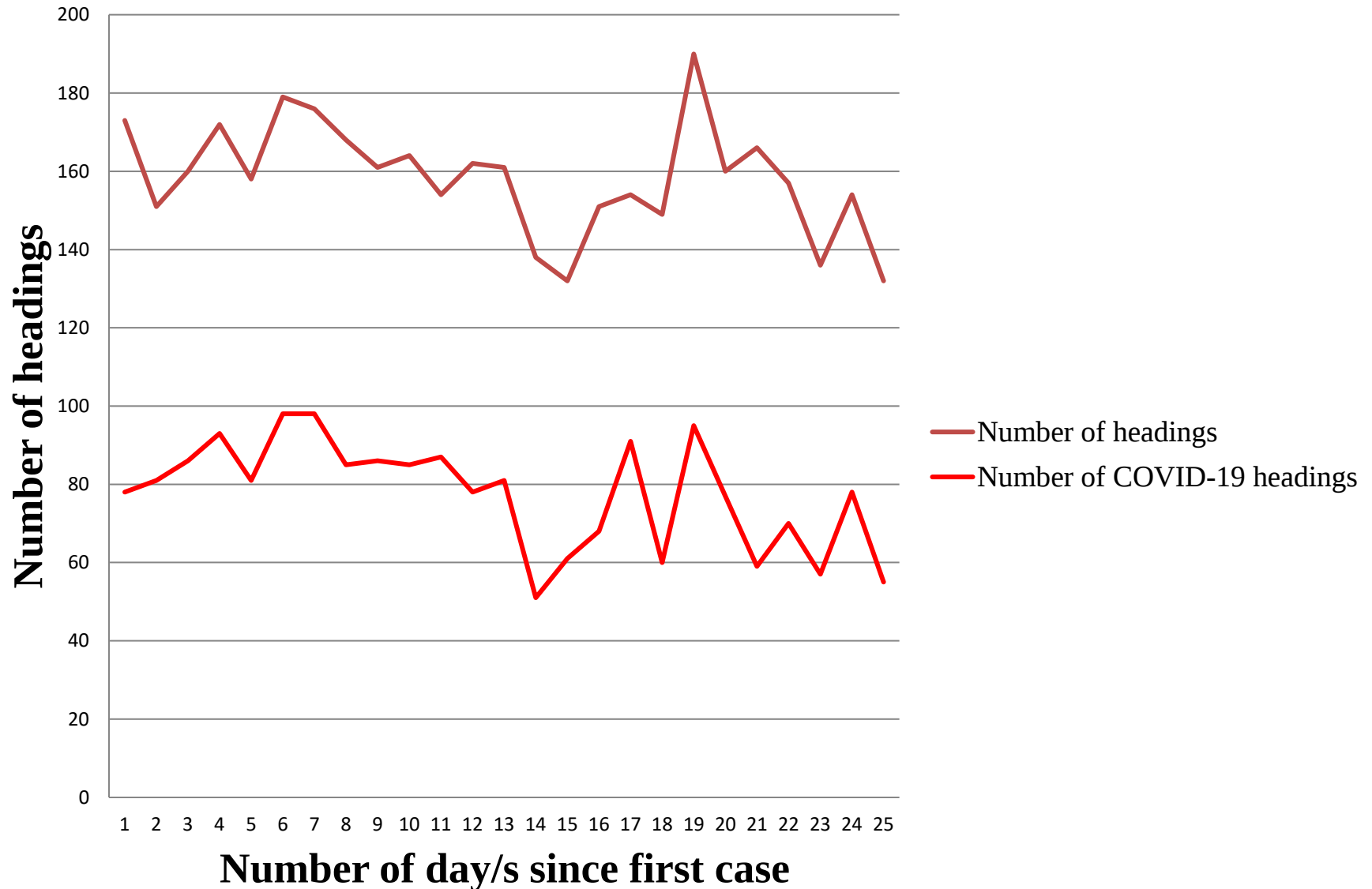
2. Newspaper review

- 1939 news items reviewed from 25 newspapers issues
- Components of awareness –
 - i. Reports on factual data
 - ii. Preventive measures
 - iii. Curative measures
 - iv. Lockdown/pandemic effects
 - v. Corona warriors motivation and respect
 - vi. Supplies and logistics
 - vii. Management
 - viii. Stigma and discrimination
 - ix. Lockdown violation
 - x. Social work

Per cent distribution of news items by COVID 19 awareness components

S. No.	Components of awareness	Number	Per cent
1.	Management	441	22.7
2.	Reports on factual data	305	15.7
3.	Social work	236	12.2
4.	Preventive measures	227	11.7
5.	Pandemic/lockdown effects	222	11.4
6.	Lockdown violation	129	6.7
7.	Corona warriors motivation and respect	110	5.7
8.	Stigma and discrimination	110	5.7
9.	Logistic and supplies	98	5.1
10.	Curative measures	51	2.6
11.	Others (crime, blame, opinion)	10	0.5
	Total	1939	100

Fig : Trend of number of headings and number of COVID-19 headings on days since the first case



Per cent distribution of news items by types, coverage, presence in front page and visual inclusion

S. No.	News item variables	Number	Per cent
News item type			
1	News articles	1307	67.4
2	Feature articles	206	10.6
3	Data	156	8.0
4	Advertisements	140	7.2
5	Opinion	130	6.7
Coverage			
1	Local	1084	55.9
2	National	607	31.3
3	International	248	12.8
Presence in front page			
1	Yes	394	20.3
Visual inclusion			
1	Yes	860	44.4

Prominence Index

- A prominence index was created with each quality indicator using a 4-point scale (0 = lowest prominence, 3 = highest prominence). The index reflected the likelihood of an item being read in a newspaper. It is any indicator of level coverage an item is given. More prominent items are more likely to be read.

Scores for quality indicators using a 4-point scale

Indicators	0	1	2	3
Front Page			No	Yes
Item location	Right, below fold	Left, below fold	Right, above fold	Left, above fold
Space coverage	< 184 cm sq	184 – 460 cm sq	460 - 921 cm sq	>921 cm sq
Headline size		Small (<0.7 cm)	Medium (0.7-1.2 cm)	Large (>1.2 cm)
Visual inclusion			No	Yes

Mean Prominence Indices of the components of awareness

S. No.	Components of awareness	Number of news items	Mean PI	SD	Mini mum	Maxi mum
1.	Motivation and respect	110	8.45	1.785	5	13
2.	Pandemic/lockdown effects	222	8.45	1.892	5	12
3.	Reports on factual data	305	8.44	2.085	5	14
4.	Management	441	8.12	2.001	5	14
5.	Lockdown violation	129	8.12	1.975	5	12
6.	Others	10	8.10	2.470	5	11
7.	Preventive measures	227	7.82	1.708	5	13
8.	Curative measures	51	7.57	1.723	5	11
9.	Logistic and supplies	98	7.54	1.568	5	13
10.	Stigma and discrimination	110	7.50	1.701	5	13
11.	Social work	236	7.39	1.331	5	13

Day-wise mean prominence index of news items

Newspaper date (day since the first case)	No. of news items	Mean PI	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Day 1 (1 April 2020)	78	8.09	1.982	5	14
Day 2 (2 April 2020)	81	8.05	1.877	5	13
Day 3 (3 April 2020)	86	8.03	2.032	5	14
Day 4 (4 April 2020)	93	7.96	1.888	5	14
Day 6 (6 April 2020)	81	7.99	1.991	5	13
Day 7 (7 April 2020)	98	7.98	1.905	5	13
Day 8 (8 April 2020)	98	7.95	1.671	5	12
Day 10 (10 April 2020)	85	8.13	1.938	5	12
Day 11 (11 April 2020)	86	7.92	1.861	5	13
Day 12 (12 April 2020)	85	7.93	1.869	5	14
Day 13 (13 April 2020)	87	7.95	1.698	5	12
Day 14 (14 April 2020)	78	7.94	1.826	5	14

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Newspaper date (day since the first case)	No. of news items	Mean PI	SD	Mini mum	Maxim um
Day 15 (15 April 2020)	81	8.04	1.978	5	14
Day 16 (16 April 2020)	51	8.12	1.996	5	12
Day 17 (17 April 2020)	61	8.25	1.997	5	14
Day 18 (18 April 2020)	68	7.90	1.971	5	12
Day 20 (20 April 2020)	91	8.02	1.856	5	12
Day 21 (21 April 2020)	60	8.13	1.953	5	14
Day 22 (22 April 2020)	95	8.00	1.738	5	12
Day 23 (23 April 2020)	77	7.96	1.956	5	12
Day 24 (24 April 2020)	59	7.92	1.878	5	12
Day 25 (25 April 2020)	70	8.19	1.713	5	13
Day 26 (26 April 2020)	57	8.23	1.909	5	12
Day 27 (27 April 2020)	78	8.05	1.772	5	13

Conclusion

- On an average, almost half of the newspaper headings per newspaper issue were related to COVID-19
- Majority of the news items – in the form of news articles i.e., news and crime reports
- Most of the news items showed the local angle and also contained visuals, thus influencing the readers
- Most of the news items were about management of pandemic situation by the government, factual data and government guidelines. The least covered components of awareness were curative measures, and logistics and supplies

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- Components that had greater prominence indices were corona warriors' motivation and respect, pandemic/lockdown effects, and reports on factual data.
- Lower prominence index components were social work, and stigma and discrimination.
- Components like curative measures, stigma and discrimination, and logistics and supplies were both less in number as well as had lower prominence indices. Hence given minimal importance in the newspaper.
- No significant differences in the day-wise prominence indices of news items, and there were no specific trend in the change.

**Thank
You**

