

# IMPACT *of* COVID-19

## ON JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY



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# IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY

SANJAY JOHRI AND SANGEETA PANDEY

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Lucknow, India

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# F O R E W A R D

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## **‘Impact of Covid-19 on Journalism and Mass Communication Industry’**

In Dec 2019, a novel pathogen emerged, and within weeks, led to the emergence of the biggest global health crises seen to date. The virus called ‘SARS-CoV-2’, causes coronavirus disease which was named ‘COVID-19’ by the World Health Organization (WHO). The speedy spread of this infection globally became a source of public worry and several unknowns regarding this new pathogen created a state of panic. Mass media became the major source of information about the novel coronavirus. Much like the previous pandemics of SARS (2003), H1N1 (2009), and MERS (2012), the media significantly contributed to the COVID-19 coverage.

In this book edited by Prof Dr Sanjay Mohan Johri & Ms Sangeeta Pandey, they have analysed the role of mass media and public health communications and impact of the Covid-19 on media and mass communication. Media coverage of coronavirus news during geographical lockdowns, extended quarantines, and financial and social hardships cannot be overlooked.

The media played a worldwide role in coronavirus disease tracking and updates through live updates dashboard and putting their lives at risk during coverage of the news. Mass media has an imperative role in today’s world, and it can provide a unified platform for all public health communications, comprehensive healthcare education guidelines, and robust social distancing strategies while still maintaining social connections.

It is equally important to ascertain at this point how the media and mass communication has been impacted by the pandemic. It is very apt that the editors thought of this topic and since not much literature is available, the book will provide very important insight in the development

of OTT platforms, role of community radio as well as how the pandemic has affected small media houses and related professionals like photo, videographers and local newspapers.

**Prof (Dr) Sunil Dhaneshwar**  
Pro Vice Chancellor  
Amity University Uttar Pradesh  
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# P R E F A C E

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## **Pandemic & Worst hit Media Industry**

Pandemic as a result of Covid-19 came as a big blow to perhaps every sector and so were badly hit wide range of Mass Communication verticals like Media industry, the Advertising, Public Relations, Event Management and even higher education sectors which not only faced worst ever crisis but heavy losses in jobs everywhere. Down with business, many companies faced closure or went for downsizing while shifting from business premises to Work from Home (WFH) working.

The media industry comprising of big organizations responded by massively cutting jobs and salaries, closing bureaus and editions.

The precise number of journalists who have lost their jobs isn't known because the employers were secretive and tight-lipped about layoffs, but estimates put it in the thousands. And the crisis is not yet over. Media workers continue to be laid off, furloughed, or made to work on reduced salary.

This situation pushed Journalists to switch to other professions until they find a proper job and many opted for their own U-Tube channels as salaries offered were meagre. Few took up to content creation to translation work or picked up teaching in journalism schools.

Freelancing is an option, but it is not a viable source of livelihood in today's media market. "There is not enough freelance work in the market as most organizations have seen their revenues dry up," said a senior journalist who till recently was with a brand newspaper. Even starting a new media venture, especially in today's market, is no mean task.

Digital media did come up to the rescue, but it was more of a pastime as payments were hard.

Advertising and Public Relations an integral part of mass communication had to battle with newer challenges. Normally these two media sectors are no stranger to disruption and turmoil having overcome economic pressures & political tensions but most of these episodes have been short-lived.

Ad and PR agencies which are heavily dependent on mega-events, sports & ad-tech gatherings faced unpredictability as the global outbreak of

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Covid-19 intensified with travel restrictions. Closer home, several agencies changed their working to go online and hold virtual meetings to deal with this unprecedented crisis. Modern ways of technology came to the rescue but in the process unspecified number of people in these two industries lost jobs.

With the global market observing a slowdown, people stopped buying newspapers & Clients proactiveness towards continuing PR activities was put on hold because of prolonged lockdown. The lockdown impacted product launches and other promotional or media events where PR teams play an important role. So was the case of multi-million dollar events businesses.

The Indian entertainment industry was one of the worst-hit and productions of films was halted. Depressed with the continued impact of pandemic we heard of suicides and deaths of superstars. Indian Bollywood lost many great stars either because of Covid-19 or they could not withstand with the pressure.

Education which never dreamt of the pandemic times resulted in closure of schools, colleges and universities in India but opened gates to innovative methods of transmission of knowledge across the globe.

COVID-19 accelerated the adoption of digital technologies to deliver education. Education institutions moved toward blended learning and encouraged teachers and students to acquire technology savvy. Soft technology, online, webinars, virtual classrooms, teleconferencing, digital exams and assessments became common phenomenon, where otherwise we might have merely defined them — or they might have come into practical use a decade later or more. However, many universities taking the advantage of the situation either stopped salary or went for heavy cuts and even teachers lost jobs in the primary and secondary education institutions.

The Centre for Media Studies (CMS) of the Amity School of Communication will be perhaps first institution which tried to analyze the

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impact of covid-19 on the mass communication industry and present it in the form of an E-Book by involving the institution faculty and research scholars and share their experience.

I wish to compliment one and all for their contributions in particular Dr. Kashif Hasan for his overall coordination, Ms. Sangeeta Pandey for her expertise in editing, Mr. Mohit Sharma and Mr. Shirish Sharma for designing the Cover page.

Cheers,

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri  
Director

# A B O U T T H E E D I T O R S

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## **Prof (Dr) S M Johri:**

Prof (Dr) S M Johri is the Director of Amity School of Communication, Amity University Lucknow. He received his PhD in Journalism from the University of Lucknow. His journey from a researcher at one of Asia's biggest drug research institute, CDRI, Lucknow, to India's premier news agency, Press Trust of India, and then a sure-footed foray into media academics, has been a roller-coaster, but a fascinating journey in the last 40 years. While switching over to journalism he presented talks, discussions, interviews and news/features in All India Radio, Lucknow, every week, and presented a weekly programme Vigyan Samachar on Doordarshan, Lucknow. Prof Johri worked for India's biggest news agency PTI for nearly 20 years and joined Amity university in 2009 where he followed his first love i.e. academics. He has also authored a book "Out in the Field" – A Reporters Guide.

## **Ms Sangeeta Pandey:**

Ms Sangeeta Pandey is a senior journalist with over 15 years of experience in the print industry having worked with prominent publications like Hindustan Times and The Times of India. She is also an author with her book 'The Making of The Greatest-Jeff Bezos' going for second reprint by Rupa Publications. At present Ms Pandey is a consultant (visiting faculty) at ASCO, Amity University, Lucknow where she teaches journalism and mass communication to students. She is also an Associate Editor of ASCO's monthly publication- 'Expressions' as well as Editor of the department's research and publication unit—The Centre for Media Studies (CMS).

# CHAPTER 1

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EMPATHY, ENGAGEMENT AND DIGITALIZATION FOR BRANDS DURING COVID-19 TIMES**

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MD ASADUL HAQUE AND ASHA ADHIKARI

### **Introduction**

Brands as intangible assets are one of the most valuable assets that companies have. In this context, brand loyalty is at the heart of the marketing activities of firms. With intensified fragmentation, sophistication and competition of markets traditional manufacturers of brands are forced to be more concerned with the development and maintenance of long-term relationship with their consumers and therefore seeking to adopt relationship marketing (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 1995; Rust, Zeithaml and Lemon, 2004).

Covid-19 presents the most significant global economic and social crisis in recent times. People have had to significantly alter their daily routines in many countries, often being confined to their home for extended periods and physically isolated from their communities. During this period, many people have been reflecting their life choices; and in doing so challenge their perspectives on work and private lives through existential questioning and contemplating. This is reflected in a recent survey conducted in Britain which illuminated that a “clear majority (85%) want to see at least some of the personal or social changes they have experienced to continue afterwards” (RSA, 2020). Likewise, in a recent survey conducted in Australia, 62% of respondents agreed with the statement “This is the reset we needed to re-evaluate how we were living” (Cotton et al., 2020). As people more broadly consider such existential questions, challenging the meaning of their (inter) actions and experiences, businesses need to rethink what that might mean for their engagement with customers.

The pandemic has hit most of the brands with an unexpected and unprecedented way. The brands in the initial phase of pandemic were seen under tremendous pressure of sales and marketing which also led to the worry of sustaining the

trust of consumers. The consumer behaviors have changed during pandemic. The consumers have started identifying if there is the need of product. No wonder all the brands have started associating their products with Covid19. To do so, while most have taken this opportunity to provide help, assistance, and essential resources to the needy and fulfil their corporate social responsibility, a few others are raising awareness on Covid-19 through innovative awareness and promotional campaigns.

### **Concept of Empathy, Engagement & Digitalization for Brands**

To maintain relevance in these unprecedented times, businesses are considering new approaches to engage their customers; and novel theoretical perspectives can provide an underlying structure to better understand the engagement phenomenon in this context. Customer engagement refers to an individual's voluntary interactions with and resource contributions to a firm's representations that go beyond what is fundamental to transactions (cf. Jaakkola and Alexander, 2014). An individual's disposition to engage, and how that manifests in customer engagement behaviors, is largely influenced by the context (Alexander et al., 2018). During, and likely after, a period of great uncertainty and social disruption, many customers seek to engage with businesses in different ways than before (Charm et al., 2020).

Empathy has an important role to play during times when brands need to understand their customers. Long-term relationship building has gained significance to stand out from competitors. Brands are able to get an emotional connection with their customers, allowing them to have real-time engagement with them that leads to mutually beneficial relationships. It also leads to inspiring connection with those customers. Customers want to know that brands "get them." They want brands to feel their challenges and celebrate their wins. They want brands to feel friendly, comfortable and trustworthy. It's a feeling of "Yes, this is me" that taps into customer identity and lets brands establish connections almost like friendships. brands should be (or at least seem to be) genuine and transparent. This creates an emotional connection with the consumer, who believes the brand understands their struggles, maybe even shares them.

It is now most important that customers believe brands get them. Even something as small as, "this brand understands my lifestyle," or "this brand understands how I consume media" can begin a relationship. This relationship may lead to repeated purchases from those brands that helps the brand in building a positive and trustworthy image. For the brand, it leads to the formation of a brand identity which customers associate themselves with. Inspiration, humour or relatability may be a few elements of brand association through which an individual consumer may feel to be connected to a brand. Examples of brands using inspiration to connect with

their customers may include sports brands and beauty brands. In order to have a resonant narrative as marketers, we must realize we aren't aiming our brands at everyone. Consumers aren't just numbers or stats. Realness is one of the many ways in order to connect with consumers. This creates compassion and connection, presenting a brand as "just like you." In the 2017 Forbes article titled 'Imperfect is Perfect,' Lauren Stephens has focused on the significance of increase in authentic and real advertising over the years. Imperfection leads to improved trust in the eyes of the customers.

It is imperative for the brands that customer purchase decision passes through several steps that includes identification of product/service to address their needs/wants, followed by the evaluation of alternatives before them and then the actual purchase. This is basically an entire journey that brands haven been focusing on. Successful brands help the customers at every step of this journey. Empathetic brands help the customers to provide total solution rather than products/services. True brand empathy is different from merely identifying needs, serving up useful information, or even understanding the personal motivations that drive consumption. It is about creating a shared journey between your brand and its audience. It involves a deeper connection to and understanding of that audience on an emotional level, as well as rational and transactional ones.

According to research firm Gartner, Digital transformation or Digitalization is "the process of changing from analog to digital format." This process creates digitized data "without any different-in-kind changes to the process itself," which can then be used for business purposes. The present-day consumer is empowered about every purchase they make. The traditional marketing (Advertisements) is not impacting or influencing the buying decisions of consumers as much as it does earlier. They are more in-the-moment, and they (sometimes) have a global array of options about where to find the product that they want. In short, they are more likely to look for their ideal product than be convinced through an ad. That is where digitalization comes in, which happens when "digital technologies are used to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities. Digital marketing has gone beyond a brand awareness vehicle and rightly become integral to how brands engage and convert their target audiences (Purvis, D. (2017 , December 1) What digital transformation means for brands. Martech today. The consumer today is looking for easy options to purchase the products and also personalization with products is something that the consumer today requires. The companies are doing their best to fulfil the need and demands of their consumers. The paper focuses on some of the most used digital strategies by brands other than commercials to attract the consumers attention.

Web Series or Personal Vlogs on YouTube have gained more acceptability over the last few years. With cheaper access to the internet, Internet literacy has increased over the past few years. People have preferred watching content on YouTube. No doubt that YouTube has content for everyone. During pandemic YouTube gave a lot more creative content to its audience for instance there were many web series, short film and vlogs introduced by the renowned producers and celebrities. The popularity of YouTube has always attracted the brands to advertise but during pandemic it increased more and in different creative way for example Close up a renowned brand collaborated with a mini web series named "Please find attached" where in each episode of 30 mins, the actors were seen using the product (covert advertising) and talking about it within every 7-10 mins. Similarly, the video bloggers were seen telling the consumers about benefits of certain product or just unboxing the product. For instance, Gaurav Chaudhary (a vlogger) in his YouTube channel technical guruji unboxes and discussed about one plus 8, the video has 4,553,528 views.

### **Significance of Empathy, Engagement & Digitalization during COVID-19 times**

However, the customer experience post-pandemic is looking very different from the pre-pandemic world. Suddenly, brands are engaging with customers who are collectively traumatized, surrounded by risk of exposure, lockdowns that impact day-to-day activities, and increasing financial worries. Customer experiences designed to market products and services must be crafted with care, with less focus on "sales" and more on delivering messages of empathy, engagement, trust and safety. The pace of forced adoption to this new virtual online mode of engagement has been quite overwhelming leaving a large group of users with physical limitations stranded in an unfamiliar digital world trying to manage their needs. This scenario is what makes ensuring "digital inclusion"—an open, accessible and supportive customer experience that works for all users regardless of physical abilities—so critical. Another silver lining is that this pandemic offers organizations the opportunity to stand out to customers and prospects by demonstrating efforts for equality and inclusion as a sign of care and concern.

Customer optimism is something that all businesses are concerned with during this pandemic. Confidence and trust, the two underlying pillars that determine loyalty of customers, have gained more significance that will decide the success of any brand even after the pandemic is over. How brands address these concerns

of customers will go a long way in restoring the trust and confidence of the customers. This is where the role of empathy and engagement becomes significant. Brands need to identify the customer moments that matter. They need to keep the interests of the customers first even if it costs a hit to the bottomline of the brand in the short-run. They need to improve upon the experience of the customers by adding flexibility in the prices, policy changes and refund policies in order to ensure that the customers understand that they are the priority for the brands. Addressing the concerns of the customers through these ways may help the organisation reap long-term benefits.

In the pandemic affected world, it is important that brands should aim at continuing to provide value to customers. The needs and wants have undergone changes during the pandemic and brands should come up with solution to those. They should aim at improved and innovative solution to those requirements of customers. Products and services that they may continue even after the pandemic will help the brand to gain momentum in the Covid affected world. The roadmap for future offerings may be decided by keeping the interests and priorities of the customers at the top. In the long-run, it will lead to trust by customers, followed by loyalty. Brands can experience a positive return on empathy. It requires being aware of what your consumer cares about and understanding the concerns and challenges they face in their everyday lives. Empathy can go a long way in helping your brand grow.

With the increased focus on empathy, engagement and digitisation in the post-Covid world, it is imperative to understand their relevance and significance. Also, the brands need to include and implement these attributes all the more to ensure a healthy and long-term relationship with customers. An example of the implementation of empathy for brands is the Saregama Carvaan Ghar Le Aayein campaign. Aiming to position the product as a companion to the elderly people, the product wants to create an emotional connect through the golden old melodies. It also helps the elderly to cope up with loneliness and boredom and serves as the ideal gift from children to the elders.

Brands need to stay flexible during this unprecedented period. As we see new spikes in the virus and states considering tightening restrictions, you must stay nimble with your communications and messaging. Don't run those standard "evergreen" campaigns when you know stressed out, worried consumers may need something geared to how they are feeling and coping with these dramatic life changes. To not acknowledge what's going on in the world and with people can be a real disconnect and can be the difference between a successful marketing campaign and a failure.

Consumers want you to communicate how your brand is responding to changes

in the market place. If you are only doing curbside service, tell them. If you are closing a plant for two weeks because of a Covid outbreak, inform them and let them know the plan for shipping product from another location. They want to know what you are doing to make their lives easier during these challenging times. Brands need to take action in many cases so customers can see you genuinely care about them right now and are not just focused on the bottom line. Take actions that demonstrate your empathy. Being in touch with customers is important. Even if the customers are buying lesser goods /services from the brand, appreciating and caring about customers and letting them know about it is important. Remembering you customers at this juncture may have a spill-over effect as it may lead to positive word-of-mouth about a brand that may lead to the communication reaching an even wider audience. Keeping customers as the priority rather than short-term sales/ profits will help forging a strong relationship and bond that may lead to future benefits for a brand in the future.

Consumers have made it clear that how companies treat employees is going to be a major factor in their purchase decision. Negative publicity from disgruntled employees can spread quickly as consumers are increasingly hypersensitive to companies mistreating employees. Communicating to your employees, especially the ones who serve your customers, is crucial as it will be necessary for employees to assure customers of uninterrupted service, or to advise them of any issues that might arise and come up with solutions. If your business has in-person customer interaction, make sure your employees are aware of operational processes to reduce the possible transmission of the virus from person to person.

The significance of digitalization for brands has increased manifold. For example, Amul presented its iconic Amul girl and giving specific messages on Covid-19 prevention and safety measures. Zomato through its push notifications, has been informing its users about the steps it took with restaurant and delivery partners on safety practices, besides launching contactless food delivery options for its users.

Apart from the traditional ways like commercial advertising, digital platforms have taken place. The immense use of digit technologies has helped the brands to grow and maintain its relations with consumers. LinkedIn launched 'Coronavirus: Official Updates' section under which its editors have been curating content from official sources such as WHO, UNICEF, and the National Health Authority of India. Facebook launched 'COVID-19 Information Center', which could be followed by users for correct information and updates and provides a direct link to the COVID-19 dashboard set up by the Government of India.

Contactless payment, as a concept, is primarily inspired and developed bearing in mind the customer's interaction points. The idea and concept of contactless

payment has existed from a long time but Covid-19 pandemic has significantly increased on promoting the adoption trajectory for mobile wallets such as, Google Pay, Paytm, PayPal etc and more. The Indian government-backed digital payment mediums like AePS (Aadhaar Enabled Payment System) and UPI (Unified Payment Interface) and ensured that contactless and cashless transactions and have seen a major uptick in the pandemic. This is because of the increased adoption during the lockdown – be it due to online grocery stores, online pharmacies, OTT players, recharges, online gaming, or bill payments.

The report, “The Rise in Contactless Payments During COVID-19,” states that there is an increase in contactless payment all around the globe.

©Appriss Retail. Data extracted via the global Appriss Retail transaction database on July 14, 2020

The contactless payment does not only help the consumers to buy product in a safe way but also turned out to be a game changer for most of the brands. Contactless payment as a phenomenon will evolve and stay and the payments ecosystem is gearing up with all its strength for the world after COVID-19 said Phil Pomford, Managing Director, International Markets, Merchant Solutions, FIS.

Influencer marketing/endorsements - Influencer marketing involves marketing products and services to those who have a control over the things other people buy. This market influence typically stems from an individual's expertise, popularity, or reputation (Zdenka KÁDEKOVÁ – Mária HOLIENČINOVÁ, Communication Today, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 2) Influencer endorsements attach fame of certain personalities who are trusted in their respective fields to spread awareness of the brands belonging to that field which in turn drives sales for the company. In simple words leveraging the popularity and expertise of influencers to promote a brand (Aanchal Nagori, IJCRT | Volume 8)

The pandemic has changed the use of many already existing things like social media apps. As per the report “Influencer Marketing in the Age of COVID-19” Aug2020 Jasmine Enberg stated -that the less scripted and unfiltered content is the new normal for advertising and marketing. The rise and popularity of apps like Instagram and tiktok attracted the brands to market their product and reach their consumers. Stuck up at home, consumers (also the viewers) have been spending more time on social media. It is easy for consumers to trust the people who they follow or who influence them directly telling the benefits of any product. These celebrities use social media to add personal elements to the relationships with their followers (Johns and English, 2016) not to be dictated of what they should create. Brands took this to gain consumers attention. Also, the other aspect from brands

side is that Influencers can also provide brands with quick, less-expensive and easy-to-produce creative at a time when large-scale ad production may be difficult.

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## CHAPTER 2

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 CRISIS ON DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS AND ITS HEALTH COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

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SANCHITA MEHROTRA AND AREENA ZAINUB MIRZA

### CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Development organizations such as international, national and non-governmental organisations play vital role in mobilising public awareness to societal problems and needs. COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed an unpredictable situation worldwide. Development organisations are facing triple crisis of health, economic and social especially in its operations, staff and finances. A study conducted by the Centre for Social Impact and Philanthropy at Ashoka University, mentioned in their findings that in March 2020 thousands of not-for-profit organisations had to keep all their programmes on hold due to lockdown.

The purpose of writing this chapter is to bring forth the role of development organisations in the growth of economy and the impact COVID-19 crisis created on the structure of these organisations. The chapter will discuss on the following points as mentioned below:-

- What is Health communication?
- Analysis of health communication environment and its Pre and Post COVID-19 scenario.
- Potential long term impact on development organisations and its health and hygiene interventions and its changing dimensions during the pandemic along with the further impact this crisis has created in this industry.
- Practical next steps to be taken.

### A) What is Health Communication?

Health Communication is the term used for disseminating health information to public and enhance their knowledge and awareness regarding health issues and

related risks. The main purpose of communicating health through communication strategies is to promote health information in view of controlling health risks and wellbeing of the society. Effective health communication strategies include detailed information with interesting facts and messages to influence good health choices and educate public to bring positive change in their attitudes and behaviour towards critical health issues.

In the year 1975, International Communication Association recognised the term health communication. Health communication strategies are diverse in nature and are designed keeping in mind the audience demographic, socio cultural context, socio economic context. On the basis of these variants the communication specialists understand the audience health literacy and their education background while creating messages for health campaigns and promotions.

Communication serves the purposes of taking actions, making known needs and requirements, exchanging ideas, information, attitudes and beliefs, causing understanding and or establishing and maintaining relations (U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2004). According to Healthy People 2010 guidelines, health communication as a study encompasses the use of communication strategies to inform and influence individual and community knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) with regard to health and healthcare. The interface between communication and health is increasingly acknowledged as a necessary element for improving both personal and public health.

The World Health Organisation has structured principles for effective communications framework. Its 'values charter mission' is to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable all around the world. Another important role of communication is to create a receptive and favourable environment in which information can be shared, understood, absorbed, and discussed by the program's intended audiences. This requires an in-depth understanding of the needs, beliefs, taboos, attitudes, lifestyle, and social norms of all key communication audiences. It also demands that communication is based on messages that are easily understood. This is well characterized in the definition of communication by Pearson and Nelson (1991), who view it as "the process of understanding and sharing meanings" (p. 6).

Health communication interventions have been successfully used for many years by non-profit organizations, the commercial sector, and others to advance public, corporate, or product-related goals in relation to health. As many authors have noted, health communication draws from numerous disciplines, including health education, mass and speech communication, marketing, social marketing, psychology, anthropology, and sociology (Bernhardt, 2004; Institute of Medicine, 2003; World Health Organization, 2003). It relies on different communication

activities or action areas, including interpersonal communications, public relations, public advocacy, community mobilization, and professional communications (World Health Organization, 2003; Bernhardt, 2004).

Successful health communication programmes or campaigns' key elements include long-term program sustainability, development of communication tools and steps that make easy for individuals, communities, and other audiences to adopt or sustain a recommended behaviour, practice, or policy change.

### **Health Communication in 21st century**

Schiavo, R. (2007) described health communication key characteristics and defining features by coding into specific keywords. These keywords were selected from the existing studies and definitions framed by experts in health communication as to inform and influence, motivating individuals, change behaviours, increase knowledge and understanding of health-related issues, empowers people, exchange and interchange of information, two-way dialogue. In the past fifty years health communication and its theoretical perspective has evolved and changed completely (Piotrow, Kincaid, Rimon, and Rinehart, 2003; Bernhardt, 2004).

Communication is now considered as a science-based discipline that needs right training and passion and reliability on the consumption of different vehicles like materials, activities, events and other tools needed to convey different messages through different channels (Health Communication Unit, 2003b). According to Saba (2006), health communication practitioners in past and very much prevalent of today were trained "on the job". To meet the need of health communication, practitioners from different backgrounds like sociology, public health, psychology, demography, communication with all specialities in film making, advertising, journalism were brought into health communication programs. Therefore, "Health communication is a process for the development and diffusion of messages to specific audiences in order to influence their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs in favour of healthy behavioural choices" (Exchange, 2006; Smith and Hornik, 1999).

The important characteristics of health communication analysed by Schiavo, R. (2007) are as below:-

- a) Audience Centred
- b) Research based
- c) Multidisciplinary
- d) Strategic
- e) Process oriented
- f) Cost effective
- g) Creative in support of strategy

- h) Audience and media specific
- i) Relationship building
- j) Aimed at behavioural or social change

According to (World Health Organization, 2003; O'Sullivan, Yonkler, Morgan, and Merritt, 2003; Health Communication Partnership, 2005e) systematic health communication programs are successful when mixed with expected behavioural and social outcomes. Global health communication term is rapidly growing including different communication approaches and different action areas such as interpersonal communication, social and community mobilization and advocacy (Haider, 2005; Waisbord and Larson, 2005).

## **B) ANALYSING HEALTH COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT- PRE AND POST COVID-19 SCENARIO**

Pre-COVID-19, health and development organisations were stable and regular working like any other organisation. Excessive field work, evaluation and implementation of interventions and health campaigns through IEC model framework were easily managed. Health interventions like on MHM, HIV/Aids, Women and Child health, WASH etc. were followed in routine. However, COVID-19 crisis changed the whole picture upside down.

Health communication environment as explained in the book (Health Communication: Theory and Practices) means that the change should be occurred and sustained along with clarity in communication as a powerful tool seeking to influence all the factors which are mentioned as below:-

### **AUDIENCE**

- Health beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour
- Cultural, age, and gender-related factors
- Literacy levels
- Risk factors
- Lifestyle issues
- Socio-economic factors

### **SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

- Stakeholders' beliefs, attitudes, and practices
- Social norms
- Social structure
- Existing initiatives and programs

### **POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT**

- Policies, laws

- Political willingness and commitment
- Level of priority in political agenda

### **RECOMMENDED HEALTH BEHAVIOUR, SERVICE OR PRODUCT**

- Benefits Risks
- Disadvantages
- Price or lifestyle trade-off
- Availability and access

These factors highlight some of the key principles of marketing as well as socio-ecological model Morris (1975) and other theoretical models used in public health to show connection and influence of different factors such as individual, interpersonal, community, organisational and public policy (Van Leeuwen et., 1999).

### **Role of development organisations and overviewing health communication strategies during COVID-19 crisis**

This part of the chapter explains the importance of development organisations known worldwide and review their communication strategies adopted during the COVID-19 situation. While doing in-depth reading of this part of the chapter the readers will come across the challenges faced by development organisations during COVID-19 lockdown situation while implementing health communication strategies and understand the shift organisations have made in dissemination of information in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Development organisations can be classified into various types on the basis of different factors like level of cooperation or orientation. Development organisations' presence is at large and is found at international, national and at local levels. However, the role of such organisations is important for the development and operation of the infrastructure, supporting innovation, demonstration and pilot projects, facilitating communication, technical assistance and training, research, monitoring and evaluation.

While going further with the explanation it is essential to understand the need and in what situation public health communication in pandemic becomes a priority for all. COVID-19, is a disease caused by the virus SARS-Cov-2, the World Health Organization declared it as pandemic by creating an unparalleled emergency worldwide. The Government of India declared the COVID-19 outbreak a "notified disaster" on 14 March 2020 and had undertaken an all-India approach to direct the situation by involving relevant administered ministries and all states and Union Territories (UTs).

According to UN Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19 (2020),

The organisation works on three critical elements of United Nations efforts to save lives, protect people, and rebuild better, alongside the health response, led by the World Health Organization (WHO), and the humanitarian response, as detailed in the UN-led COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan.(p. 1)

COVID-19 pandemic has taught us the importance of public health and identified the gaps in public health communication. It is evident from this crisis that public health communication is an indispensable part to reduce the current global challenge as a response. In an article written by Srivastava and Bose (2020) on the topic 'Effective public health communication must for Covid fight', cites the agenda of World Health Organisation as in the emergence of COVID-19 'people need to know what health risks they face and what actions they can take to protect their health and lives'. The authors further brief that effective public health communication can be determined only when the information is given on time, frequently and which can be understood easily in a simple language, trustworthy, utilised in such a way that an individual is informed and have time to prepare themselves and families and communities from adverse health hazards.

World Health Organisation came into force on 7th April, 1948 and this date is now celebrated as World Health Day. Goal of WHO is to ensure that people around the world have universal health coverage, protect billions of people from health emergencies and provide better health and wellbeing. The organisation has prepared global strategy to respond to COVID-19 for all countries "to control the pandemic by slowing down the transmission and reducing mortality associated with COVID-19" (WHO, 2020, p. 5).

### **The global strategic objectives laid by WHO are:**

- To mobilize all sectors and communities ensuring participation in the response and in preventing cases through hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and individual-level physical distancing.
- To control and prevent community transmission by rapidly finding and isolating all cases, providing them with appropriate care, and tracing, quarantining, and supporting all contacts.
- To suppress community transmission by appropriate infection prevention and control measures, physical distancing measures, and applying restrictions on non-essential domestic and international travel.
- To reduce mortality for those getting affected by COVID-19 and provide clinical kits to the vulnerable population and frontline workers.
- To develop safe and effective vaccines that are accessible based on need.

To maintain the status of low level or no transmission, the risk of re-introduction and reoccurrence of the disease, will continue and needs to be controlled through continuous application of public health interventions. Therefore, to work against COVID-19 collective capacity and collective action need to be taken immediately for every government and non-government, global and international and national governance body.

According to the international community's response to COVID-19 guidelines, the WHO has given emphasis to risk communication and community engagement practice. It is an important component of public health and related risk management. Risk communication is also known as interactive exchange of information for health services to safeguard all the communities at large.

Risk communication plays a vital role in controlling the adverse impacts and help in taking actions when needed at the time of public health emergency. According to IHR (2005) risk communication is defined as an expository pillar developed during emerging infectious diseases as national core capacity and other related events of health services. It is important to develop effective communication plan and implement integrating with emergency management activities and operations. Characteristics of risk communication and community engagement plan as per the guidelines of WHO response plan for COVID-19 :-

- Accurate information of COVID-19: communicate through multiple media channels to provide right information, at the right time, to the right audience, so that it triggers right action.
- Global public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic: dissemination of information through trustworthy and credible info-media so that people can get the right guidance when they need it.
- WHO Information Network for Epidemics (EPI-WIN) 18: – Partnership with various sectors and their respective members with the existing reliable sources of information have been increased and created for specific audiences such as faith-based organizations, sporting event organizers, travel and trade sectors, international employers' organizations, trade unions organizations, health care delivery sector and others. EPI-WIN has simplified making on time correct actions in rectifying wrong information "through a high output of public health messages that inform individuals and populations how to protect themselves and support outbreak control activities" (WHO, 2020).
- Rapid Feedback: With the help of social scientists and practitioners, surveys on perception and feedback from communities, who are being affected by physical distancing and restrictions on movements, are being

rapidly combined to ensure that measures regarding future response are informed. Risk communication and community engagement data collection tools (surveys, questionnaires, rapid assessment methods) are prepared to help researchers and public health organizations in taking quick assessments in their communities of interest.

### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

WASH is an acronym for water, sanitation and hygiene and is termed as a key to public health issues within international development and focuses on the Sustainable Development goals 6. According to WHO (2020), there is no current evidence on coronavirus stating that coronaviruses can be found “on the surfaces or surface or groundwater sources or transmitted through contaminated drinking-water” (para.1). We all are aware and as informed by WHO and health practitioners as per the health studies found on COVID-19 that cleaning hands with soap reduces transmission and help people staying healthy. Major concern worldwide is that billions of people lack these three essential facilities and access to safe water, sanitation and handwashing with adequate funding (UN Water, 2020).

In an article published by Tropical Medicine and Health, Mushi and Shao (2020) studied the importance of water, hygiene and sanitation interventions for prevention and control of COVID-19. The study highlights the important fact that virus particles get removed and deactivated by handwashing with water and soap (HWWS) in COVID-19. The authors in this study highlights the challenges being faced by WASH services currently in the middle and low income countries and suggest measures to strengthen WASH services employed in the period of COVID-19 pandemic. It is reported in this study that globally 3 million people are estimated with no access to basic handwashing facilities at home and at the point of care around 43% of the health facilities lack hand hygiene. Further, the study suggests that to combat with COVID-19 situation basic strategies of promoting behavioral changes in the communities is important to be reached. To ensure sustainable behaviour change a collective action needs to be taken by the government to communities for adopting new behaviour. It is suggested that new behaviours can be adopted through mass education, community mobilization and social marketing activities.

United Nations Water (2020) stated that hygiene is ‘multi-faceted’ and has the power to transform behaviours such as handwashing, menstrual hygiene and food hygiene. According to UN WATERS, several international consultants and professionals from WASH sector have identified that handwashing with soap and water is the most recommended indicator for national and global monitoring from safeguarding COVID-19 virus risks.

In the year 2015, as per the reports of Philanthropedia— an online resource for

donors which works to evaluate nonprofit organizations in a more holistic way—recommended the top best sixteen organizations specializing in WASH systems. The evaluation is done by the best practitioners, researchers and experts working in this field.

Below is the list of top 16 nonprofit organizations recommended by the 81 top WASH experts working globally:-

1. WaterAid
2. Water for People
3. IRC
4. UNICEF
5. Water.org
6. Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor (WSUP)
7. Rural Water Supply Network
8. SNV Netherlands Development Organisation
9. Millennium Water Alliance
10. World Vision International (WVI)
11. Plan
12. Care (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere)
13. Oxfam
14. Rotary International
15. PATH
16. iDE (International Development Enterprises)

World Health Organization is working closely with all the WASH service organisations. In India WaterAid and UNICEF are playing lead role in implementing health communication strategies effectively as framed under the response guidelines by WHO for different stakeholders in brief. The other non-profit organizations are revising and replicating the same strategies as per their segments in different parts of the country.

### **WaterAid India**

WaterAid India is a part of the global WaterAid network which works to get access to clean water, decent toilets and maintain good hygiene for everyone and everywhere. Since the organisation started it always focused in promoting good hygiene habits and handwashing has been the core part of their work. In the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic, WaterAid India focus is on the hygiene behaviour change response to COVID-19. Giving special focus on long term behaviour change in communities the organisation is giving continuous efforts in developing evidence based and context specific programmes. The overall expected

outcomes from these efforts is to achieve and contribute in improving public awareness, improving handwashing facilities, contributing to WASH sector and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

WaterAid global has distributed and planned phased approach to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic situation. In the first phase, the organisation focused on key hygiene behaviour for reducing the risk of transmission in all 28 associated countries. To promote hygiene behaviour 'Do no harm' principles, the organisation is using digital, social, mass media and no contact methods.

To sustain hygiene behaviour change, government led campaigns are planned for the second phase. The activities included for the second phase are community-based activities in continuation with media campaigns and installation of handwashing facilities. COVID-19 hygiene intervention package of WaterAid is developed after thorough review of the existing hygiene interventions and redesigned on the basis of new insights observed from a creative content targeting on the key behaviour. Promotion of hygiene interventions at WaterAid is making use of multimedia channels to normalise appropriate handwashing behaviour. Effective use of audio and visual methods is being used to change the environment and motivate people so that they can think and act differently to help prevent COVID-19 spread amongst community. Hygiene promotions is launched by WaterAid India in schools and early child care centres to create safe hygienic spaces for children.

WaterAid has always been an expert in doing partnership and collaborations externally. Expanding engagements will help to accomplish the organization mission and bring hygiene behaviour change prominently to the front of policy, research, advocacy, private partnerships and to WASH and development communities. 'Hand Hygiene for All', as a global initiative by WaterAid and its core partner for WHO/ UNICEF is implemented especially to respond to COVID-19 pandemic. The main focus of this initiative is hygiene behaviour change, reimagining hand hygiene in society and advocating for the sustainable findings. Hygiene Hub is another external engagement that helps actors of committee from low and middle income countries to actively share, design and adapt evidence based hygiene interventions to combat COVID-19. This association's main contribution is for resources, case studies and engage in conversations by sharing experiences and learnings.

### **A pictorial representation designed by WaterAid India in educating preventive measures to reduce the risk of infection mentioned below:-**

**(INSERT IMAGE BEFORE PRINTING)**

WaterAid India also created creative messages for hygiene and COVID-19

campaign. These messages are created in seven languages English, Hindi, Telugu, Marathi, Odia, Kannada and Malayalam. These messages are created in poster format with colourful graphical representation and have its audio version too for sharing through digital mediums keeping in mind educated and non educated communities.

The campaign messages disseminated by WaterAid India are as follows:-

1. STAY SAFE
2. WASH YOUR HANDS
3. HANDWASHING STEPS
4. HANDWASHING AT HOME
5. COMMON WATER POINTS
6. USE AND CLEAN TOILETS
7. HAND HYGIENE- THE Do's and Don'ts
8. PRACTICE PERSONAL HYGIENE
9. MAINTAIN PHYSICAL DISTANCING

### **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

UNICEF is a United Nations agency recognized as a social welfare organisation being responsible for 'providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide', (UNICEF. Para 1). The agency is closely associated with WHO and WASH systems. In COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the agency is following all WHO guidelines framed for global response COVID-19 strategies.

UNICEF has adopted a multi-sectoral approach to its response strategy, coordinating with relevant ministries involved in the response, to enable policies that protect the rights of the most vulnerable, especially women and children.

The UNICEF response plan has two major goals: -

- Minimizing the spread and impact of the outbreak on the population, with a focus on women and children
- Ensuring that essential services for women and children are safely made accessible during and after the pandemic.

The agency has multi-sectoral teams in 13 field offices - covering over 100 districts across 23 states. UNICEF team includes experts in health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, child protection, inclusive social policy, disaster risk reduction, communication for development, and external communications and advocacy. Strong partnerships with academia, professional bodies, government, and civil society organizations further enable UNICEF in effectively responding to emergencies.

### **UNICEFs efforts for COVID-19 response are focused on (WHO/ UNICEF, 2020):**

1. Risk communication and community engagement
2. Improve Infection and Prevention Control (IPC) and provide critical medical and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) supplies.
3. Support the provision of continued access to essential health and nutrition services for women, children and vulnerable communities, including case management.
4. Data collection social science research for public health decision making.
5. Support access to continuous education, social protection, child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) services.
6. Coordination, technical support and operational costs It is envisaged that most support provided by UNICEF will be delivered as part of existing government initiatives.

UNICEF multi-sectoral response is built on the important pillars as mentioned in the previous para. Risk Communication and Community Engagement as also discussed earlier in this chapter mentioning its importance in the health communication strategy planning and implementation. Fighting against coronavirus the role of RCCE becomes crucial especially for the development organisations working for WASH services.

### **The RCCE response by UNICEF consists of the following key components:-**

1. Development of risk communication and community engagement (RCCE and capacity building materials
2. Social mobilization through health frontline functionaries and multiple engagement platforms
3. Capacity building and orientation of state/district workforce
4. Gender-responsive local and folk media
5. Public Communication, Advocacy and Social Media Plan
6. Monitoring and documentation of the communication interventions

Importance of WASH and its related efforts in communicating the essentiality of hygiene, soap and handwashing already been discussed. In India during COVID-19 crisis whether lockdown or unlock phase, now all the above-mentioned top development organizations have given and in continuation a big contribution to combat with this pandemic helping public and communities at large.

Oxfam India (2020), is working for the most affected community migrant workers during the COVID-19 lockdown phase. The organization states that helping migrant workers becomes important because it constitutes ninety percent of Indian

workforce. Lack of access to free and quality healthcare means that this section of the society will not be able to protect themselves when they are diagnosed with COVID-19. Oxfam India is responding to this crisis by creating mass awareness through mobile vans campaigning with mike and announcements in states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Messages generating awareness on COVID-19 were sent to more than five million people through different mediums like mobile vans, announcements at religious places etc. Oxfam India took help of WG-CAN platform for disseminating COVID-19 information. Uttar Pradesh pilot tested alternative messaging systems in collaboration with Oxfam India.

Therefore, multi-sectoral response strategy has been adopted by all top development organisations like UNICEF, WATERAID etc. to tackle the pandemic. Hygiene behaviour change and Improve Infection Prevention and Control are few of the health communication strategies designed for the communities, civil society and for the well-being of their staff and duty workers. The health and hygiene promotions during the phase of COVID 19 lockdown and till date are being promoted through social media, digital, mass media and other non-contact methods only.

### **C) POTENTIAL LONGTERM IMPACT ON DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS AND ITS HEALTH AND HYGIENE INTERVENTIONS**

Society at large will need to understand that health communication cannot be effective in an empty space. It is a critical element of larger public health interventions or corporate efforts. Understanding the complexity of health issues in a limited time frame may “not be equally effective in addressing all issues or relaying all messages” (National Cancer Institute and National Institutes of Health, 2002, p. 3).

Similarly, in COVID-19 situation implementing health communication strategy with lack of local infrastructure (such as the absence of appropriate health services or hospitals) or capabilities lacking with an inadequate number of health care providers as compared to the size of the population being affected cannot be effective. Continuous efforts by development organisations and government agencies working on health and hygiene intervention assessments and evaluation can help in advocating for change and create an open-minded environment to support new development in health services in these most challenging times. Active participation in combating COVID-19 crisis collectively will help secure political commitment, community involvement and stakeholder endorsement to encourage change and improve health outcomes post pandemic.

COVID-19 is a unique crisis in the history of mankind, which has had a widespread effect worldwide. The responsibility of development organisations has increased more to communicate with public at large and advise constantly to communities in controlling health risks. Professionals in social work and communication fields will have to focus on health behaviour change and carefully evaluate the known and unknown insights continuously emerging.

World Health Organisation states that its focus is on the response of COVID-19 crisis and so it is important to know the widespread consequences experienced across the globe. There are several lessons to learn from this pandemic and while learning WHO wants to ensure that its response makes the world a safer place in future.

Misinformation and “infodemic” surrounding the coronavirus as identified by WHO has made it difficult for the general public to identify fact from fiction due to the maximum consumption of Internet during the lockdown phase. Fake news about the pandemic has full potential to dissolve response efforts and affect public behaviour.

Public health literacy in countries like India is a major drawback due to lack of good health services and practitioners at large. That is why, throughout the pandemic, the Indian Council of Medical Research has taken proactive steps to communicate regularly and effectively through press releases, website updates and via social media to help ensure that accurate information reaches the public.

Specific portals for information around COVID-19 and on vaccine development have been created, as well as a clinical registry for COVID-19. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has also facilitated regular media interactions.

It is also necessary in this context, to ensure that any kind of public health messaging is communicated should be from reliable sources that are trusted by the target audiences. During the current pandemic, slogans such as ‘Do Gaj Doori Hai Zaroori’ and ‘Jab Tak Dawai Nahi Tab Tak Dhillai Nahi’, have helped communicate the importance of taking precautionary measures.

This is not the first pandemic we have seen, nor will this be the last. Therefore, conducive environment for public health communications in the country becomes vital. To accomplish effective public health communication, collaboration between technical experts such as doctors, scientists, public health researchers and communication experts, social and behavioural scientists, communicators and the media will act as a magic wand in overcoming the situation.

## **D) KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED**

1. How effective will response strategies in context to communication in the

- health sector be in this COVID 19 scenario?
2. What impact will development organisations have in promoting health communication strategies in future?

## **E) PRACTICAL NEXT STEPS TO BE TAKEN**

Post COVID-19 lockout situation, the focus in monitoring quarantine and positive cases will continue. Usage of digital medium during the time of lockdown and still in continuation has increased rapidly. Development of mobile applications and dissemination of information regarding health communication campaigns in context to COVID-19 latest updates via all social media platforms is one stop communication medium for government departments and development organisations as well as for the society.

Basis on recent studies and initiatives taken by development organisations, following are the next steps suggested to be implemented or will continue to be implemented are as follows:-

1. Continue working on hygiene behaviour change strategies.
2. Active participation in communities and families to identify key problems and find solutions.
3. Continuous effort in transforming multimedia and multi-level campaigns by professionals to be adopted.
4. Core values and Social marketing ideas to be brought together for bringing behaviour and social change.
5. Invest in formative research and ethnographic studies at the community level to identify barriers, enablers, preferred means of communication to inform communication strategy and planning.
6. Considering the need to avoid mass contact and maintaining social distancing, need to explore and invest in message dissemination for behaviour change communication through digital means. Also, there is a need to develop cadre and build capacities of community champions beyond health frontline functionaries such as ASHA, ANM, AWW etc. for effective reach for large scale behaviour change through IPC and peer influencing.

## **CONCLUSION**

The paper gives brief information about health communication, development organisations, challenges faced by development organisations while implementing health communication strategies in the COVID-19 situation, analysis of health communication environment in the pre and post COVID-19 scenario, potential long

term impact on development organisations and its health and hygiene interventions, key questions asked to the experts of the industry and suggestions in taking next steps to continue protecting communities and everyone's lives from COVID-19.

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## CHAPTER 3

# IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON FASHION INDUSTRY AND THE EVOLVING PATTERN OF FASHION COMMUNICATION

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GARIMA SINGH

### **Lessons from the past**

Epidemics and pandemics have often changed the course of humanity through history. Evidences of prehistoric epidemics dating as far back as circa 3000 BC have been discovered, wiping out entire settlements. The Plague of Athens 430 BC, lasted 5 years with the death toll being estimated at 100,000 people (Jarus 2020). The Spanish flu pandemic [1918-1920] infected approximately a third of the world's population with effects as devastating as pushing certain indigenous communities to the brink of extinction. As mankind progressed and the world became smaller, the spread of pathogens increased exponentially along with travel and trade. History has many such examples of epidemics and pandemics that have brought the world to a standstill time and again. The losses are great and consequences dire, but humanity prevails, and the world moves forward having adapted to and noted the lessons, resolving to be better prepared the next time. "Sometimes [infectious diseases] accelerate history or reveal where a society was already going, while sometimes they fundamentally change the trajectory of societies" (Harper 2017). Examples have also been observed historically of the disease itself becoming the passport for a better life like the Yellow fever acclimatization in 19th century New Orleans. People voluntarily infected themselves with the deadly yellow fever in order to gain the status of acclimated citizens if they survive (Bower 2020). Or the role of Black death in restructuring the social system and eventual collapse of serfdom in medieval Europe. "We know the Black Death marked the beginning or, at the very least, an acceleration of a huge economic and sociological shift in Europe," (DeWitte 2014)

In the technology enabled modern world one would have believed that these are occurrences of the past and that science is equipped to handle any eventuality.

We lived in our cocoons assuming that life would go on as we predicted and prepared for the future at a breakneck pace. “Perhaps pandemic forgetfulness is as contagious as infectious diseases” states Bower (2020) rather aptly. The COVID 19 pandemic saw the world totally unprepared with the lessons learnt from the past forgotten. As the microscopic SARS-CoV-2 virus infected humans rapidly crossing geographic boundaries at the speed of travel itself. The touring global citizen carried the virus back to all corners of the globe and soon the entire world order as we knew it collapsed. “The coronavirus pandemic is one of the most difficult collective challenges facing humanity since the last world war” (Krogh 2020)

“The Antonine Plague and other epidemics and pandemics that struck before 20th century vaccines and medical knowledge hold lessons, but no easy answers, for governments and people today grappling with COVID-19. One lesson looms large: Societies can’t indefinitely avoid outbreaks, but they can withstand even severe pandemics. Past political systems have found ways to bounce back from mass illness and unthinkable numbers of deaths.” observes Bower (2020)

### **The new normal**

The definition of normal changed again in the beginning of the new decade with health and safety temporarily taking precedence over commercial wellbeing. The current pandemic is being hailed as a metaphorical black swan event, “a surprising, unpredictable event of great significance and severe consequences that dramatically changes the political and economic environment” (Winston 2020; Kuektrez et.al 2020). While efforts are being made across the globe to ‘Flatten the curve’, the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns imposed by governments has affected every individual at many levels. The scientific community all over the world is united in trying to decode the virus which remains an enigma till date and prevention does seem to be the best cure for now.

An era of prioritizing health and hygiene, an era of social distancing and work from home (if one is lucky enough). The way the world lives, works, studies, socializes, and plays has drastically changed since March 2020. The virtual world that we had already started inhabiting thanks to the world wide web and social media suddenly became a stark reality with the internet becoming the prime mode of communication, entertainment, learning and commerce. While we must consider ourselves considerably fortunate to be able to function more or less efficiently through the virtual mode it also highlighted the importance of the physical interactions. “Social distancing saves lives but imposes large costs on society due to reduced economic activity” (Thunström et.al 2020). The emotional and financial effects of the pandemic are slowly coming to fore with individuals and businesses

struggling to adapt to the 'new normal'. Seemingly non-essential industries like hospitality and fashion were few of the worst hit with the fashion industry losing the entire spring summer 2020 season.

The negligent demand for apparel coupled with point of sales being shut down resulted in an unprecedented crisis in the garment industry and a devastating impact on the global supply chain. "The situation is predicted to get worse before it gets better. The International Labor Organization predicts that 25 million jobs will be lost worldwide as a result of Covid-19" (Anner 2020). With the factories shutting down and orders being cancelled across the industry, millions of workers were sent home. The forecast to say the least, is grim with a majority of the people employed by the fashion and textile industry being skilled artisans and labor with limited sources of income outside their craft. The cut-throat world of glamour, despite its sharp edges stepped up to the challenge with many big and small players of the industry contributing in their own creative ways

- LVMH, the luxury goods giant repurposed two of its perfume factories to manufacture hand sanitizers which were in short supply and donate them across hospitals in France.
- Dior dedicated one of its workshops to manufacture facemasks with their campaign promoting #WeStandByYou dedicated to the frontline workers.
- The fashion giant Prada, has produced more than 200,000 overalls and masks to be donated to hospitals in Tuscany apart from funding ICUs in hospitals in Milan
- Nike, Versace and Moncler amongst others are not far behind in their obligation to the community through donations for the cause.
- Gucci factories are producing masks and protective overalls along with donations to crowdfunding campaigns in Italy and to the COVID 19 solidarity response fund in support of WHO. Their ongoing campaign also addresses the escalating gender-based violence in these times.
- Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) has set up a financial assistance cell for small businesses and young designers in need.
- The Armani group has switched to manufacturing single use medical overalls in all its plants to support the frontline workers.
- H&M has utilized its vast supply chain to produce protective equipment to distribute to hospitals across the globe along with monetary and merchandise donations to children's organizations to combat the pandemic.
- The iconic house of Chanel not only retained all its employees but also realigned its factories to produce protective face masks.

These are but a few examples of philanthropy from an industry that has a long and rough journey ahead. Many design houses around the world have gone out of their way to support their artisans and associates along with the frontline workers in these difficult times. The efforts though commendable need to be augmented with a strong strategy to help the people along the value chain survive while simultaneously reviving the industry. The stakes are predicted to go up as the dust settles, as consumer demand continues to plummet and the investor confidence wavers. The question of huge inventory of unsold merchandise also haunts the industry that grapples with the problem of inventory management without damaging the brand equity.

“Covid-19 could spur the biggest economic contraction since World War II, hitting every sector from finance to hospitality. Yet fashion, due to its discretionary nature, is particularly vulnerable” (Business of Fashion 2020). According to McKinsey Global Fashion Index analysis, 80% of the global fashion industries publicly listed in Europe and North America would be in financial distress. The analysis goes on to predict that a large number of global fashion companies would go bankrupt in the next 12 to 18 months (Business of Fashion 2020). The strain has started showing and the current crisis is being hailed as “fashion’s Darwinian shakeout”, with the companies being advised to “adapt or die” (State of fashion report 2020). Fuelled by exponentially growing demand the fashion and lifestyle retail were on the track of over production before the crisis. The rapid pace of fast fashion (Caro et.al 2014) was abruptly halted by the pandemic pushing the value chain into turmoil and posing fresh survival challenges for players big and small. For an industry that thrives on personal interactions it is not an easy challenge. Companies and individuals in the fashion trade have already started realigning their strategies to tackle the changed scenario. A few first reactions being,

- Gucci has announced their decision to go ‘seasonless’ greatly reducing their annual shows
- Harrods, London is opening new stores to tap fresh markets for their excess inventory rather than falling in the discount trap like many other brands.
- J. Crew and Aldo are amongst many brands that have filed for bankruptcy protection
- H&M, Guess, Victoria’s secrets, Esprit amongst others have announced closure of multiple stores globally
- Zara in order to focus more on digital growth plans to close approximately 1,200 stores and invest in online operations.

## **Opportunity in crisis**

Crisis management is employed to foster resilience and will be of utmost importance during the COVID-19 crisis. It is employed to minimize the impacts of a crisis (Spillan and Hough, 2003) and, if done well, can quickly restore functionality to organizations suffering from the effects of disrupted or weakened systems (Williams et al., 2017)- An advise that should work well in the current scenario. Resilience is an essential concept in entrepreneurial crisis management (Doern et al., 2019) and the fashion industry would do well to learn from it. The current crisis poses a great threat to the scheme of things as they were but at the same time presents an opportunity to realign its strategy and reset the value chain to be more environment friendly. The liner make-use-throw nature of the fashion industry has made it one of the biggest polluters next only to Oil. Clothing and textile is one of the oldest industries and employs over 45 million people directly and 60 million people along the value chain. The industry is estimated at approximately 108 billion dollars, was expected to reach 223 billion dollars by 2021(Pre-pandemic evaluation by the Ministry of Textiles, Indian Textile journal) It is unfortunately also one of the major polluters of the environment. 'The 2017 Pulse of the Fashion Industry report, put together by GFA and the Boston Consulting Group, estimated that in 2015, the global textiles and clothing industry was responsible for the consumption of 79 billion cubic meters of water, 1715 million tons of CO2 emissions and 92 million tons of waste. It also estimated that by 2030, under a business-as-usual scenario, these numbers would increase by at least 50%.' (Šajn N. 2019). Sincere attempts were already being made to alter the nature of the industry towards a more sustainable circular format. There is a great opportunity in this adversity as the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown has forced people to finally assess their needs and separate them from wants. The fashion industry too on losing a major fashion season and dealing with mounting stocks of unsold merchandise has unanimously realized that sustainable practices offer the best solution.

"There are, to a certain degree, parallels that can be drawn between the current COVID-19 pandemic and some of the other contemporary crises our world is facing. All require a global-to-local response and long-term thinking; all need to be guided by science and need to protect the most vulnerable among us; and all require the political will to make fundamental changes when faced with existential risks." Offers Wyns (2020)

"We do have experience (and spotty success) managing the exponential growth that drives our biggest global challenges, including population, use of resources, and emissions of greenhouse gases. From the Industrial Revolution to the 2010s. We must understand that we're all connected. The pendulum has been swinging

in recent years to an “every person for themselves” attitude. Pure nationalism is frankly dangerous in the face of borderless issues like climate change, resource overuse, and, yes, pandemics. On some level, we’re only as strong as our weakest immune systems” (Winston 2020)

With the most of 2020 gone in grappling with the unprecedented challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic is yet to show us where we are headed in terms of changing the course of society, and the way we buy and produce fashion. If evidences of human resilience and creativity across the globe are to be believed the society in general is moving (rather rapidly) towards a new era of innovation and creativity. The pause imposed in our lives due to the lockdown offers a golden opportunity to re-think and re-evaluate our strategy and move towards a greener, sustainable future. The world of fashion has woken up to the reality that it is impossible to continue of a path of rapid growth without paying heed to the environment.

“Solving problems during a crisis demands speeding up innovation by repurposing the knowledge, resources, and technology you already have at hand” (Krogh et.al. 2020).

We have the resources and we’ve always had the knowledge, what was missing probably was the will to change. The global pandemic of 2020 forced the world to pause completely for a while and then slowly pick up the pieces and start the journey towards recovery, not just of health or the economy but to look at the larger picture and work towards recovering the environment.

Sustainability is yet again the strongest key word for the future of fashion but this time it’s more than just a term that makes the brand look responsible. The setback suffered by the world of fashion during the lockdown emphasized the need for slow fashion and timeless classics. Despite the struggles the industry synonymous with innovation and creativity has geared up to the challenge and the most innovative thinkers are well on their way to making the best of the situation. From innovative use of mass communication channels in order to educate and empower the consumer and build brand loyalty to effective use of technology for innovative solutions the fashion industry is picking up the pieces. The great Indian wedding season, one of the biggest sources of revenue for the fashion industry in India, provided lucrative returns to the fashion stakeholders as the funds set aside for the festivities were observed to be redirected towards sartorial extravaganza.

The fashion industry relies heavily on personal interactions and tactile experiences, the distances created by the new normal saw the evolution of fashion communication making digital interactions and experiences as gratifying as physical experiences.

- The most awaited event in the fashion calendar the Fashion Weeks went

digital, giving front row seats to millions of viewers across the globe from the safety and comfort of their homes.

- E-commerce saw an unprecedented growth, which was encouraged by popular retailers like Marks and Spencer, Myntra etc launching attractive sales and discounts.
- Social media has developed as an established hub for commerce for fashion, giving even the smallest players their due if handled creatively and ethically.
- Fashion brands are actively utilising various media vehicles to educate and encourage social and environmentally conscious behaviour.
- Interactive interface enabled with gaming and artificial intelligence are slowly making their way into fashion communication channels, enabling greater customer engagement.

The year 2020 would be immortalized in history as the year that stood still, and yet moved at a breakneck speed. As the world grapples with the new reality, the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us lessons that we were not even aware that we needed to learn. The complete unravelling of the socio-economic structure to be knit together in a new pattern called the 'new normal' has brought forward numerous challenges along opportunities for those willing to adapt and innovate. The shift of fashion communication towards digital communication has not only impacted the business of fashion but has also helped in reducing the carbon footprint of the fashion industry. With sustained responsible efforts and gradual adaptation to the much more flexible, ecofriendly solutions like virtual fashion events and digital supply chain management the fashion industry could regain its glory with a much lighter carbon footprint and pave a way for a greener future.

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## CHAPTER 4

# **A STUDY OF EVOLUTION OF OTT PLATFORMS DURING COVID-19 AND THE SHIFT IN TREND OF RELEASING FILMS DIRECTLY ON THEM AND THEIR FUTURE ASPECTS**

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SHIVANSHU PATHAK

The theatres closed due to Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020 keeping our health in mind. Many film makers whose films were ready for release in cinema halls waited for some time for things to normalise but after observing the uncertainty of the future of cinema halls, they decided to release their films on OTT platforms. An over-the-top (OTT) media service is a streaming media service that directly offers viewers through broadcast, internet bypassing cable, and satellite television platforms. The viewership of films on OTT platforms like Netflix, Disney+Hotstar, Zee-5, Amazon Prime Video, Eros Now, Mx Player, Mubi, Sony Liv (Sony Pictures Network India) have rapidly increased since March 2020. Almost all the new films have been released on these digital platforms. Films like Gulabo-Sitabo, Gunjan Saxena, Khaali Peeli, Dil Bechara, Chalaang, Laxmii and Ludo to name a few. Anurag Kashyap's film Choked: Paisa Bolta Hai had an online premiere just before its release where a link was created and mailed to the guests and the film was watched by people at the same time in their respective places.

The main objective will be a comparative study of pre Covid-19 and Covid scenario as to how a film's success is measured on OTT platforms and its future aspects as compared to films releasing in theatres by taking a look at the business part since the success of a film commercially is dependent on its box office performances. Film 'Suraj Pe Mangal Bhaari' was theatrically released on 15 November 2020 coinciding with Diwali amid 50% occupancy theatrical guideline owing to Covid-19 pandemic in India. And the limited occupancy re-opening of movie theatres across the country has put a huge question mark on the future of movie theatres in India. If the attendance remains as thin as it is, theatres may have to shut down again and

have no new content to show.

It is noteworthy that several OTT players have been producing original shows and films besides offering live entertainment, which has managed to capture eyeballs. The proliferation of OTT platforms has evoked apprehension among the filmmakers that this may be the death knell for theatrical experience. In Covid times it is now not uncommon to see certain films opting for the OTT route to reach out to the appropriate target audience. 'Content is king' phrase is truly living up to its real sense in recent times. It is personalized and provides the opportunity for wider focused distribution. Video streaming platforms have certainly made watching movies affordable, convenient and available 'on the go.'

The first Indian OTT platform was BigFlix, which was launched by Reliance Entertainment in 2008. OTT gained momentum in Indian in 2103 when Ditto TV (Zee) and Sony Liv were launched.

Disney+Hotstar was launched in 2015. And it is one of the highest watched OTT platforms in India. As of July 2020, it has more than 300 million active users. Soon after, Netflix began its operations in India in the year 2016 (January). It is one of the most recognised and prominent global OTT segment player. Netflix faces stiff competition in India from players like Amazon Prime, Disney+Hotstar etc.

There are currently more than 40 OTT service providers in India, which provide streaming services over the Internet. In the Fiscal year 2018, the OTT market in India was estimated at Rs. 2150 crores (nearly 300 million dollars) and its value grew to nearly Rs 3,500 crores (nearly 500 million dollars) in 2019. And this market is anticipated to grow at a cruising rate in years to follow.

According to a report by E&Y, the number of OTT users in India will exceed 500 million by 2020, thereby making this country the second-biggest market after the US. In a recent report published by Boston Consulting Group, titled 'Entertainment Goes Online', the Indian OTT market is expected to reach US\$ 5 billion by 2023. In India, Disney+Hotstar has the highest number of subscribers, followed by Amazon Prime, Sony Liv, Netflix, and Voot. However, this ranking figure may differ in terms of watch time.

Analysing the situation pre-COVID-19 and how it has changed the OTT industry during the pandemic-

In India when the lockdown was imposed in the month of March 2020 nobody would have thought that films will premiere on the OTT platforms. OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon prime, Zee-5, Disney +Hotstar are going to be the major platforms on which we are going to watch cinema instead of going to the cinema halls but it's a truth of new normal. Now, with almost every further week we witness that one or the other film is releasing on the OTT platform. Sometimes many a films are releasing simultaneously on different OTT platforms for Example- Shakuntala

Devi, Raat Akeli Hai, Lootcase, Yaara, Avrodh were released on the same Friday on different OTT streaming platforms. With this kind of release neither producers of the film nor the owners of cinema halls are happy. With cinema halls closed and an uncertain future as to when they are going to open, film producers who were ready to release their films in theatres but couldn't face a grave situation. Hence keeping this in mind some producers approached OTT streaming platforms and sold the rights to release their film after theatrical release negotiating if producers bypass cinema release and premiere it only on the OTT platform, how much extra money they will get.

### **Situation during pre-lockdown days –**

Before the pandemic, in India films primarily used to release in cinema halls and after eight weeks it could be released on OTT streaming platforms or on any other satellite channel. Eight weeks of cooling period was definite, and these norms were religiously followed. So apart from theatre release films OTT rights and telecast rights used to be sold.

### **Situation during lockdown period-**

During lockdown period when cinema halls were closed, many OTT platforms came forward and offered producers to premiere their films straight on these platforms. Producers got a chance to liquidate their blocked investment and keeping uncertainty of theatres re-opening in mind during the lockdown they opted to release their films on OTT platforms.

Hence the producers of film Gulabo Sitabo decided to premiere their film on OTT platform Amazon Prime making it the first big film to be released in this manner. The movie had to take the OTT route first for release rather than the conventional theatrical release due to the lockdown induced by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. The release prompted more viewers to tune into Amazon Prime to watch the film, owing to the hype around its release. The movie did do much better on OTT, thanks to the hype built on the social media. Also, Amazon Prime has released the film in 15 languages in 200 countries, implying it is not looking for audiences in India alone,"

Amazon Prime has 17 million subscribers in India, according to estimates. Based on monthly active users, Jio and Hotstar have a share of 35.5 per cent and 30.3 per cent, respectively. Amazon Prime has a share of 14.8 per cent. KPMG has pegged the OTT market in India at over 325 million users, saying it will touch 550 million users in 2-3 years.

Looking at the success of Gulabo Sitabo many of the producers have started to negotiate with different OTT platforms for the release of their films so their blocked

investment can be liquidated.

While producers are getting a way out to get their money back, the cinema hall and multiplex owners are absolutely against it this arrangement because with every single film that is being released on the OTT platform they are losing out on at least one week of their playing programme as the films, which are releasing directly on the OTT streaming platforms will not release in cinema halls. Suppose if twenty films are committed to be released directly on the OTT platforms then cinema halls are going to lose twenty weeks of playing programme. On the one hand producers are getting more money from the OTT platforms, on the other hand they are losing on the money that they were supposed to get from the theatres. The satellite rights and music companies are also negotiating with the producers to pay less than the committed amount as their business is also suffering. Because when a company buys the satellite rights of a film it is underlined that the film is going to be released in the theatres, which involves large scale publicity and marketing ahead of a theatrical release.

A film may be hit or flop, but awareness of the film is definitely there in the mind of the audience. Hit films are widely talked about as well as flop films also become topic of discussion. But when a film doesn't release in cinema halls it is assumed that it is creating less awareness in the mind of the audience as compared to a film releasing in the theatres. So, the satellite channels and music companies will have to spend much money on the marketing of a film to reach the audience. Hence the extra expenditure they are going to bear will be deducted from the committed amount, which was promised to the producers. Hence even though producers are earning comparatively much money from OTT streaming platforms, but they are losing out on satellite and music revenue. In addition, income from cinema halls is also zero as movies are not releasing there. From audio companies too income is less as well as from satellite rights given to the channels.

### **Now there can be two options –**

1. If a producer was supposed to earn from theatrical revenue, streaming platform revenue, satellite channel revenue and audio revenue then under the new normal (during lockdown) where cinema halls are closed, either he will earn X amount or less than X or more than X amount. Taking into consideration that audio companies and satellite channels are paying less and all the traffic is going to be diverted towards the OTT platform so OTT platforms will pay producers a very handsome amount to compensate all the losses of the producer, which is not very likely to happen.
2. The second option is the amount of income a producer was supposed to earn in the pre-Covid times, should be compensated completely by the OTT

platforms. This is also a very far-fetched notion because no OTT streaming platform is going to give that much amount of money to a producer as OTT platforms also know that producers are finding it very difficult to liquidate their invested money. Generally, no producer has earned more money by bypassing the cinema platform to release their film on OTT as compared to the pre-Covid period when films majorly used to premiere in cinema halls.

The amount of money producers used to earn pre-lockdown days, now they are going to earn less comparatively as the norm of releasing a film on OTT platform after eight weeks of theatrical release is completely defunct as of now. Though OTT platforms are offering much money comparatively as they also need good content on their platform to be streamed but not to the complete satisfaction of the producers.

Film is a perishable commodity and if cinema halls are closed for 8-9 months every producer is worried that their film should not become a stale product. This is also the reason why producers are rushing towards OTT streaming platforms by giving their premiere rights to them. By and large, the Hindi film industry went into denial in the wake of the pandemic, much as we did in our lives. So, even as film production around the world came to a grinding halt, big releases were postponed. The hope remained that the worst phase of this lucrative industry would soon blow over. That obviously did not happen and by the looks of it, 2020 effectively turned the box office and the mass appeal of stars to zero.

Right from the first major Bollywood film, *Gulabo Sitabo*, which premiered on Amazon Prime Video to big-budget commercial movies like *Laxmii*, we got to know the game has changed. There is little success associated with a brand on a streaming platform. Gone are the days when brand equity mattered and lured people into the cinema, to spend time and money for hours. None of that works now.

OTT boom is nothing new. The transition from movie-going to home-viewing was a long time coming. But it was a slow-moving process with the growth of streaming services that the Covid-19 pandemic supercharged into an overnight revolution. The audience being spoiled for choices on OTT, is no longer a captive of the closed doors of cinema halls and suffer through terrible films just because the ticket and popcorn have been paid for. The lockdowns have brought into sharper focus issues related to hyped movies because its consequences fall hardest on films with poor content. With a plethora of streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+Hotstar etc, not having to commit to the entire film has been a welcome change.

The paradigm shift can possibly be understood in terms of how news and media have changed. During the times of newspapers, readers had limited options and distractions. Now, with the internet penetrating each and every aspect of our lives,

grabbing and more importantly, holding the attention of people is a hundred times harder. Similar is the case with films. They are not just competing with content in their field and on the same spectrum, but also with WhatsApp messages, Facebook pings and calls.

For writers, directors and producers, it becomes a different thing. You have two hours to establish a story with those characters. You can start slow and build the film to the climax, but on OTT you need to get the audience's attention in the first 5-10 minutes for them to continue watching because it's too easy to switch off TV or flick from one OTT platform to another. In a cinema hall, you can't really do that. There you have freedom because the audience is stuck with the doors shut. So, you have the time to develop the story and the characters and reach the climax. OTT is instant.

We all know that expensive and expansive films aren't meant for the small screen. They weren't written, directed or made for that. For example, Christopher Nolan's Tenet was meant for IMAX, and with poor walk-ins, the movie became his worst performance till date. So, as the likely blockbusters move from the theatre to the couch, they inevitably reshape itself to the contours of that format. Greater emphasis is required on intricately plotted stories that play out well even in homes. So, filmmakers now have to ideate and create films suitable for the small screen, that can impress the audience even in the absence of sound effects and the environment of cinema halls.

While nothing beats the joy of the big screen, safety comes first. 2020 also upended all the traditional ways of thinking about how films are released and perceived. We are in a world with limitless digital possibilities and filmmakers have to devise a way to tell creative stories so that the audiences will choose to watch at their leisure.

By far the biggest challenge for the OTT platforms will come when the situation comes back to normal post-pandemic. When the other sources of entertainment like movie theatres, live shows, live performances, sports, gymnasium, etc resume, it remains to be seen as to how the OTT platforms will handle that situation. The OTT mediums might lose their charm amongst the viewers. This can be judged from the fact that even though the IPL tournament was scheduled without any audience in the stadium, but the viewership on the TV and other live medium (Disney+Hotstar) was more by 25-30% over the previous years.

Movie theatres were the first one to close and the last one to open due to Pandemic and lockdown. But once the situation gets normal, we could see a revival of this industry. But the surge of something comes at a cost of something else. And OTT platforms might be in for a stiff fight from other entertainment modes. And

it remains to be seen as to how this industry comes out fighting and maintains its place in the world of entertainment.

Certainly, theatres won't disappear completely, even though many have shut down for good, they are more likely to become once-in-a-while events rather than everyday experiences for the masses. But for cinephiles, who love the cinema experience, the worry is that when the pandemic ends, the theatrical experience of yesteryear will be there to experience the collective viewing.

## CHAPTER 5

# REVALUATING, REFURBISHING AND RECALIBRATING THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY TO SUSTAIN AFTER THE PANDEMIC

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ABHISHEK KUMAR AND MOHIT SHARMA

### Introduction

Advertising industry is one of the most dynamic and inseparable media of business that provides strong connectivity between consumers and industry. In the pre-corona phase, the advertising industry took a lead of 6% per annum growth, thus reaching US\$646 billion (2019). With this trend, the industry was poised to reach US\$ 865 billion by 2024 but the pandemic has left a deep permanent scar on advertising industry along with other sectors. In the past few months every industry was shaken due to Corona pandemic and thereby declined substantially. As per the report of World Federation of Advertisers (WFA, 2020), advertisements revenue dropped by 50%-90%, where overall decrease of more than 30% in investments were seen. This has forced the industry to rethink on surviving with changes in kind of advertisements. The consumer behaviour is one factor that has directly affected the industry and forced to adjust accordingly. Digital platform has stood as one of the helping hands for industries to connect with. There is no handbook for survival from such effects, but to sustain, the entire approach to connect with consumers must be revaluated, refurbished and recalibrated for the right target.

### Background

Advertising is a promotional activity for marketing a commodity. In the present day world of mass production and distribution, advertising serves as a powerful tool in the marketing machinery. Different producers manufacture similar types of goods. They face tough competition in the market. Every producer is trying to create demand for his product. Advertising helps the manufacturers to increase

his sales or maintain his market. It is only through proper advertising that a new product can be introduced in the market.

It is both a method to promote and earn revenue and also used for selling everything, be it a product, service, an idea, an organisation's or individual's image.

Advertising can be both good and bad it can either garnish a product's image or destroy it. Advertising acts as the first impression about the product. Different kinds of advertising are used for different products. Various media channels are used to fulfil the advertising needs of products. These can be the traditional print advertising, the attractive electronic media advertising or the new and vibrant entrant – the digital medium.

Irrespective of the medium, advertising plays a significant role in today's highly competitive world. Whether it is brands, companies, personalities or even voluntary or religious organizations, all of them use some form of advertising to communicate with the target audience.

The objectives of advertising are to inform, persuade and remind about the product. These advertising objectives are main factors that every brand lists out before airing their advertisements. YouTube and Facebook are proven to be the best social platforms for advertising products.

The popularity of these sites mark their competency for better informing users about the launch of new products and their increased acceptance in market. Advertising on these platforms helps the endorsee to carry out all required objectives for endorsement, namely – informing, persuasion, reminding and reinforcing.

Commercials or advertisements help to increase the consumption and sell the product, leading to increased profit margin. It also educates and reminds people about the name and image of the brand.

There is a variety of reasons keeping in mind which advertising is created. There can be many purposes keeping in mind.

To prompt action: Direct action advertising is designed to motivate people to act. It involves ads that try to persuade people to make a purchase.

To encourage information search: In some cases, it is unreasonable to assume that a consumer is ready to make a purchase based only on advertising. In this case more information is required.

- Provides reminders and reinforcement of the brand to the consumers.
- Advertising help in creating brand image of the product among consumers.
- Make people aware of the product. Influence and persuade the consumer.

### **Types of advertising:**

- Social advertising- Social advertising are those advertising that work for social cause.
- Political advertising- This type of advertising is done by political parties to motivate people in favour of the party.
- Online advertising- Advertising that is done on internet. The promotion of product is done on internet.
- Public Service Announcement- In this type of advertisement some important message is delivered by the government to the publics. The government aware people about things that are important for the people to know.
- Financial advertising- When any advertisement is done by any bank or by insurance company then it is called financial advertising.
- Corporate Image Advertising- This type of advertisement doesn't sell the product directly but tries to build goodwill of the brand or product.
- Retail advertising- In this type of advertisement the retailers who sell goods directly to the consumer promote their product.
- Surrogate advertisement- The product that are not promoted directly but are promoted in disguise of other product.
- B2B- It is called business to business. Where those products are advertised, which are used in production of other products.

### **Factors affecting advertising industry:**

- (i) Advertising messages
- (ii) Advertisement attitude
- (iii) Budget allocated
- (iv) Competitive advertisements
- (v) Frequency of advertisements
- (vi) Market acceptance
- (vii) Location
- (viii) Advertisement sources
- (ix) Product durability and promises
- (x) Language
- (xi) Consumer buying behaviour

### **Impact of Covid-19 on Advertising**

The pandemic, which hit the world in the last quarter of 2019 and the entire 2020, drastically changed the advertising and marketing industry. It has led to unprecedented economic and public health concerns. It transformed the mode of communication with consumers and product promotions. The pandemic has forced

the industry to re-evaluate its existing and upcoming advertising campaigns and to sustain. Hence, advertising, marketing and promotional strategies are the major focus in future. This has poised the industry to thing again and move ahead with enhanced competitive gesture and aggressive practices to sustain on global platform.

Although, the regulatory bodies are playing an active role in slashing misleading pictures, unfair advertising, where the brands must initiate their marketing campaigns with caution and must also re-evaluate content used in advertisements. The brands may also comply with strict social media regulations and think of more usage of promotional gifts options and activities.

In this scenario, advertising expenditures are getting postponed and sometimes even cancelled just due to pandemic and further the lockdown state. In view of such adversities advertising industry is also getting affected. Many players are turning-off the light in terms of advertising expenses. Statista, a renowned data firm has predicted loss of around \$26 billion for advertising industry in the U.S. in pandemic.

This critical environment where connection with consumers is mostly digital could be sometimes challenging, but it is important. The brands dealing with digital mode of advertising, marketing and communication efficiently would only survive.

The Holland & Knight alert provides an insight of effect of COVID – 19 on the advertising, marketing and promotional practices in business. It also comprises of best practice hints that can help companies recognize their responsibilities and boost their regulatory compliance to diminish the risks linked with advertising, marketing and other promotional activities during COVID-19 pandemic.

### Business challenges during Covid-19 pandemic

During this pandemic, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reported that the global economic growth in 2020 would fall by -3%. The industries which suffered the most are hospitality, aviation, retail, energy, textiles, transportation, furniture, appliances and machinery to name few. Among the industries that showed initial growth includes food, chemicals, electronics, plastics and rubber products. Many industrial sectors have started revaluation and recalibration of their marketing and advertising plans to initiate measures for generating customer interest. However, they are also looking forward with many few challenges like:

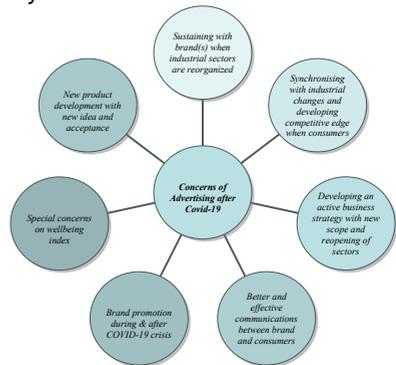


Figure 1: Challenges ahead for advertisement during Covid-19

## **Impact of Covid-19 on Advertising and Marketing**

Marketing and advertising departments are facing challenges on creative and innovative strategies and practices to navigate the business through this new normal. Considering brands, it implies dealing with market change on industrial sectors; addressing sustainability; re-evaluating operational avenues; analysing brand reputation; identifying potential new products/ services needs to meet consumers' demand; focusing on innovative marketing campaigns and targeted advertising; and using social media effectively.

As a result of Covid-19, advertising expenditure is expected to decline in 2020 as stores are closed and revenue would decrease. The businesses are now doing purpose-driven, mission-based marketing and cause-related marketing to better satiate consumers' increased media consumption while working from home. Approx. 45% of consumers across globe are devoting more time to social media, online video streaming has increased by 26%, online gaming has enhanced and number of consumers using online food supplies and essential goods delivery has made consumer's first choice. As a result, brands are looking forward to optimizing their marketing practices like increase in online transactions, communications and face time with consumers.

Keeping the world crisis in mind this is not the first time when advertising industry has shown its spirit after facing some downfall. Today, there is a feeling among general public that the advertising industry losing its hold. But this is not true. The industry is accepting the challenges thrown to it and is authentically reaching to audience in a more innovative and powerful manner with the help of digital medium.

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## CHAPTER 6

# COMMUNITY RADIO STATIONS: RESCUERS THROUGH THE COVID-19 IN RURAL INDIA SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN PREVENTION OF THE EXPLOSION OF THE COVID-19 CASES IN RURAL INDIA

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REKHA PACHAURI

### **Introduction:**

The governments around the globe invested much of their resources and time in managing the crisis produced by the Coronavirus. The pandemic impacted lives and livelihood of people across earth thus resulting in a decline of the economic composition of several countries especially third world nations. In its report in June 2020, The World Bank predicted a reduction of 7 percent in the advanced economies and a decline of 2.5 percent in the developing economies. The World Bank also said that most countries will enter the recession because of the pandemic.

Recently, India was officially declared to be in a recession in an article released by Reserve Bank of India (RBI). It observed a drop of 8.2 percent in the 2nd quarter (July- September) of the financial year 2020-2021. (Thomas, 2020). This seems the outcome of the huge impact on the turnover of the business sectors in India. The large-scale businesses survived albeit with losses, but small-scale industries couldn't and died struggling without finances. The companies had to let go of the work force due to the loss they stated. From almost every private sector, employees were told to leave the job. Media industry acted no different. Hundreds of the media employee were made to resign. The employee who were retained were given additional work.

In India, Radio was one of the mediums that was growing in terms of internship during the Covid-19, but its revenue was also hit hard. The pan-India lockdown caused a decline of 80-85 percent in the revenue as per the Elara Capital Research Note. The Association of Radio Operators for India asked the government of India

to grant an economic survival package to the Radio industry.

“The association has requested for one year waiver of license fee; payments on rentals and other charges to Prasar Bharti and Becil; one year free spectrum and waiver of spectrum fees; zero or five percent GST; restoration of government advertising to normal levels; full waiver of minimum guarantee i.e. 2.5 percent of one time entry fees till end of license period; and two year extension in terms of license period.” (Farooqui, 2020)

While commercial FM radio stations were struggling to rescue their setup, the community radio stations with a small setup came to the rescue of people living in rural and remote areas of the country during Covid-19 spread.

### **Community Radio: Significance as a medium**

Radio is divided mainly into three tiers in India. All India Radio (AIR) is a public service broadcaster that has the maximum coverage around the country and forms the top tier. The private FM stations are a major source of entertainment and it forms the second tier. The community radio stations, which are much closer to the grassroots in our country, forms the third tier. Community radio stations may not be as popular as much as the commercial stations but their work on the grassroots level in remote pockets is much more worth. Central government and the state governments rely on the community radio stations to communicate with the rural India on several issues and concerns. Community radio serves primarily the population living in rural and remote areas and acts as a bridge between the government and marginalized people. From raising local health concerns to disseminating information in rural areas and even educating people in rural and remote areas— community radio stations constantly play a critical role. The people live in villages and towns are much closer to the messaging done in their local language and dialect.

In 1963, India Planning Commission constituted the Vidyalankar committee. The committee was of the opinion: “Our development task is so great and our population so large that only by the most efficient possible programmes of public information can we hope to reach our people often enough and effectively enough to activate on the needed scale, discussion processes and subsequent actions in the cities, towns and villages.” As per a policy document of the Government of India, “radio should become an input in the nation building tasks and must strengthen the confidence of the people, promote the concept of self-reliance and encourage forces of unity and national harmony.” (Tarafdar, 2015)

Commercial FM radio stations have a limited reach and cater to the privileged and educated audience. The villagers, farmers, tribal and folk identify very strongly with the community radio. The programmes related to health and hygiene, sanitation,

agriculture, local problems, education are in the popular list among community radio listeners. The factor for popularity is mainly the presenter speaking their language and dialect. Many of the residents contribute to the community radio programmes and they feel empowered that way.

### **Community Radio: A rescuer through Covid-19**

Community radio stations were never on the forefront in the radio arena but during the initial attentive days of COVID-19 not just in India but all over the world it played a crucial role. The arrival of novel Coronavirus has brought much uncertainty about its spread and cure as awareness was the key to keep oneself away from getting infected by the virus and the community radio stations were (are) on the forefront in rural pockets informing people on protocols to be followed. Community radio stations emerged as the rescuers against the explosion and prevention of COVID-19.

A new radio series had been launched by the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia to assist people during the pandemic. The association disseminated advices to people during the pandemic and provided access to resources to help them with the financial decisions. (Community radio supports consumers coming out of COVID, 2020) The association partnered with Ecstra Foundation to support the local community. In Africa, the community radio stations were doing lifesaving messaging to tackle the spread of the novel Coronavirus. The Koch FM was dedicated to broadcast a daily program on Coronavirus. This very first licenced community radio station of Kenya has put much of the efforts to make everyone aware about the COVID-19 especially the persons with special ability and vulnerable units. (Obonyo, 2020) In Mexico, the community radio stations successfully transmitted information about the coronavirus and the precautions to the indigenous communities in their language. (Pavarala & Jena, 2020)

In India, community radio stations have always been a trusted source in the times of crisis and they proved to be a rescuer throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite lack of resources and funding, the community radio stations were determinedly working to provide information to the marginalised groups in their local language and helped the communities to cope up with the crisis. Across the country, the community radio stations were encouraging people to follow the directives suggested by WHO to control the spread of the virus. The information about frequent hand wash, wearing masks and social distancing norms were relentlessly delivered by the community radio stations in villages and remote areas where the print and electronic media has hardly any reach and Internet is almost non-existent.

In Mewat, there are a few areas where most people live are illiterate. It was a

challenge for the local administration to reach to the areas with factual information about COVID-19 crisis and make them understand in their language. Radio Mewat acted as a bridge between the local administration and people living in those remote areas. A show named "Corona se Jung, Radio Mewat ke sang", was aired to provide information and update about the ongoing crisis. One more community radio station in the same region worked to provide information across 225 villages in Nuh district in Haryana. Alfaz-e-Mewat, a community radio station has produced special shows on COVID-19 crisis. At first the lockdown was announced and imposed for 21 days. The Alfaz-e-Mewat was so prompt to produce a show named "Ekkis Baten, Ekkis din" (21 Dialogues, 21 Days). The station come up with another series when the lockdown was extended. Alfaz-e-Mewat was not only committed to update people about the crisis and precautions but also to alert people about the fake news that was being circulated on social media. The community radio station broadcasted a show "Savdhan" to help people in ignoring fake news and misinformation about the crisis. (Pavarala & Jena, 2020)

Odisha became a trendsetter in fighting the Coronavirus crisis with the help of 17 community radio stations. In Khariar, Nuapada region in Odisha, Radio Swayamshakti, a community radio station become a saviour for the distressed milkmen. At the start of the COVID-19 crisis, suddenly the milkmen started losing their business. The community radio station started a campaign to connect customers to the milkmen. In Assam, Radio Brahmaputra was serving people with information about the social distancing norms, wearing a mask, handwashing and sanitization. Kadal Osai is a community radio station based in Rameshwaram, which helped the fishermen of Tamilnadu survive the lockdown. The fisherman couldn't go fishing due to lockdown and were starving. The station connected them with Britannia, which provided biscuit packets to the fishermen and Muthoot Finance which chipped in to provide rations to the fishermen. (Patnaik, 2020)

In India, community radios are united, despite their diversity, in reaching out to the communities to ensure that the lives of people on the margins are not compromised and taken for granted (Mehra 2020). Advocating physical distancing, debunking fake news, social distancing or physical distancing (a phrase that is perhaps more accurate and divested somewhat of the connotations of the social divide in hierarchical India) is a useful measure that has been advocated by the WHO. The Government of India as well as local authorities across the country have been promoting and trying hard to enforce physical distancing to avoid the threat of community transmission. In its response to COVID-19, community radio station Alfaz-e-Mewat (AeM) has been broadcasting factual information across 225 villages in Nuh district of Haryana about the spread of the pandemic. Station director, Pooja

Murada, revealed that “team AeM has been helping the communities in remote areas during this global health crisis.” During the first phase of the nationwide lockdown, AeM aired a series, Ekis Batein, Ekis Din (21 Dialogues, 21 Days) and when the restrictions were extended, the station followed up with another series called ‘19 Din Aur Sambhalke’ (Caution for 19 days more). The idea was to sensitise and inform people about various aspects of the pandemic so that people can be fully aware of the essential things that might help them avoid getting infected or spread it to others. The station also broadcast a show called Savdhan (Alert) that attempted to take on and debunk disinformation and fake news in circulation on social media platforms.

Another station in the ISSN (Online) - 2349-8846 same region, Radio Mewat, has been airing a show called ‘Corona se Jung, Radio Mewat ke Sang’ (Fight the battle against the virus with Radio Mewat) through which it not only provided critical information for the well-being of their listeners, but also became a key link between district and local administration and the mostly non-literate communities of the area. In the remotest parts of Koraput district of Odisha, Radio Dhimsa, a tribal CR station catering to the Desia (indigenous) community, has been carrying out wide-ranging activities, both on- and off-air, to empower the community to deal with the pandemic. While narrating his experience as the station manager, RJ Uday said that, “Desia people can’t understand the information that is conveyed to them through mainstream media outlets because of language and cultural barriers. As a result, vital information remains out of reach for the community during these trying times. We have roped in local experts from the community and trained them to convey important messages in the Desia dialect.” With the strong community bond built over the years, the station’s staff and volunteers visited villages to demonstrate such things as physical distancing norms, proper wearing of masks, and personal hygiene.

‘Gurgaon Ki Awaaz’ in Gurugram (erstwhile Gurgaon), Haryana has been informing its listeners, mostly migrant workers who fuel Gurugram’s Millennium City, about the availability of rations in the neighbourhood fair price shops, medicines, and providing counselling on psychological anxiety and job losses. It has emerged as a strong community voice during the COVID-19 crisis. In order to keep the tribal population of Sargur, Mysore updated about the novel coronavirus, Janadhwani CR has been bringing in doctors and other key health officials to share messages in Kannada and local dialects. Similarly, another Karnataka station, Sarathi Jhalak, in the Hoskote taluk of Bengaluru rural district did some out-of-the-box thinking with its programming. In a panel discussion, they brought together a health expert, a police officer, a non-governmental organisation representative, a historian, and a philosopher to discuss past epidemics that had drastically affected the region and

the lessons one could learn from those experiences, and also sought to address the spiritual well-being of the community (Chopra 2020; Bhatnagar 2020; Kumar 2020).

In Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh, a relatively new station called 'Gunjan' has been providing valuable information related to public health, hygiene, and lockdown regulations not only in Hindi, but also in Pahari and Garhwali dialects. 'Waqt ki Awaz' radio station in Kanpur rural district of Uttar Pradesh has broadcasted a 26-episode series relying heavily on WHO data to provide facts and figures, scientific information about the virus, and safety precautions that individuals and communities can take to prevent the disease from overwhelming their health and livelihoods.

Hence it would be no exaggeration to say that community radio stations rallied around the national resolve to tackle the pandemic and minimise its impact on lives and livelihoods with a great sense of responsibility and community awareness, albeit against great odds. ISSN (Online) - 2349-8846 Fighting against Odds Community radio stations in India have been working against the pandemic at considerable risk and cost to their staff members, with no support from the government. Without the privileges accorded to journalists of mainstream media, restrictions on movement during lockdowns made it rather difficult for station personnel, especially women, to reach the station (except in places like Gurugram where the civil defence stepped in with transport help). Not enjoying formal recognition as media in many parts of the country, community radio reporters found it a challenging task to get local administrators and authorities to speak to them over the phone or include them in social media groups meant for distribution of official circulars. Working remotely and transferring audio files via the internet also posed a financial problem with costs of data connection. While in many countries, recognising community radios as a valuable public resource, governments and regulators extended emergency funding to stations and offered other kinds of financial assistance, in India, we had a half-hearted and uninformed Ministry of Information and Broadcasting getting the minister to reach out to the stations with a pre-recorded message on 22 May, 2020. The minister's short speech was full of rhetorical appreciation of the sector and bereft of any ameliorative measures to bail out the stations that have been rendering a critical public service. On financial support to the stations, the minister claimed that the government provides financial assistance for setting up stations and that the stations then must meet maintenance costs by raising advertising support.

The community radio policy in India permits CR stations to broadcast seven minutes of advertising to every one hour of air time. The minister suggested that this could be raised to 12 minutes to an hour of broadcast. The announcement betrays ignorance of the fact that very few stations in the country are able to raise even five minutes of advertising per hour of broadcast time, because of locational

disadvantages, the audience of low socio-economic status is perceived as the wrong demographic, and lack of marketing skills. The support for setting up costs mentioned by the minister have also been disbursed so scantily over the last few years that the funds allocated under the ministry's much-vaunted Community Radio Support Scheme (CRSS) goes mostly to organising national sammelans in Delhi and funding awareness workshops across the country with the objective of encouraging more organisations to apply for a CR licence. That, despite these workshops, there are still only under 300 CR stations in the country of our size (as against 350 in Nepal) calls for another in-depth analysis of the reasons, including insurmountable bureaucratic hurdles in obtaining a licence.

The long-standing demand of the community radio movement that the government establish an autonomous community radio support fund, as it exists in many other democratic countries, with transparent grant-making for a range of needs, including setting up costs, acquisition of infrastructure, salary support, volunteer training, and content production, has fallen on deaf ears. The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) of the ministry, which had started issuing government publicity advertisements on various welfare schemes at considerably low rates, has been defaulting ISSN (Online) - 2349-8846 on prompt release of payments.

During the current pandemic crisis, there have been suggestions that if the government at least releases the payment of arrears to stations, leave alone emergency funding, it would be a big help. It is in this context that we also propose that the government seriously consider mobilising a minuscule proportion of the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to strengthen community radio stations operating in relatively deprived regions of the country. India, as a signatory to the Constitution and Convention of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), is obligated to see how the benefits of new communication technologies extend to marginalised communities in the country. The USOF was created in 2004 with the funds generated through the Universal Access Levy (UAL) as a percentage of the revenues earned by telecom licensees. We suggest, for instance, that these funds could go towards subsidising the high costs of internet connectivity for community radio stations.

## **Conclusion:**

CR in Crisis Communication and Beyond Participatory media such as community radio, produced and managed by local communities, are proving to be a vital tool in times of disasters and crises. With its underlying philosophy of empowerment of marginalised people, CR is attuned to disaster management approaches that are centred on vulnerable sections of society. There is enough documented evidence about the critical significance of community radio in dealing with disaster risk

reduction and disaster management from Asia, especially South and Southeast Asia. There are exciting stories as well from Africa, Australia, and the Caribbean of how local communities have used their own communication competencies to share information about impending natural disasters, rehabilitation efforts, and to build resilient communities that adopt practices of sustainable development so that they become less vulnerable to future disasters (Pavarala 2013).

It has also been pointed out that community radio plays a crucial role in enabling communities to assess the risk of disasters and prepare for an appropriate response (Chawla and Ramakrishnan 2020). It is to be noted that community radios are able to deliver during natural disasters or public health crises such as the Coronavirus pandemic because of certain key characteristics that define them. First, their proximity to the community, often bolstered by decades of grassroots mobilisation work in which the parent organisation has been engaged, is a primary advantage. Second, eschewing inputs from professionally trained broadcasters, community radio programmes are mostly produced in partnership with and the participation of community members. Third, unlike the one-size-fits-all models of dissemination of information, the content of CRs is contextualised locally, sharing relevant experiences and information that large-scale, centralised media cannot. Lastly, the programming in community radios is mostly done in local languages and dialects, with CRs in India today echoing the sounds of Marwari, Kutchi, Bundeli, Bhojpuri, Haryanvi, and Desia, rarely ever heard over the airwaves.

As the badly bruised and battered migrant workers (now labelled, ominously, as “the returnees”) emerge out of their village quarantines trying to fend for themselves and their families, several questions arise: Where and how do they speak? Who will listen to them? What infrastructures for articulating their voices would they find open for them? In India where Internet penetration is still only at about 40% of the population, community radio certainly has the potential to offer discursive spaces for those left out of the digital dreams. However, we have much ground to cover if genuine democratisation of media spaces in the country can be achieved. This includes urgently addressing issues of information access and communicative equity, creation of a level playing field in the infrastructural domain, provision of public funding for community media, and forging enabling policy formulations to support these measures.

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## CHAPTER 7

# RISE OF DIGITAL EVENTS IN THE COVID ERA

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SOUMEN BHATTACHARYA AND SONIA SINGH

*“Ultimately, the greatest lesson that COVID-19 can teach humanity is that we are all in this together.”*

*- Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw*

### **Dawn of COVID-19**

Coronavirus disease, COVID-19, an infectious disease first detected in Wuhan, China in late 2019 was declared as a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) by early March 2020. In India, the first affected case of COVID-19 was detected on 30th January 2020 in Kerala since the infected person had travelled to Wuhan, China. This virus spread rapidly.

India witnessed its first COVID-19 death on March 12, 2020, which initiated the talks for Janta Curfew and eventually led to a nation-wide lockdown for months.

Lockdown was the only solution to prevent rapid transmission till its proper medicine was discovered. Other mandatory precautionary measures suggested by WHO were social distancing, staying at-least 1 meter away from others, isolation of sick people (especially respiratory illness), wearing a mask and washing hands at regular intervals.

The event Industry was one of the worst-hit sectors due to nationwide lockdown and travel restrictions. Prior to the pandemic, it was believed that attending events whether big or small will always be an integral part of human life. It was not considered a luxury but a necessity. Our society thrives on shared experiences, so even imagining a scenario where this necessity is taken away sends jitters down the spine.

The Event industry which is a Rs 50,000-cr market, including organized and unorganized sectors came to a halt in India when a nationwide lockdown was announced. While attending physical events was not an option, Academic Events, and Domestic Events switched gears to digital platforms. The digital switch came with its own set of pros and cons.

In this chapter, we will discuss how Academic and Domestic events moved to digital platforms, how people adapted to these new forms of interactions, and the future of Digital Events.

## **Event Industry in India**

Collins dictionary defines events as a planned and organized occasion, for example, a social gathering like a wedding, business conference, felicitation ceremony, etc. The event industry comprises professionals who can organize and manage a well-planned and organized occasion with the view of meeting or achieving specific objectives for the benefit of a group of people or an organization. The professionals in this business are known as Event planners. An event can be a Celebration (festivals, weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries), Education (conferences, graduations), Promotions (product launches, fashion shows, and conventions), or Commemorations (memorials, civic events).

25.9 million jobs from the \$1,000 industry have been directly impacted at a global level. The industry incurred a loss of approximately \$666 Mn by mid-March. Exhibitions and trade fairs alone account for up to 60,000 events in leading 11 countries.

## **Types of Events**

### **Academic Events**

Academic Events can be defined as the events organised by an educational institute majorly for its stakeholders at various intervals. These events can be Freshers, Conferences, Orientation, Seminars, Convocation, Farewell, Annual Day, and Intra/Inter-Institute competitions. These events are conducted throughout the academic year to engage its students and to provide a growth opportunity for them. These are organized at a medium to a large level, engaging at least 100 to 1000 people at a time.

Management of Academic Events is done by the staff members and students of the organization. Usually, event planners are not hired when it comes to Academic Events.

There are numerous people involved in the management team. Like event planners, the management team of Academic Events also follows a checklist to run the event smoothly. These events thrive on the participation of students, faculties, staff, and industry/influential guests. These events are not held for making monetary profits yet in some cases (conferences, inter- institute competitions) a nominal registration or entry fee is charged.

Academic organizations benefit in terms of publicity received through such events

in terms of news coverage, positive image building in the eyes of its stakeholders, and potential stakeholders who can be a part of the organization in near future.

### **Domestic Events**

Domestic Events can be defined as events concerning a household. These events can either be small celebrations like birthdays, anniversaries, get-togethers or big events like weddings, community festival celebrations.

Small events are conducted annually and majorly involve family members and a few guests. These events are usually managed by the family members by themselves. Big events require a professional event planner who can manage these events as they involve a big guest list and a lot of money is involved.

Weddings are one of the emerging event categories and quite expensive in India nowadays. Prewedding photoshoots and video shoots are also getting acceptance in India widely. Wedding Planners are even using the most current or latest techniques (like drones, slo-mo, fast forward, emotions, etc.) to shoot promo videos, images in innovative ways. In India people spend an average amount of \$31,213 for his/her wedding, the result is as per the survey taken some time back. The situation has changed nowadays, and anyone who has the willingness to spend finance in the event can have the wedding ritual of his/her dreams.

### **Digitization of Academic and Domestic Events Amidst**

#### **COVID-19**

From lockdown 1.0 to lockdown 5.0, in all these phases educational institutes across the nation didn't receive any relaxation to resume their on-ground educational activities. Thus, the education sector was impacted significantly. According to the UNESCO report, COVID-19 has affected nearly 68% of the total world's student population as per the data taken during the 1st week of June 2020. COVID outbreak impacted about 1.2 billion students across the world. In an attempt to prevent community-spread, governments across the globe decided to shut-down all educational institutes. In India, this decision has affected more than 32 crore students.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged communities have been affected the most by this closure. Keeping this in mind, governments around the globe initiated different digital modes of learning for continuity of education. According to a survey report of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, conducted on higher education it was observed that there are 993 universities, 39931 Colleges and 10725 standalone institutions listed on their portal, which contribute to education (DNS Kumar, 2020).

Although digitization of education in the current scenario was a progressive step, but in our country where only 45 crore of the total population have access to the internet along with smart devices, access to digital learning is not possible for all. Rural areas of the country where people are still very much out of a touch from the advanced internet-run technological world are unable to reap the benefits of new-age learning.

Besides these setbacks, this new-age learning brought many benefits. The online world is such where physical distance between two people doesn't count. The real-time interactions between people now are as good as real-life interactions in the comfort of one's own personal space. Education institutes took this digital switch in a very good spirit and as it is said necessity is the mother of all inventions, education institutes along with students conducted all major events as per their event calendar through online mode.

### **Webinars**

Webinars i.e., web-based seminars were conducted by all major higher educational institutes throughout their online semester. These webinars attracted more students as it required nothing more than simple registration and internet service. This initiative was also welcomed by industry gurus and scholars as they could reach far more students through this medium without taking out a big chunk of their time which would have to be done otherwise in an on-ground event.

### **National/International Conferences**

These events take months of planning and even after that on-ground execution includes handling of guests, venue, attendees, panellists, and other essential things costing a lot to the organizing institute. All these hassles didn't exist during digital conferences which were organized both at national and international level.

Joseph, co-founder, and director, Wiz craft International, said that the major effect would be on small and medium enterprises, as are high chances for them to wipe out as it would be very problematic for them to survive in the hard-hitting market situation for long. From all the segments; hospitality sector, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) — have been hit the most due to several cancellation events across the country during this time as well as in the next few months too. Considering the impact on Travel, it directly affects foreign participation in events.

### **Intra/Inter Institute Competitions**

With distance no bar, a number of competitions were conducted online to keep

the students active and to make sure learning experiences can be grabbed by both hands.

### **Orientation Ceremony**

As it was evident that COVID-19 was nowhere near to leave the country, educational institutes welcomed new admissions through online admissions. An orientation ceremony is a major event for freshers as it is the official introduction to their selected course, their college as a whole, various departments, etc. it was all shifted to digital platforms. These events were conducted by planning out the whole event in accordance with the new digital platforms.

### **Convocation Ceremony**

This day holds a lot of importance in the life of a student, their parents, and the institution as well. This day celebrates the journey a student covers during the course of their professional studies. Students hope for a spectacular graduation day ceremony, but with COVID-19, the physical event was not possible at all. So, to keep the spirits high of the students, educational institutes left no stone unturned to make their digital convocation as memorable as possible.

In India, a recent survey was done by EEMA (Events and Entertainment Management Association) that was shared with the Government of India and Ernst & Young suggests that the Indian events and exhibition sector is expected to take an INR 1 Tn hit as almost all big scale events across categories have been postponed or cancelled because of the outbreak.

According to the report, in India alone, the sectors account for the employment of 60 million people of which 10 million were directly affected due to the crisis. The event and entertainment industry are going through challenging times since the outbreak of the coronavirus. The economic disruption has led businesses across various sectors to see a huge downfall in their growth. The worst affected are the event industry who is witnessing a major dip in their business due to the cancellation of events worldwide. Due to this, there has been a significant spike in the number of webinars, online discussions, and live chats to keep the industry active.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry has mentioned the in its March 2020 edition that; India's growth the level will be slow as compared to previous years, they have involved the impact of COVID19 on the Indian economy, Projections given by different credit giver firms like S&P Global 5.2%, Fitch Ratings 4.9%, Moodys 5.4%, OECD 5.1%. Different sectoral impact and losses have also been covered, and the suggestions have also been made which shields the industry like; Aviation, Tourism-Hospitality, Medical, Capital Market, Ecommerce, MSME,

Entertainment/ Events/ Sports. Similarly, the International Monetary Fund projected a GDP growth of 1.9 percent for India in the year 2020, as the global economy hits the worst recession since the Great Depression in the 1930s recently assessed by the World Bank.

### **Future of Event industry**

Finally, the biggest change that the new normal has brought with itself is the re-establishment of the world as a global village. However, this time it is a virtual village that connects all those who are sitting at their respective homes waiting for these hours to pass. Virtual events are a sigh of relief as they emerge victorious in the battle against geographical barriers. As a result of this transition, individuals across the globe can experience the performance of their beloved artists.

Using the lockdown period wisely, and instead of cribbing over the situation, one can make strategies for future events that are to be organized or can be organized. An organizer should think about the different ideas and implement them in an effective manner to serve their customers/attendees. They can utilize the time wisely for idea generation or for creative ways that lead to survival in the future. Considering lockdown, Event and Activation Industry had a webinar using the available software technology used. EEMA, EMF (Event Management Federation-Ahmedabad) had organized a webinar using the Zoom application to address queries from all over India advising clients to plan for possible scenarios— like keep up to date with the latest information, avoid fake news, take reasonable steps to increase hygiene standards.

All these activities highlight human being's ability to adapt to any situation and in this case effectively using virtual mode to stay connected and conduct various activities. It will be no wonder that in the post-Covid world the way we conduct and hold events of any type and magnitude will have changed into a hybrid mode.

## CHAPTER 8

# HOW COVID-19 HAS IMPACTED SMALL-SCALE PRODUCTION HOUSES, PHOTOGRAPHERS & CINEMATOGRAPHERS

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ARPITA SINGH

### Background

If we talk about the service sector there are numerous opportunity hubs, which involves all kinds of sectors like IT, Trade, hotels Transport, storage, Railways, Financing, Insurance, Real Estate, Business Services, Insurance, Community, Social service and Film industry. These service-based industries have an invisible and occasional demand for photographers and production houses. Here we are talking about a small segment of people coming from entertainment industry who started their business in a creative field, but their earnings vary according to the market demand. In my research I am mostly targeting all the small-scale photographers and cinematographers of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Photographers and cinematographers working in small-scale production houses are both skilled and unskilled workers. Few of them have degrees in their respective field while others basically learned the craft on their own but in the absence of a degree are termed as 'unskilled workers.' Most of these 'unskilled workers' are working as freelance photographers or cinematographers and they do not have a regular workflow. They manage their finances by earning during the seasons like wedding, festival, new year etc. During off season they manage with whatever little work they can get their hands on. Whereas the skilled workers who have degrees can opt for many other services according to the need of time.

In March 2020, Lockdown was imposed in India by the central government due to a Coronavirus outbreak. The lockdown, which was imposed to save the people lives, adversely impacted the whole world especially photographers and videographers because their earnings were based on projects that came to a halt after the lockdown. Those who were owners of renowned production houses had to face different kind of problems but those who were working as freelancers or as

employees in these small production houses were out of the work. To survive, all the freelancers used their savings to survive and finally many even returned to their hometown or shut their businesses.

## Research Methodology

I have used qualitative methods to collect the data about owner of production houses, freelance photographers & videographers who may experience the impact on their business due to the pandemic. These methods included surveys with various questions that assessed whether these freelancers experienced a negative or positive change during the pandemic. Some of them lost their jobs as they were working in production houses or some of them closed their businesses as they were not able to meet their monthly administration cost. The open-ended questionnaire was distributed among 5 photographers between the age group of 18-40 years in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh based on which the following results were analysed for the purpose of this research paper.

Sr. No	Name of the Production House	Name of the Owner
1	Palanquin Bearers	Pragya Singh
2	Click Tasveer	Shiva Mishra
3	Abhiraj Studio	Rahul Gupta
4	Sattarmm Films	Arpita Singh
5	Pixel	Aman Srivastava

Table 1

## Results

Here in this research, I have interviewed 5 different small scale production houses of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (Table 1) whose livelihood have been affected during the outbreak of COVID -19.

**The first owner is Pragya from Palanquin Bearers.** Her production house was started 1.5 years back. Her production house is still in growing stage as before the lockdown period, she was working on the promotion strategies of her production house. She shared that earlier she had a very less client as her work was not recalled by the many clients. When COVID-19 struck, Pragya was still in the middle of many wedding deals that she was trying to crack for the next wedding seasons, which were proposed in April, June, October, November and December 2020 and the estimated profit she expected from year 2020 was around 4 lakhs. The total number of employees she was having in her production house before COVID-19 were 7, out

of which 4 were photographers, 2 were editors and one was an office boy. Pragma was working from her home only because she wanted her business to first grow in her own state, Uttar Pradesh and then after that she had plans to expand.

However, due to pandemic her plans went kaput. She says, "Now for next 3-5 years I am not planning to open my office anywhere because the photography market has crashed and clients are expecting maximum services in low budget packages. In addition, NGOs have stopped giving any project due to budget constraints & FCRA amendment. Now I am totally dependent on wedding shoots, which are seasonal. Now even clients have accepted the concept of intimate wedding. They have their own cell phone & DSLR that gives good quality pictures." Pragma also shared that she had borne a loss of around 2 lakh rupees in 2020 and is still unsure about her future. She is now looking to give some competitive exams as she is unsure about the survival of her venture. Her co-workers have started doing part time jobs in some places to fulfil their basic needs but Pragma is still trying to get some projects for 2021. She is hoping to get few projects in the month of March and April 2021, but she is still not very sure about the rates.

**The next is Abhiraj Studios**, a small production house located in Lucknow that was into photography and videography from past 4 years. There were 60 employees who were working in the studio. One thing that I want to bring in notice is that they all were not degree holder photographers. They were into photography as skilled labourers who knew photography but had no degrees to support their vocation. When lockdown was imposed all of them returned to their villages and were very afraid to come back because few of their fellow photographers lost their lives due to COVID-19. Abhiraj studio had to shut their office space, which was in Alambagh, Lucknow. Most of their cameras, editing desktop were on EMI and due to non-payment of EMIs they surrendered all their equipment. All the employees lost their job, few stayed in their respective village and started working there as a farmer or opened general stores. While a few of them came back to the city after Unlock and started doing delivery and other odd jobs to meet their expenses.

Owner of the studio Rahul Gupta said that the clients are now expecting giving us very less budget and ask us to bring only 2 photographers with them due to less number of guests. The government rules and regulations has badly affected the services sector. The travelling restrictions have also impacted them. "COVID-19 outbreak completely destroyed our business and paying back our pending loan is another challenge for us. There is a lot of money that is still there in the market and people are not returning it back as they are giving various reasons. We don't know any other jobs so right now many of us has joined as a guard, salesman etc and we are not thinking to ever come back in photography business because we think the

market is over for us completely.”

**The next in the list is Pixels.** Owner Aman Srivastava opened the studio in 2019 and was doing brisk business. Within a year he had employed 25 people in the studio all of whom were professionals. In the first year, the studio made a profit of Rs 5 lakh, however, Covid-19 struck and the earnings reduced to Rs 2 lakh in 2020 due to which Aman had to dismiss 15 employees. In another blow, one of his employees died due to Covid-19, which he contracted while shooting a wedding in Varanasi in the early quarter of 2020. They closed their 3 offices in Lucknow, Kanpur and Delhi due to no work. They were not able to meet their working capital cost.

Regarding Covid protocols issued by the government Aman said, “Safety measures, social distancing and travel restrictions has changed the whole industry. We were having few good photographers who left this industry and went back to their hometown after selling their equipment because they did not have enough savings to survive during the lockdown. So many of our customers are yet to pay but citing pandemic they have not given anything. The photography Industry is based on credit from market and we generally save very less amount and if we have a family, we survive on very less amount. The market is very slack and people are now wanting very low packages so sometimes we get a very low margin of merely 2000-5000 rupees in one wedding. The COVID-19 impacted us in such a way that now I this vocation is almost over for us,” he said.

**The next production house is Click Tasveer Studio.** This production house is from Lucknow Uttar Pradesh and is functioning since last 7 years. They were having annual turnover of Rs 15 lakhs per year but in 2020 due to COVID-19 their turnover was only Rs 5 lakhs due to which they had to dismiss 25 employees and as a result there are only 5 employees right now in the firm. They had to shut their studio and are now working from home.

**The next production house is Sattar MM films.** The production house is 3-year-old and was in the process of expansion. They work on freelance basis and hire people according to their requirement. The concern here with the owner is that many freelancers are right now at their hometown and no one is planning to return till now.

## Conclusion

In the current scenario with clients reducing their budgets for photoshoots, wedding photography or corporate events, it is becoming very difficult for people to survive in this profession.

Clients are either postponing events/functions or reducing budget to practice social distancing and save themselves from getting infected. And since it looks like

the world has come to a stop, people are in no hurry to organize events or get clicked for something.

This has led to a decline in work for photographers. But the situation is still better than that of other businesses as a photographer can always tackle the decline in revenue by scaling back the cost. This is the flexibility that comes with photography.

Currently, the big photographers aren't facing as much adversity as they are still in demand but many small-time photographers are opting out of this vocation due to no income.

Since the Coronavirus is not loosening its hold easily, the "New Normal", might include an exhaustive list for social distancing measures and other health guidelines like masks for everyone at events, sanitizers at all touchpoints; ensuring medical assistance on sets; minimal unit strength, and least amount of travel for all involved is here to stay.

The basic problem that come into light is the clients are asking for low-priced packages due to the guidelines and limited gathering, which is affecting businesses. It is not possible for these production houses to carry forward such low-priced deals and also it is not possible to keep lots more employees in a company as they are not having enough projects. The competition is now not about good quality of work but now it's all about money and this is what impacting all the small production houses. A new concept of intimate wedding has also shattered the remaining hope of production houses.

During the lockdown period, TV, gaming, digital and OTT platforms saw a massive increase. On the other hand, outdoor consumption models such as films, events, theme parks, are witnessing a dramatic fall with social distancing norms in place. The one thing that all the production houses are taking care is of the promotions they are doing through social media. They are using Instagram as their promotion tool and trying to bring clients through Instagram only.

The world economy is in a recession phase and photographers are not exempt from the financial impact. Photography in modern times is more of a luxury good than a necessity, with its demand rising and falling with the incomes of clients.

These are trying times for all. The spread of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, has led governments to take drastic actions, put strains on businesses, and has affected all individuals in a personal way. It is incredibly important that we all do our part during this time. As photographers and filmmakers ourselves. Everyone probably has some extra time on their hands right now. You don't need to fill it with endless tasks. Taking a second to breathe and relax can do wonders. Maybe it will give you a new project idea to tackle during the next few weeks. Filmmaking and photography can be extremely collaborative. However, I

would advise that avoid handing off and sharing equipment is now a days important. Studies have shown that the virus can live for a fairly long period of time on objects and surfaces. Sharing equipment has the potential to spread the virus even if you don't come in physical contact with another person. Now it has become a necessity to cleaning the cameras and lenses often.

Now is the time to do it, especially if you are stuck at home trying to figure out how best to make use of our time? This might look like a time where you can just sleep all day or binge on Netflix, but it is truly the time to lift the business before things worsen. Also, keep the faith as times will improve but make sure that you are ready for whatever comes. If you want to stay relevant as a photographer, make sure that you practice safety measures while doing photoshoots. Firstly, try to sanitize your hands before starting your photoshoot.

## CHAPTER 9

# THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND STARTUPS: DETERMINANTS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN INDIA

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MOHAMMAD FAISAL

### Introduction

The field of entrepreneurship has expanded rapidly over the last 40 years. Entrepreneurs are those who bring change, someone who does not pursue to perfect, or augment existing ways of doing things, but searches instead for new methods and new markets—different ways of doing things (Stokes, 2000), someone who hunts for change, and responds to it in an innovative way, exploiting it as an opportunity (Drucker, 1986).

In past few years, the start-up in India has appeared as a reckoning force. Systematic decisions are very important in entrepreneurial situations, when there is often limited time, money and resources to establish a presence in a marketplace. It is striking that the best practices of highly successful entrepreneurs often ignore traditional theories. Even with many constraints startups can creatively manage and leverage the full potential of their enterprises.

COVID-19 is far more than a health crisis. It is a health, economic and social crisis. Every business has seen a significant economic impact of the coronavirus on its operations and growth. Startups are always very vulnerable to external changes and any major change will be create a new set of challenges and provide new possibilities for success.

Start-ups are very vulnerable and in fact they are badly affected by COVID-19. They are facing various challenges both, from a setup as well as from an operations' perspective. The start-ups have been continuously striving to adapt to the present situation as flexibly as possible.

There are many determinants, which affect the startups during and after COVID-19 pandemic. An important task for entrepreneurs is to look at these determinants, which are very important for the survival of their ventures after the

pandemic. Existing literature have focused on diagnosing these determinants for their respective time and region. As a result, we lack a holistic view in understanding the factors in present Indian context. It is required to recognize and map several determinants in business startup and develop competencies for startups in India. But this is not an easy job. Many determinants impede the adoption and implementation of new ventures in India. Because of these barriers, individuals are hesitant to start new ventures in India. Instead, there are certain enablers that help startups in India. Hence, the entrepreneurs are now needed to identify, analyze and manage these enablers and barriers for the efficient and effective design and introduction of new ventures in India. These elements or variables (i. e. enablers and barriers) not only affect the execution process of start-ups in India but also influence one another. So, it is important to examine their nature and relationship among them.

## **Objectives**

Primarily this research aims to explore and study the eco system of startups in India after COVID-19 pandemic, the study has following specific objectives:

- To identify the determinants of startups in India.
- To identify the relationship among these determinants.

## **Methodology**

After a review of existing literature, personal interviews of the entrepreneurs and subject experts were conducted by the researcher through personal visit. Wherever personal visits were not possible interviews were conducted through e-mail or telephone. A mix of judgmental and snowball sampling was used for choosing experts. Discussion topics included questions on the following issues:

- Positive and negative factors for startups in India.
- Their view about the various schemes for startups in India and how COVID-19 had affected it.
- The factors affecting entrepreneurs, regulators, and other stake holders.
- Economic, political, regional, issues related to startups in India.

The responses are collected and analyzed qualitatively key determinants for startups in India has been identified.

## **ISM Analysis**

The responses are collected and analyzed qualitatively, key determinants for startups in India has been identified using Interpretive Structural Modelling. This technique is a methodology for identifying and summarizing relationships among

specific elements, which define a problem or an issue (Warfield, 1974) (Sage, 1977). It provides some means by which order can be imposed on the complexity of such elements (Ravi & Shankar, 2005). ISM helps to bring order and direction on the complex relationships among the variables of a system (Warfield, 1974) (Sage, 1977). ISM is an interactive learning process whereby a set of different, directly and indirectly related variables are structured into a comprehensive systemic model. The model so formed portrays the structure of a complex issue or problem in a carefully designed pattern implying graphics as well as words (Singh, Shankar, Narain, & Agarwal, 2003) (Ravi & Shankar, 2005). The ISM approach has two basic concepts, the concept of transitivity and reachability, which are essential to understand the ISM methodology (Raj, Shankar, & Suhaib, 2008). The concept of transitivity can be explained with the following example. If a variable p is related to q and q is related to r, then transitivity implies that variable p is necessarily related to r. Transitivity is the basic assumption in ISM and is always used in this modelling approach (Farris & Sage, 1975) (Sharma & Gupta, 1995). The reachability concept is the building block of ISM methodology. The identified variables are compared for their inter-relation on a paired basis. This information is represented in the form of binary matrix. If variable p influences another variable q, then entry in the cell (p, q) of the reachability matrix is 1 and if variable p does not influence q, then entry in the cell (p, q) of the reachability matrix is 0.

## **Limitations**

This work is based on survey both in case of experts and entrepreneurs. Hence a representative sample is mandatory. Due care has been taken to arrive at an appropriate sample, however a large sample size may lead to better results.

## **Findings and Analysis**

### **Determinants for new ventures In India derived from survey.**

The deployment of new ventures in India depends upon several factors. These factors may not only affect the startups in India but also its subsequent operations and future prospects. After a review of literature and the opinion of experts, both from academia and industry, 9 important determinants for startups in India have been identified that are listed below:

- Changing Global Scenario
- Changing Consumer
- Individual traits
- Idea & Creativity
- Finance

- Government Policies
- Business Environment
- Marketing
- Human Resource
- Successful Startup

**Keys steps of interpretive structural modeling (ISM)**

Keeping in mind the contextual relationship for each determinant, the existence of a relation between any two determinants (p and q) and the associated direction of the relation is questioned. Four symbols (V, A, X, O) are used to denote the direction of relationship between the determinants (p and q):

- V is used if determinant p influences determinant q;
- A is used if determinant p is influenced by determinant q;
- X is used if determinants p and q influence each other; and
- O is used if determinants p and q do not influence each other since they are unrelated.

**Step 1: Creation of Self Sustained Interactive Matrix**

Drivers	Successful Startups	Human Resource	Marketing	Business Environment	Government Policies	Finance	Idea & Creativity	Individual traits	Changing Consumer	Changing Global Scenario
Changing Global Scenario	O	V	V	V	X	X	V	V	V	
Changing Consumer	O	V	X	X	A	O	X	V		
Individual traits	V	V	V	A	O	X	A			
Idea & Creativity	V	X	V	A	A	X				
Finance	V	V	X	X	X					
Government Policies	V	X	V	X						
Business Environment	V	V	V							
Marketing	V	X								
Human Resource	V									
Successful Startups										

**Step II: Creation of Initial Feasibility Matrix (IFM)**

The next step is to develop the initial and final reachability matrix from the SSIM. This is obtained in two sub-steps. The first sub-step is to obtain the initial reachability matrix from the SSIM format by transforming the information of each cell of SSIM into binary digits (i.e. ones or zeros). This transformation has been done by substituting V, A, X, O by 1 and 0 as per the following rules:

- If the (p, q) entry in the SSIM is V, then the (p, q) entry in the initial reachability matrix becomes 1 and the (q, p) entry becomes 0;
- If the (p, q) entry in the SSIM is A, then the (p, q) entry in the initial reachability

matrix becomes 0 and the (q, p) entry becomes 1;

- If the (p, q) entry in the SSIM is X, then the (p, q) entry in the initial reachability matrix becomes 1 and the (q, p) entry also becomes 1; and
- If the (p, q) entry in the SSIM is O, then the (p, q) entry in the initial reachability matrix becomes 0 and the (q, p) entry also becomes 0.

Following these rules, initial reachability matrix is prepared as a Table below. In the second sub-step, final reachability matrix is obtained. The concept of transitivity is introduced for this purpose, and some of the cells of the initial reachability matrix are filled by inference. After incorporating the transitivity concept, the final reachability matrix is developed and is presented.

**Initial Feasibility Matrix (FFM)**

Drivers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DEPENDANCE
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
2	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	6a
3	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	6
4	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	6
5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
6	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
7	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
8	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	5
9	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	5
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
DRIVING POWER	3	6	5	8	7	5	5	9	9	8	

**Step III: Creation of Final Feasibility Matrix (FFM)**

Drivers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	DEPENDANCE
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
2	0	1	1	1	0	1*	1	1	1	0	6
3	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	6
4	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	6
5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
6	1	1	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
7	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
8	0	1	0	0	1	1*	0	1	1	1	5
9	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	5
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
DRIVING POWER	3	6	5	8	7	5	5	9	9	8	

Iteration I

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,5,6	1,5,6	
2	2,3,4,6,7,8,9	1,2,4,6,7,8,9	2,4,6,7,8,9	
3	3,4,5,8,9,10	1,2,3,5,6,7	3,5	
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9	2,4,5,8,9,10	2,4,5,9	
5	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	1,3,4,5,6,7,8	1,3,4,5,6,7,8	
6	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	1,2,5,6,7,8,9	1,2,5,6,7,8,9	
7	2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	1,2,5,6,7	2,5,6,7	
8	1,5,6,8,9,10	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,5,6,8,9	
9	4,6,8,9,10	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	4,6,8,9	
10	10	3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10	10	1

Iteration II

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,5,6	1,5,6	
2	2,3,4,6,7,8,9	1,2,4,6,7,8,9	2,4,6,7,8,9	
3	3,4,5,8,9	1,2,3,5,6,7	3,5	
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9	2,4,5,8,9	2,4,5,9	
5	1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,3,4,5,6,7,8	1,3,4,5,6,7,8	
6	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,2,5,6,7,8,9	1,2,5,6,7,8,9	
7	2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,2,5,6,7	2,5,6,7	
8	1,5,6,8,9	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	1,5,6,8,9	II
9	4,6,8,9	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9	4,6,8,9	II

Iteration III

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1,5,6	1,5,6	
2	2,3,4,6,7	1,2,4,6,7	2,4,6,7	
3	3,4,5	1,2,3,5,6,7	3,5	
4	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	2,4,5	2,4,5	
5	1,3,4,5,6,7	1,3,4,5,6,7,	1,3,4,5,6,7	III
6	1,2,3,4,5,6,7	1,2,5,6,7	1,2,5,6,7	
7	2,3,4,5,6,7	1,2,5,6,7	2,5,6,7	

Iteration IV

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3,4,6,7	1,6	1,6	
2	2,3,4,6,7	1,2,4,6,7	2,4,6,7	
3	3,4	1,2,3,6,7	3	
4	1,2,3,4,6,7	2,4,	2,4,	
6	1,2,3,4,6,7	1,2,6,7	1,2,6,7	
7	2,3,4,6,7	1,2,3,6,7	2,3,6,7	IV

Iteration V

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3,4,6	1,6	1,6	
2	2,3,4,6	1,2,4,6	2,4,6	
3	3,4	1,2,3,6,7	3	
4	1,2,3,4,6	2,4,	2,4,	
6	1,2,6	1,2,3,4,6,	1,2,6	V

Iteration VI

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3,4	1	1	
2	2,3,4	1,2,4	2,4	
3	3,4	1,2,3,7	3	
4	2,4	1,2,3,4,	2,4,	VI

Iteration VII

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1,2,3	1	1	
2	2,3	1,2	2	VII
3	3	1,2,3,7	3	VII

Iteration VIII

Drivers	Interaction	Antecedents	Intersection	level
1	1	1	1	VIII

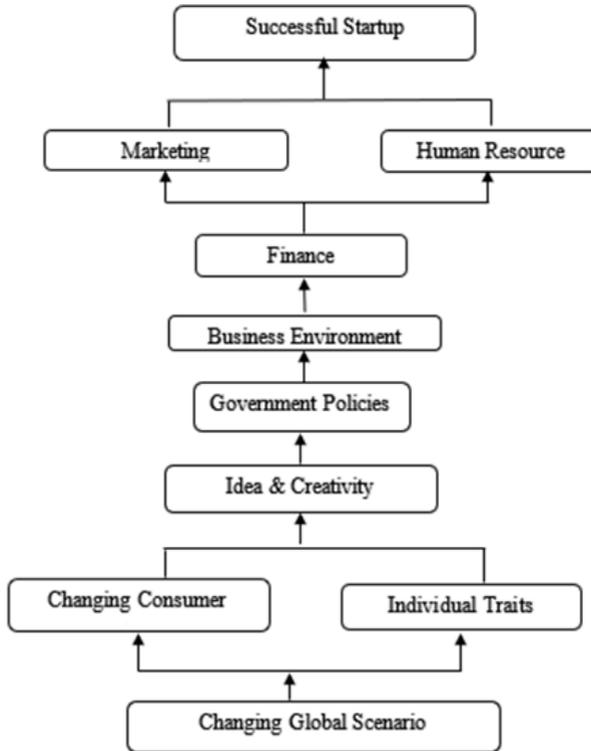


Fig. 1 - ISM based model

## Conclusions & Recommendations

The study shows that there are nine determinants, which affects startups in India. Entrepreneurs are already focusing particularly on these areas. Startup companies are also reinventing themselves through next-normal operating models, capitalizing on this malleable moment and the resulting spread of agile processes, nimbler ways of working, and increased speed and productivity.

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## CHAPTER 10

# **A BREAKTHROUGH BOOM OF OTT PLATFORMS POST COVID-19: A STUDY ON 7 C'S OF ONLINE STREAMING PLATFORMS DURING THE NATIONWIDE LOCKDOWN IN INDIA**

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ALISHAH SYEDAIN

### **Introduction**

Digitization has changed the outlook of entertainment in India. The rise of OTT platforms has seen a new dawn. Information is just a click away and the online content is easily accessible to the viewers. It will not be wrong to say that OTT platforms such as Netflix, Voot, Amazon Prime Video, etc. have given a catalytic impetus to the shrinking of the globe into a village. These platforms can be lauded for bringing the world together and closer and for fostering an enhanced sense of cultural understanding among the masses. During the unfortunate times of a hitherto unprecedented global pandemic such as COVID-19, these video-on-demand platforms have seen a surge in their viewership (Saini, 2020)

Covid-19 country-wide shutdown has completely transformed the way people socialize, work, and communicate. Social distancing and the infectious nature of the virus has kept the entire world at a standstill mode for almost a year now. This has affected the entertainment and events industry beyond measure. The cinema-going and Friday release of movies has taken a big toll. The most hit sector is theatre-going as it involves large gathering alongside events.

COVID 19 has caused tremendous disruption not only in people's lives but the economy at large. Since the beginning of lockdown from March 25, 2020, in India cinema houses are closed and all the sectors are at a halt. Owing to the condition of increasing work from home culture and colleges shifting to online mode education, the over the top (OTT) entertainment service industry has had an impeccable boost.

Over the Top (OTT) platforms have become immensely popular with users in

India over the past five years. A few years back the concept of watching content on the internet was limited to videos on YouTube. Next came the boom of concept-based YouTube channels and various entertainment programs streaming for the audience.

The OTT platform has increased its penetration in the market of on-demand content and web streaming focusing mainly on the concept of narrowcasting. OTT is a streaming media service directly to the viewers. Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Disney Hotstar, Voot, Zee5, SonyLIV, MxPlayer, ALT Balaji, Eros Now & Arre are the top ten OTT platforms in India according to The India Express. (The Mobile Indian Network, 2020)

These online streaming services have established a new consumption pattern for the audience today. OTT platforms are delivering content directly to users. The tv content, original shows, and films are delivered to the viewers bypassing the conventional platforms. As the country was in a nationwide lockdown, people had free time at home to surf the content online and browse through these applications to access the content. These applications saw a tremendous boost in the consumption of the content during the pandemic. (Shakir, 16 April 2020)

With a hitherto unprecedented pandemic forcing the public to remain indoors and offices, schools, and businesses being shut, a discernible rise in the demand for OTT content has been noticed. Covid-19, a deadly strain of coronavirus, with an abnormally high rate of infection and the absence of a concrete cure for this outbreak have led countries across the world to go into complete lockdown to tackle the spread of the virus. Crores of people suddenly have more time on their hands than they can spend. In this situation, films and entertainment content have emerged as savior, especially on-demand video content. (Ghode, 2020)

The researcher has conducted a study of 200 respondents regarding the usage of OTT platforms, their content, and the consumption pattern. The study also includes the change in subscription pattern pre and post corona period.

### **Objectives of the study**

- To analyze the seven C's (Content, characters, creativity, choices, consumption, connectivity & competition) under the umbrella of COVID 19 lockdown period
- To study the impact of COVID 19 on the boost of OTT platforms in India

### **Conceptual Framework**

**Over the Top (OTT)** means availability of audio-visual content on the web streaming services to its viewers. It follows the principle of narrowcasting and on-

demand content. These applications are available to be downloaded on devices like computers/laptops/tablets and smartphones. The viewers take subscription monthly/quarterly/annually and access to its content as per the desire. Most web streaming services take a nominal subscription fee and few relatively new ones are still free of cost to the viewers. Once the subscription is taken the viewers can access the films, tv-series, and other content available on the streaming services. The nature of OTT services focuses on the concept of delivery of content directly to its viewers. There are several OTT services available in the country, some national and some international providing a plethora of options and a variety of visual content to its users. There are separate areas of specialization for each web streaming service. Some focus on showcasing the newly released films, some on popular tv shows while others stream original web series. (Aryan, 2020)

2020 has changed the way viewers consume entertainment. With theatres being closed due to the nationwide lockdown, people switched to their screens for accessing the content available on OTT platforms

Many Indian films were released online directly on the OTT platforms like Gulabo Sitabo, Shakuntala Devi, Gunjana Saxena, Dil Bechara Lootcase, Khudahafiz, Durgamati, Laxmii, Raat Akeli hai, Bulbull, Chhalaang, Ludo, Coolie No.1, and others brought cinema watching experience directly to the living room of common audience. Amazon Prime Video Hotstar and Netflix are the top destinations to release Hindi & regional language movies (Kashyap, 2020).

## **Emergence and boom of OTT**

OTT has been enabled by technology advances such as smartphones, super-fast IP networks, open-source platforms, innovative services, cutting edge functionalities, and shift in consumer preferences towards their “freemium” based business models are seeing an ever-increasing adoption rate.

**Development of Jio** – The network connectivity and easy access to high-speed internet has supported the culture of browsing videos. Net neutrality and good connectivity have eased in the smooth viewing experience to the viewers today inching towards the growth of OTT platforms in India. Pandemic and lockdown provided the time to access content while living indoors.

**Cost efficiency** – OTT platforms are hassle-free and these applications can easily be downloaded and used instantly from anywhere. The plans are cost-effective and provide access to a whole bunch of content national and international.

**Data tariff plans** – The tariff plans available are economical and also offers multiple screen sharing options that can be used by friends and family. This is an exclusive feature that television doesn't provide.

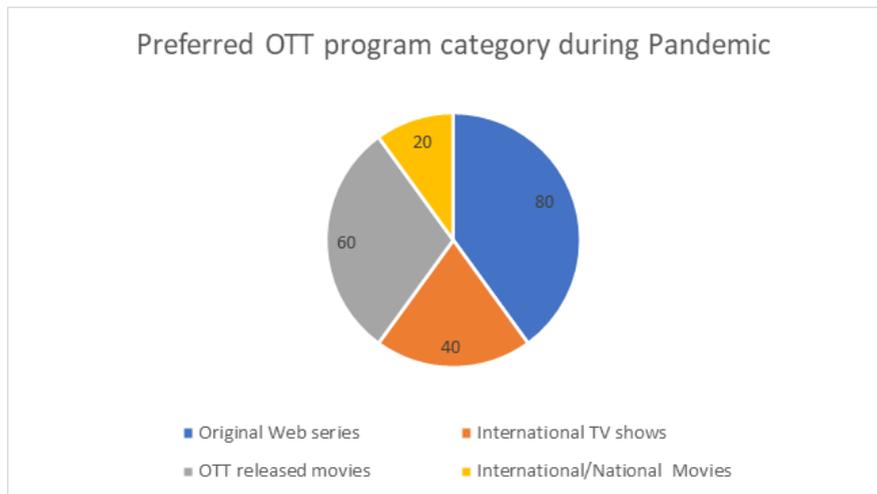
**Convenience** – The easy access to the content at any time to the viewer’s smartphone, the on demand content as per the choice and preference, the concept of going solo and watching content in isolation is a beneficial feature of the OTT platforms for viewers. (PARIKH, 2020)

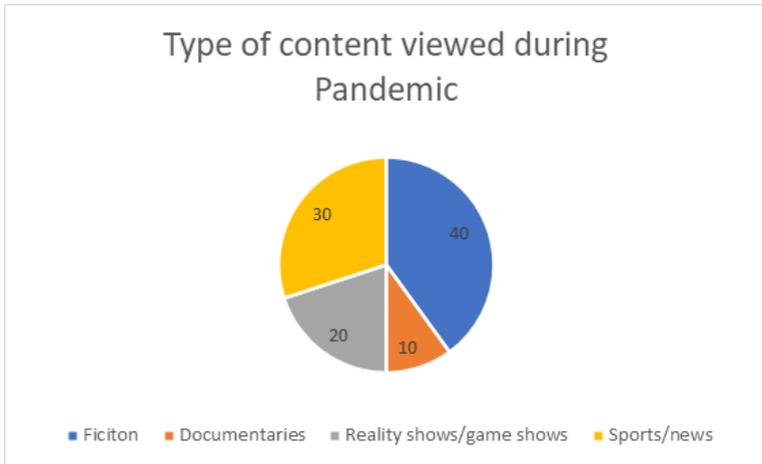
## Analyzing Seven C’s of OTT Platforms under the Umbrella of Covid-19 lockdown

### 1. Content

The on-demand content provides ongoing access to its viewers. The various web streaming service providers offer a plethora of options to their users. Netflix offers access to classics international, national, and regional TV shows, films from around the globe, and the most popular original web shows and films. Amazon Prime video is famous for the original web series and access to Bollywood movies, Disney Hotstar has pioneered in giving its viewers the latest Hindi movies, web shows, and sports. As the country went in nationwide lockdown due to deadly coronavirus, the OTT platforms have very carefully planned and released the second season of shows like Mirzapur (Amazon Prime video) Ashram (Mx Player). Amazon Prime video even launched certain shows like Paatal Lok and Panchayat amidst the lockdown.

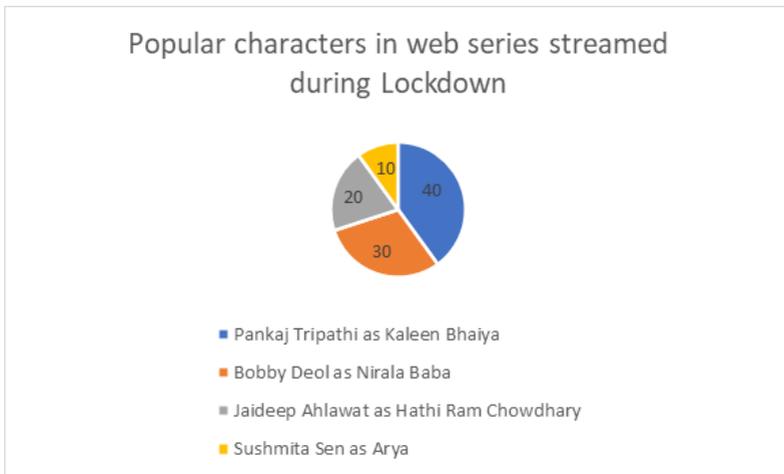
For the first time, big-budget Bollywood films had to be released directly on the OTT platforms. The producers decided to stream the films on the streaming apps instead of waiting for the reopening of theatres.





## 2. Characters

The pandemic situation had put the entire world at a standstill mode and the work from the home situation and online education paved the way for free time with people to access the streaming applications to watch content. Some of the characters from the Original web series became extremely relatable, likable, and popular among youth. Characters like Kaleen Bhaiya, Guddu Bhaiya, and Munna Bhaiya all from Mirzapur, Nirala Baba, Bhopa from Ashram, Hathi Ram Chowdhary from Paatal Lok, Arya from Arya received unappalled love from the viewers.



### 3. Creativity

The lockdown period became a boon for online streaming applications. OTT platforms marketed the concept of binge-watching among their viewers. Many critically acclaimed shows of HBO and Star world were watched and re-watched by viewers. Shows like FRIENDS, Big Bang Theory, Money Heist were in the top 10 list of NETFLIX for a very long time during the pandemic. The creative concept sold by OTT services were subscriptions with the mobile service providers and increasing the market share of its viewers. It focused on the fact that many people were stuck in lockdown and isolated at places. People made most use of their time by accessing online content on the streaming services to keep them distracted with all the negativities of the pandemic and entertained at such a crucial time.



### 4. Choices

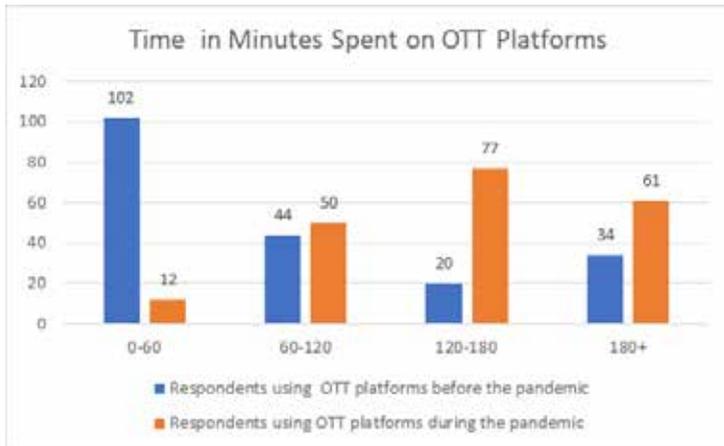
The careful choice of releasing many web shows at the time of the pandemic proved to be a smart marketing decision. The OTT platforms marketed the second season of popular web series in sync with the lockdown periods. Many Hindi and regional language films were released on OTT platforms directly for the first time to utilize the period of uncertainty with the theatrical release. People were stuck at home, internet services being available at 4G/5G speed and the transition to work from home and online education setup gave time to keep viewers engaged with the audiovisual content available on OTT platforms.

Most popular OTT Web Series during pandemic



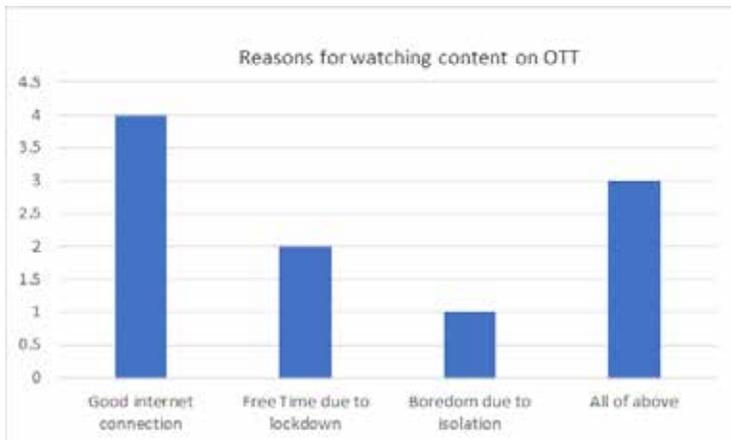
### 5. Consumption

The consumption of OTT services increased two folds in the lockdown period. Viewers started to spend two to three hours a day on one or the other applications.



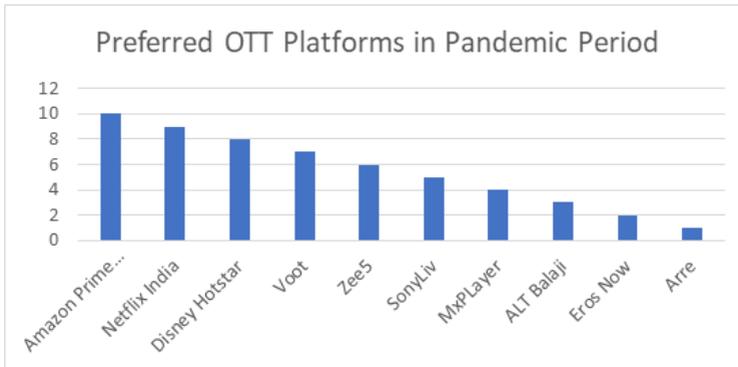
### 6. Connectivity

The digitization process and the concept of net neutrality have boosted internet connectivity in India. Thanks to Reliance JIO and the introduction of 4G/5G network connectivity, the consumption of OTT content has increased tremendously.



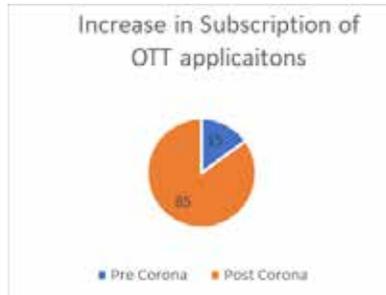
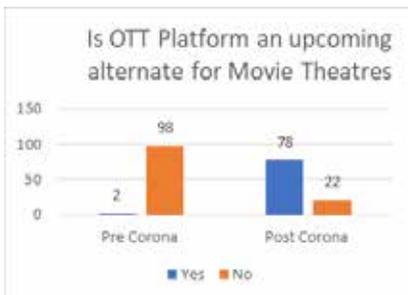
### 7. Competition

The OTT platforms have directly or indirectly marked territories and specialize in their areas. Netflix gives access to more global and international content alongside the original shows including fictional and nonfictional shows. Amazon Prime video is primarily famous for its original web shows. Disney Hotstar specializes in providing access to the latest Hindi films. These three are major players followed by Mxplayer, Voot, Zee5, SonyLiv, and others. The top 3 streaming applications in the lockdown period were Amazon Prime Video Netflix and Hotstar respectively



### Boost of OTT platforms amidst pandemic

The lockdown period has increased the consumption of OTT content. Viewers are now accessing the content of their choice on the smartphone and opting for on-demand content. The OTT subscription has increased post-pandemic and viewers are developing a taste of global content preferring OTT over movie theatres amidst the ongoing pandemic to maintain social distancing normal and keep safe from the deadly coronavirus.



## Conclusion

The study highlighted a spectacular rise in the consumption pattern of OTT applications. The subscription to online streaming services increased during the pandemic period. People preferred watching content on these applications during the lockdown. The research study established the following aspects of the boost of OTT platforms during a pandemic:

- Amazon Prime video was the most viewed OTT service followed by Netflix and Disney+Hotstar in India during the pandemic
- Fiction is the most preferred category on OTT platforms followed by news & sports.
- The comedy followed by Drama is the most favorite genre watched on OTT platforms.
- Web series is the most-watched content on OTT platforms.
- Mirzapur 2 followed by Ashram 1&2 and Scam 1992 were the most preferred web series during the lockdown.
- Pankaj Tripathi as Kaaleen Bhaiya (From Mirzapur, Amazon Prime Video) is the most favorite character of the OTT platform.
- The majority of people give credit to a good internet connection for the boost of OTT platforms during the lockdown period.
- A drastic increase in the number of hours spent by a viewer on OTT platforms ranging from 2 -3 hours or more during the lockdown
- A two-fold increase in subscription of OTT platforms post-Covid 19
- 78% of people preferred OTT platforms over cinema-going amidst the pandemic
- The subscription base of OTT platforms increased by 52% post-pandemic

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## CHAPTER 11 .

# PROPAGATION OF CINEMA VIA OTT: A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE GROWTH AND VIEWERSHIP OF FILMS AND WEB SERIES DURING COVID-19

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AMIT MASSEY

### Introduction

What could have caught the minds and fantasies of the millions of people in a nation like India –Indian cinema. It would not be hyper rated to say that it's more than an industry, it's a religion. It is a world that has been pulled over the eyes in order to experience a unique phenomenon. The Indian cinema is undoubtedly one of the largest film making industries in the world with a whopping no. of 1300+ films approximately being made in a year.

An industry which attracts the majority of youth, who are in search of a glittering career, enters this dream world to make a mark of their own. However, widely known as 'Bollywood' which refers to Hindi language films, the industry is not only restricted to this and has witnessed some extraordinary cinema makers from other parts of the country like Satyajit Ray (Bengali), Mani Ratnam (Tamil) to name a few.

However, over the past few years Indian cinema has witnessed a paradigm shift with the arrival of films on OTT platforms and web series, which have successfully portrayed the raw facts that the cinema makers wanted to showcase. This new medium of showcasing the exact direct thought in a fast-paced medium has limited the filmmakers to get rid of all the extra material that are being used to catch the attention of the audience in recent commercial cinema.

### Understanding OTT platforms

OTT stands for over-the-top, initially named in reference to devices that go "over" a cable box to give the user access to TV content. In OTT channels, content is delivered via an internet connection rather than through a traditional cable/

broadcast provider. OTT and video are intertwined, but they are not the same thing. OTT is just a different channel through which video content (and related display or video advertisements) is delivered to end users. Content that comes from an OTT content provider (like Sling TV). OTT content can be viewed on multiple devices, including computers, mobile devices, OTT devices, and more.

The emergence of OTT has disrupted the entertainment sector. It has made movie-watching convenient, accessible and affordable across a wider segment of the users. Anybody with a mobile phone and internet connection can catch-up with a movie sitting anywhere in the world. The average time spent by each Indian subscriber has gone up from around 20 to 50 minutes to at least one hour during the pandemic. With over 40 OTT platforms to choose from, the Indian consumers can watch their favourite TV show or catch the latest movie on their mobile phones as long as they have an internet connection.

### **OTT: The need of the hour and a silver lining**

With the extended lockdowns and the current state of the economy, OTT seems to be the next normal for the world of entertainment. For months now, films have been bearing the brunt of cinema complex/hall closures. Coupled with the numerous ongoing and new projects on hold, the film industry might be looking at losses. As the lights are going out on live events, shoots and movie premiers, the only silver lining amidst all this is the rise of the popularity of OTT. The halting of productions may have dried up the content line, but streaming hasn't stopped via the OTT platforms across the country. At the same time, ad-spends have gone down significantly due to a knock-on effect of the recessionary impact on financial services, e-commerce and automotive industries.

### **Merger of Film Industry and OTT**

Initially, there might be discomfort among the big players of the film industry regarding the new normalcy, but even in a post-COVID19 world, OTT services will continue to dominate. Therefore, the need of the hour is for key investors to think about integration of technologies.

OTT can help content reach millions of potential consumers at the fraction of the cost of a formal release and traditional ad promotions. The launch of a new movie and web series on OTT simultaneously can garner over billions of viewers across the globe. The production house could potentially make millions within the first weekend of release by monetizing their online ads. While cinemas can still see multi-million-dollar releases, they can minimize the monetary risk by taking out a minimum guarantee deal for covering their production cost. Release via OTT

channels can eliminate the threat of piracy production houses currently face in India. In fact, the mass availability of content can eliminate the necessity of piracy altogether.

## Objective

- To find out the growth and popularity of content on OTT platforms during Covid-19.
- To find out the factors behind the popularity of content on OTT platforms.
- To find out the future prospects of OTT platforms.

## Research Methodology

The study has followed quantitative method for collecting data by using an Online Survey platform "Google Forms". The sample size was 250 plus respondent. After the online survey was conducted it was numbered 285. Researchers did an analysis of 285 responses. Out of 285 respondents, 12 respondents do not watch content on OTT hence they were excluded from giving responses for rest of questions. They skipped the questionnaire after first question.

The target audience was from the age group 15 to 45 years and above. They were divided into four categories- 15 to 25 years; 26 to 35 years; 36 to 45 years and above 45 years. Researcher targeted both male and female respondents for the online survey. It was also a conscious effort to include respondents from all the forms of occupation. Respondents were classified into three major occupations- Students, Private or Public sector employees and Entrepreneurs.

Simple percentile analysis was used for statistical analysis, as it was adequate to simply quantify the measures for the questions asked from respondents. 3D Pie Chart and Cluster Bar is used for representation of data.

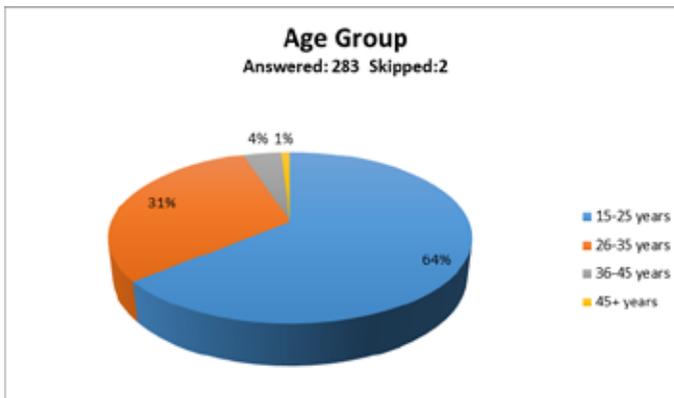
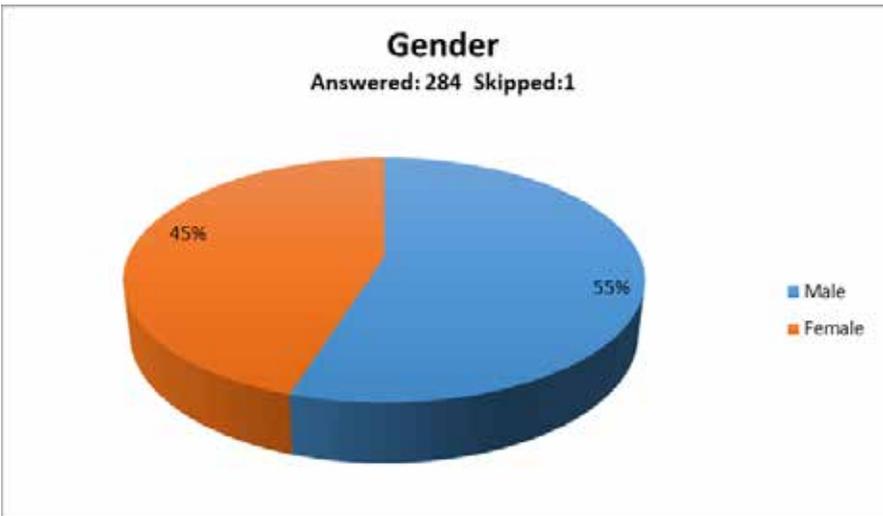
This study was conducted through primary data collected from people. Survey technique was used for data collection through online platform - Google Forms. The survey consisted of 10 questions, which covered all research objectives of the study. The survey was divided into five sections on the basis of research objective.

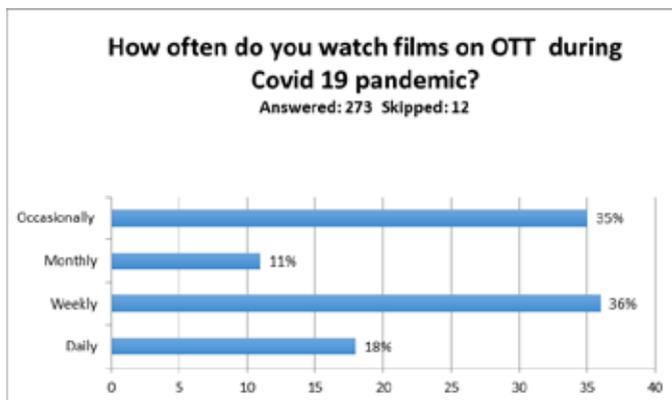
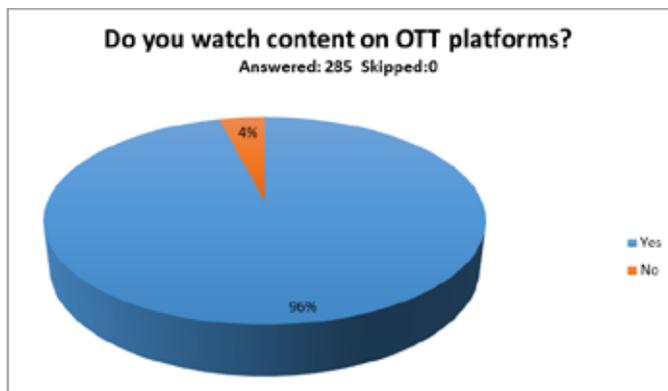
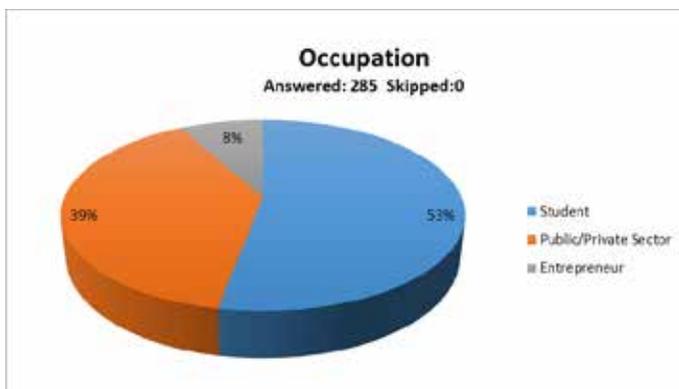
- **The first section** consists of three questions with the purpose to understand the respondents' demographic segmentation – gender, age and occupation.
- **The second part** sought to explore primarily whether respondents have a subscription of any OTT platform or not and on which frequency they watch content on OTT platform. It contains two questions.
- **The third section** focused on assessing the growing popularity of content on OTT platform and factors behind it.

- **Fourth part** contains two questions related to limitations and challenges of OTT platform.
- **The final section** of survey intended to find out the future prospects of OTT platform. It consists of two questions.

### Data Interpretation and Analysis

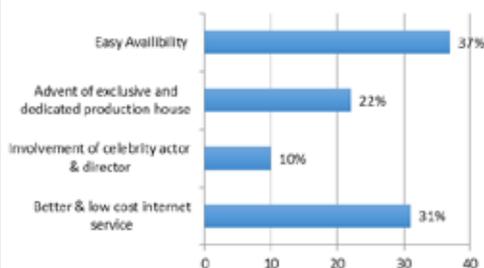
Findings are based on the survey done with 285 male and female respondents including students, working professionals, businessmen from the age group of 15 to 45 years and above.





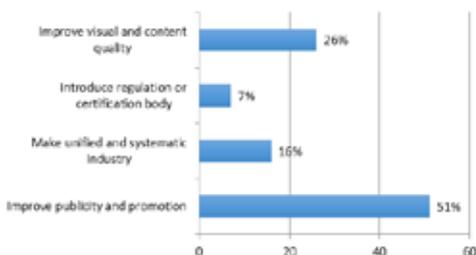
**What according to you is the main cause behind the growing popularity of content on OTT post Covid 19 pandemic ?**

Answered: 273 Skipped: 12



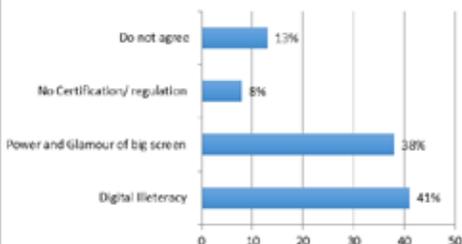
**As a viewer what improvements do you want to suggest to the creators of content on OTT?**

Answered: 273 Skipped: 12



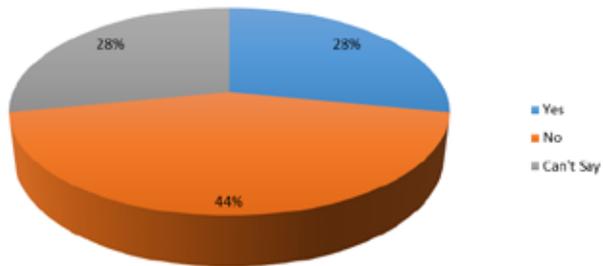
**Why films on OTT still lacks mass acceptability?**

Answered: 273 Skipped: 12



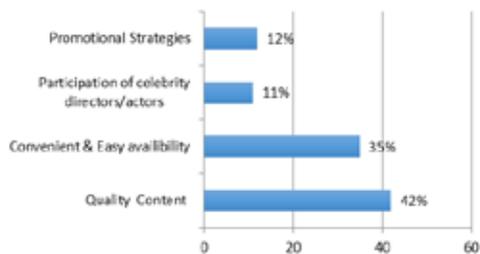
**Do you think films on OTT can be an alternative to big screen cinema in the future?**

Answered: 273 Skipped: 12



**What is the main factor which can make films on OTT an alternative to big screen cinema?**

Answered: 273 Skipped: 12



### **Research Findings & Analysis**

- 1) The survey showed that out of 285 respondents, 156 of them were male and 128 were female. Thus, there is a proper representation of gender across the sample. With 55% male and 45% female respondents, gender bias or prejudice was negligible in the study. Most of the times gender has an influence over views and opinions. Various study on behavioral science states that both male and female carries different traits and behavior pattern. Hence, there is a possibility of having different views on certain questions. As a result, the study has diverse views and opinions coming from both the sections of society. Study includes views and opinion of both the male and female on popularity, limitation and prospects of content on OTT platforms.
- 2) The survey stated that out of 285 respondents, 180 respondents were from the age group of 15 to 25 years old. Therefore, most of them i.e., 64% fall under 'the young adults' category.
- 3) As per survey 152 respondents were students. Therefore, approximately half of them i.e., 53% belong to student strata of the society. This stratum is mostly exposed to digital arena. Findings also states that students watch more films on OTT as compare to other stratum. Students have more time and access to Internet, which makes them a suitable candidate for this study.
- 4) Trying to find out how many respondents watch films on OTT, a surprising 273 respondents, i.e., 96% said 'Yes', they watch films on OTT. For subsequent questions the sample size of the study was reduced to 273 from 285.
- 5) a. As far as frequency of watching films on OTT out of 273 respondents, 98 respondents watch weekly and 96 respondents watch occasionally. Thus, survey includes both the frequent audience and occasional audience, which make the findings of the study balance. 36% respondents watch on a weekly basis. They religiously follow OTT platforms and simultaneously possess in-depth information about the films such as name of the director, actors, dialogue writers and producers. This audience group is called as "Avid Viewer". Not much less there are 35% respondents who watch occasionally. They do not purposely search or look for films on digital platform instead they get the link or display on digital platforms and start watching it while they are surfing for something else. This audience group is called as "Casual Viewer". We have a proper representation of both the

- audience group.
- b. Survey also brought forward one revelation that 18% of the sample watch films on OTT daily. This becomes very crucial to mention this particular finding that number was on a higher side as expected by researcher. In other words, out of 273 respondents 49 watch on daily basis. This audience group number is rising on regular basis, which also states the growing popularity of OTT platforms. This also brings up the certain trend in OTT viewership. Slowly and steadily people who watch on weekly basis are converting into daily viewers. If this trend continues, we can expect a higher percentage of daily viewership of OTT. Future studies on the same subject will reflect the fact. There was a time when we were daily readers of newspapers, then with the advent of satellite TV we became daily viewers of television programs. On the same pattern Internet is also attracting daily viewers towards itself. This proves the fact that OTT content are getting popular day by day.
  - 6) Survey clearly states that films on OTT are getting popular among masses. When trying to figure out the reasons behind it. The following responses were received from the respondents.
    - a. Out of 273 respondents 101 respondents feels Convenient & Easy Availability is the main reason behind growing popularity of films on OTT. 37% of respondents says it requires less time and can be watched at anytime and anywhere through mobile, tablets, laptops or PC.
    - b. 85 respondents said Better & Low cost of Internet Services is the crucial reason behind the popularity of OTT. 31% respondents feel that some content is easily and freely available on different OTT platforms. OTT platforms like MX Player, Hotstar, Sony LIV, ALT Balaji and Prime also offers free content to watch. Yes, Internet data is exhausted for watching but that is a very minimal cost as compare to other cost incurred for other sources of entertainment. With the recent revolution in Internet sector and advent of Jio as a service provider in India brought affordable and cost-effective Internet services. Now, Internet is available to everyone right from the lower income group to elite class. This fact establishes that availability of better and low-cost Internet services is enhancing the growth of OTT platforms in India
    - c. 22% respondents said advent of dedicated and exclusive production house for OTT platforms owes a credit to push the popularity in India. Big production houses and few directors like Zoya Akhtar, Ali Abbas Zafar, Anurag Kashyap, Imtiyaz Ali etc. are producing content for OTT on regular

- basis. Out of 273 respondents 60 respondents advocates that entry of production house which are solely and entirely into the production of films not only increased the number of films released on OTT but also improving the content and visual quality of content.
- d. In recent times we have seen a lot of renowned celebrity actors and directors who got famous through big screen cinema like Bollywood coming towards OTT industry. Akshay Kumar's Laxmii, Anurag Basu's Ludo, Amitabh Bacchan and Ayushman Khuaranna starrer Gulabo Sitabo, Alia Bhatt's Sadak 2, David Dhawan directorial Coolie No.1, Zoya Akhtar's Made in Heaven, Prakash Jha's Aashram are the few examples to quote to establish the argument. Out of 273 respondents 27 respondents believes that involvement of popular actors and directors has contributed significantly towards the popularity of OTT content. 10% of respondents feel bringing the fame and popularity of actors and directors from Bollywood boosts its popularity Presence of star actors and directors can bring those people who do not have or less interest in OTT content.
- 7) When asked about the improvements you want to suggest boosting the reach and growth films on OTT, the responses were crucial for growing short film industry.
- a. Out of 273 respondents, more than half i.e., 139 respondents said there is scope of improvement in publicity and promotional strategy of films on OTT. In other words, 51% of sample feel it needs innovative publicity and promotion. Films on OTT are still not able to reach to every stratum of masses. Though shared links of on other social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram etc. are few steps taken to promote and publicize. In spite of this respondents feel more effort is required to enhance the reach and exposure.
- b. 26% of respondents are in view that improvement in content and visual quality is required to boost the popularity of films on OTT. Out of 273, 71 respondents said creators could improve the quality of storyline, dialogues, screenplay, cinematography, acting etc.
- 8) Findings of the survey states that though popularity of content on OTT is growing day by day but on the same hand it is still unsuccessful to reach to the masses. In other words, it is still lacking mass acceptability. The researcher's next objective to find out the limitation of content on OTT. Talking about why content on OTT still lacks mass acceptability? Researcher got revealing responses from the respondents. Out of 273, 112 respondents said Digital Illiteracy is a key factor behind low reach of OTT content to

the masses. As far as India is concerned major chunk of people who still struggles with digital knowledge and application. 41% of sample feels lack digital literacy is major limitation. Not too behind 104 respondents said power and glamour of big screen cinema is an important factor. Especially in India, big screen cinema has a long and golden history, which serves as big challenge to OTT platforms. Power of big screen cinema can be assessed with the fact that India has been the largest movie producer worldwide for the last few years, releasing more than a thousand films each year. Big screen cinema has a place among individuals and households. People idealize actors as a hero from these films. It has major influence on the thinking capabilities of people. To support the fact 38% of the sample feels it is a big challenge for content on OTT to stand in front of big screen cinema, which is already so popular among mass. Power and glamour of big screen cinema is one of the limitations to OTT platforms.

- 9) Talking about the prospects of content on OTT, the researcher asked whether OTT can be an alternative to big screen and surprisingly 44% respondent said 'NO' to the question. In other words, out of 273, 120 respondents who watch content on OTT still feels it can never surpass the power and glamour of big screen cinema. It is a major finding that rising trend of OTT cannot pose any challenge to cinema hall experience. Both content on OTT and feature films on big screen will exist simultaneously but cannot be an alternative. Apart from these 76 respondents (28%) have a very optimistic perspective on this question. They are in a view that in future OTT can become an alternative to big screen cinema. They feel feature films will lose their charm and fall short.
- 10) It is a debatable question whether OTT can be an alternative to big screen cinema? So researcher tried to find out what are those factors, which can make OTT platforms an alternative to big screen cinema? It was a finding to ponder that out of 273, 114 respondents (42%) said quality content is one factor which gives OTT content an edge over big screen cinema. 96 respondents (35%) feel time is one factor which Big Screen lacks over OTT platforms. In total 77% respondents said quality content, convenient & easy availability are those factors which can make OTT platforms as an alternative to big screen cinema.

## **Conclusion**

The unexpected rise of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the harbinger of unprecedented growth in the global OTT market. Even before the lockdown started, the OTT market had grown by 15% in 2019. With the pandemic on the rise and

lockdowns being extended, people are afraid to venture out. Most of the cinema halls, malls, adventure parks have been shuttered for a good part of this year, and consumers are left with very few entertainment options. They invariably seek to find means to entertain themselves in the safe confines of their homes. And this is where OTT platforms have come to the rescue.

### **The rise and rise of OTT platforms in the post-Covid Era**

Industry pundits and analysts may have been declaring the age of on-demand video streaming for a while now. But it took a pandemic for the age to truly arrive. The internet revolution drove the popularity of over-the-top (OTT) services in recent years, and the greater convenience offered by these platforms is worthy of recognition. Streaming services made it easier for consumers to access videos from any device – from mobile phones and tablets to computers and smart TVs. And another important consideration has been low priced plans offered by OTT platforms. But in 2020, we've seen adoption like never before.

### **The road ahead**

While recent months have seen some OTT movie releases, such as Enola Holmes on Netflix and Dil Bechara on Disney+ Hotstar, it appears far from becoming the norm. As cinema halls gear up to reopen, theatrical releases may be on the cards in the coming months. However, since at least some of the lifestyle shifts are here to stay, we can expect some of these effects to be residual.

Tech advances such as the shift to 5G and immersive technology would further reinforce public interest in online streaming. Other avenues, such as e-gaming and online education, can also provide opportunities for OTT services to expand their base.

OTT services have exhibited one of the most impressive growth curves in recent times and the pandemic has only accelerated this growth. All trends point towards a brighter future for the on-demand video streaming industry.

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## CHAPTER 12

# REBOOTING TOURISM: TOURISM MARKETING & COVID-19

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UPASANA SAXENA

### **Introduction:**

The Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) popularly called Covid-19 has played a major role in disrupting the world economy as never before. All the major sectors contributing to the world economy has suffered. Tourism sector, which is one of the major sectors contributing to the global economic growth was badly affected. Due to lockdowns travelling came to a halt as many countries sealed their borders thus bringing travel and tourism industry to an impasse.

As per a report by United Nation World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the covid-19 pandemic has resulted in International Tourist Arrivals (ITA's) decline by 22 percent in the initial stage of pandemic in 2020. In the latest report by UNWTO the ITA's has diminished to 70-75 percent in the whole 2020. The signal towards the recovery of this sector is likely in 2021.

With the gradual opening of the tourist and leisure destinations, it can be seen as a development towards the tourism and tour related activities among people. This has also led to the travel and tourism related companies interact with potential travellers on social media or digital platforms. In this regard they are coming up with new marketing strategies.

After the outbreak of Coronavirus, consumer behaviour also changed drastically. This was revealed by a company Skift, which is known to provide indepth marketing, research and related news for the tourism industry, which found that users are still positive towards the recovery from the outbreak and they will move to their desired destinations. It also revealed that they want to cancel their tours and reservations and the data gathered through BCV shows that almost 80% increment of the tourist in social media who are interested in travelling.

Penland analytics (a marketing research firm) says that organisations that opened well after a crisis and continue communications with its audiences see a

20 per cent increase in its brand value compared to those who re-opened poorly. Building trust with the customers in the new normal is the first and foremost priority of travel and tourism personnel. Marketing personnel have changed their social media marketing strategies from building brand awareness to communicate about safety, from showcasing their product towards the society and community.

While suffering from the Covid-19 pandemic, organizations are trying hard to make palpable efforts towards customer satisfaction and generating their trust. In accordance with the data gathered from IPA, the brands who are trying to sustain themselves through the crisis and have given appropriate exposure to the customer regarding their genuine effort towards bringing trust towards them will have around thrice the market share and would recover and revive faster from this pandemic.

In the post-corona phase one thing that is found to be changed for the tourist and tourism industry is 'Traveller' themselves. As, after the opening of the hotels, tourist places and different destinations, 'Travellers' would be investigating the hotels and travel arrangements and will be wary during their stay and destination visits. This makes the Destination Marketing Organisations (DMO) make efforts towards more social media engagement for gaining the trust of wary travellers.

This chapter will focus on how tourism and travel companies will devise new strategies to lure travellers back to the destinations. It will also look within the mushrooming discussions and research conducted for tourism and Covid-19 impact, the unified way to transform the crisis into an opportunity (Mair, 2020). According to McKenzie, 2020, the industry will recover and recreate themselves for the new normal. In the words of Gossling. et.al, 2020; Hall et.al., 2020, researchers should not be completely making themselves dependent on the Corona pandemic for the measurement and prediction of impact on tourism industry.

Crisis can bring about changes in different dimensions, but none of the crisis has such an impact that can bring about upheaval in tourism sector (Hall et al., 2020). As it is said change is inevitable, but it can be discretionary or eclectic for the stakeholder in tourism sector, such as tourist, DMO (Destination Marketing organizations), tour operators, strategy formulators and employees. The change in the sector because of the crisis can lead to the transformation of the mind set of these stakeholders as how they react, retain and adapt to the corona pandemic. Therefore, for better consideration and to forecast, educate and to familiarize with the changes of COVID- 19 on tourism research should be administering with profound assessment and understanding of the stakeholders related to tourism sector, whether their behavioural, cognitive, emotional and psychological mindset of the stakeholders and also to understand and assess their actions and reactions towards the pandemic and its impact on them which will directly and indirectly

clout their attitude, behaviour and changes towards the tourism and destination planning.

The researcher will examine the impact on the tourism behaviour and their involvement from the three different stakeholders, that are tourism demand, DMO's (Destination Management Organizations) and marketing strategist and also analyse their impact during pre and post Covid-19. This research is meant to encourage, motivate and apprise all stakeholders in tourism and travel industry of adapting to the new normal. For example:

***Yatra.com has come up with the campaign named 'Reason to Travel' which is a social media campaign, as the new normal is more about communicating through digital platforms and to promote and to reach more and more target audiences, Yatra.com has also featured a free gift vouchers to the winning/participating contestants in the campaign. According to Shweta Singhal, marketing head, Yatra.com, says that, people take short vacation to take break from their monotonous daily lives. However, because of covid-19 crisis, it has put the halt in their travel. With the campaign #ReasonToTravel spread the message to the travellers that it the time again to travel and to rekindle their desire on the move.***

### **1.1 Technological innovation and Tourism during Covid-19:**

In the internet era, technology has become the mainstay for information on the pandemic, re-opening of tourism destinations among others. With the advent of technologies, innovation and disruption in e-tourism can be seen and to formulate tourism pliancy during the crisis (Hall et al., 2017). The technological advancement has also brought new way to imagine and to revolutionized the tourism in its electronic form with the use of virtual tourism and adoption of smart destination tourism services with the use of VR (Virtual Reality) and AI (Artificial Intelligence) to combat Covid-19 crisis.

Before the covid-19 crisis, tourism was viewed as a way to 'escape', 'recline', 'fraternize', construct memories and to give oneself precious time from the daily routine. Tourism was taken as a mean for leisure and moving away from the daily routine. Other than leisure holidays, tourism was also done for business or work purposes and other kinds of recreational tourism—all of which came to a halt after Covid outbreak.

Before the crisis, the companies were commercializing and commodifying the tourist with their tangible and intangible needs with their tourist attraction to please the tourist. But after the Covid-19 phase, the companies need to communicate the tourist not in a way of commercializing tourist rather for bringing their happiness, self-expressiveness with their digital platform, as in this scenario digital platform and

social media are playing an important role for gathering the people at one place and not only providing the message but also understanding their needs and wants.

Tourism marketing in the Covid-19 phase should be done to provide an inspiration to reset the tourist frame of mind towards the destinations and to re-imagine tourism with the new normal and sustainable and transformational setup. The marketers and strategist need to devise a policy not as one of the marketing tools to rebuild their brand after the opening of tourist destinations but for changing the lifestyle of their customers in the new normal and bringing the responsible and sustainable future goals.

Covid-19 has generated many anomalies, which can be determined at different levels of tourism management, such as: macro level, meso level and micro level. This can be easily explained through the table below.

Anomalies	Examples related to anomalies in tourism
Privacy and vagueness	Use of technology by the tourist in form of GPS and other tracking applications.
Innovation and Uniqueness	The use VR (Virtual Technology) and AR (Augmented Technology) adoption and different AI (Artificial Intelligence) used by the companies in the form of virtual tours and testimonials of customers in the Covid-19 times to secure their customers.
Collaborations and Competition	A collaboration between the government and DMO's for reopening of the destinations and competition among the companies to attract more tourist through digital marketing campaign run by them.
Transpiration	Providing the safe, secured travel to the tourist to their desired destination by using different travel mobilities such as airlines, buses, trains and cabs.
Decision- Making	Evaluation of the quality and satisfaction from the stakeholders regarding destination, whether tourist, DMO and marketing strategist by the tourism companies under the guidelines for covid-19.
Stakeholders Motivations	Tourist motivating factors or behaviour towards the destination, local communities' motivation towards organization and employee's motivation towards the organization towards services and experiences catering with covid-19
Personalized services	Tourist organization to provide personalised and restructured tourism experience to memorise travellers' journey.

### COVID-19: Dis-assembling and assembling tourism into four phases:

With the occurrence of every crisis, there is always a need of crisis management that need to implementation in pre, during and post crisis phases. Table 2 illustrates the impacts and ramification of Covid-19 on the three main tourism stakeholders: Tourist, DMOs, Marketing strategist in the three different stages representing impact assessment, restoration and revamping stage for the better assimilation of transformational stage after the covid-19 era.

**Table 2: Illustration of the impacts and ramification of covid-19 on three main stakeholders.**

	Impact Assessment		Restoration		Revamping and Resetting	
	Impacts	Research fields	Impacts	Research fields	Impacts	Research fields
Tourist Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact that the covid-19 has given to the tourist and their dear one's is not less than a traumatic experience for them.</li> <li>Cancellation of vacation plans, which led to the losses incurred due to reservations made by the people</li> <li>Trip severance</li> <li>Some loyal traveler also loses their travel loyalty points</li> <li>Quantities and social distancing and lockdowns</li> <li>Travellers assessing traumatic COVID-19 tourism experiences lived by Social media (media communication and user-generated content)</li> <li>Travel restrictions and travel bans</li> <li>Use of technology for crisis alerts and communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of tourists on tourists' travel behavior.</li> <li>Impact of decision-making and experience related to the travel behavior of tourist</li> <li>Impact of communication done by the tourism company on tourists' perceived risks, decision-making, future travel and service quality assessment</li> <li>Impact of fake news and misinformation on tourists' anticipated risks and destination image</li> <li>Impact of booking restrictions and firms' cancellation policies related to tourists' attitudes and behavior towards booking restrictions and booking patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social distancing</li> <li>Lockdowns and stay at home</li> <li>Choosing self-isolation by using social media application</li> <li>Experiencing a global travel slow down resulting in reduced environmental pollution and hyper tourism phenomena</li> <li>virtual social behaviors:</li> <li>Social media Virtual tours entertainment</li> <li>Virtual events/festivals</li> <li>Virtual destinations and attractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact of safety and health concerns on tourists' attitudes, decision-making, and behaviors</li> <li>Impact of reflecting on personal values, lifestyles and priorities on tourists' behavior (tourism segmentation strategies for tourism marketing)</li> <li>Issues of social isolation and excess use of social media/technology, on mental and psychological health on tourist well-being</li> <li>tourists' attitudes, tourist behavior travel intentions and travel behavior</li> <li>Tourists' understanding of tourism's impact on climate change and problems faced by the travelers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapting new tourism service and apprehension:</li> <li>Digital identity apps</li> <li>Travelers' mobility tracing apps</li> <li>Crowd safety and social distancing technological solutions and travel restrictions</li> <li>Contact free travelers' journey management solutions</li> <li>New hygiene standards</li> <li>Social distancing which will bring about new service etiquettes</li> <li>Setting up new priorities for determining tourists' selection, evaluation of services and consumption behavior, e.g. Self-care, safety and hygiene</li> <li>Tourists redressing the priorities and changing lifestyles in the new normal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the new normal tourists' motivation, their profile and decision-making, behavioral aspects</li> <li>Travel in a good condition not in a bad condition</li> <li>Travel for a meaningful reason</li> <li>Experience the other side of destinations</li> <li>Redefinition of luxury tourism which include hygiene first in the destination and the place for the stay</li> <li>Impact of covid-19 on tourism demand</li> <li>Investigating the impact of the new psychology of the tourist while making travel decisions and behavior of tourists on:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pricing strategies</li> <li>Booking patterns</li> <li>Segmentation and promotional strategies of different tour related companies</li> </ul> </li> <li>Tourists' attitudes towards the adoption of and satisfaction from virtual tourism experiences</li> <li>Tourists' acceptance and use of technologies (VR, AR, AI)</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Illustration of the impacts and ramification of covid-19 on three main stakeholders.**

<p>Ensuing proper health and safety of tourists and the employees</p> <p>Handle customer queries and requests for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• changing travel itineraries and bookings</li> <li>• Refunds and compensations to the tourists</li> </ul> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Destination Marketing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assurance for tourists in ensuring individual safety, security and stability (e.g. affliction, emotional support, promoting building emotional bonds, trust and brand values through the digital media platforms</li> <li>• Communicating and caring for employees and ensuring health, emotional stability and engagement</li> </ul>	<p>safeguarding business continuity and building flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase use of digital Media adoption by the tourism firms and organizations</li> <li>• Customer engagement</li> <li>• Employee engagement</li> <li>• Brand communication for building brand values, e.g. messages like "Timeto travel safely and securely."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital involvement and communication</li> <li>• Re-skilling and up-skilling of employees</li> <li>• Loyalty programs: rebuilding customer trust and redesigning their value propositions and business models</li> </ul>	<p>Resetting the new normal for the organizations as well as tourists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-opening: learnings adopted from essential healthcare operators</li> <li>• New cleaning and hygiene related protocols: protective equipment, masks, sanitizers, disinfecting wipes</li> <li>• Crowd management and social distancing practices to be followed</li> <li>• Re-designing and re-imagining of the customer journey to make it contactless</li> <li>• Reframing of tourism experiences</li> <li>• Restructuring of workspace and service scope</li> <li>• Technology solutions for hygiene, health and safety control. For eg. Arogyaseta App</li> <li>• Lead with purpose: association of brands</li> <li>• forecasting, revenue management and pricing systems</li> <li>• Capture new demand</li> <li>• Using digital data for analytics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New competitors</li> <li>• Virtual tourism experiences : a substitute or a complement of tourism experiences.</li> <li>• New start-ups and disruptors in the tourism business model</li> <li>• Surviving the COVID-19 recession and new operational standards , costs and requirements</li> <li>• Abilities to address the sophisticated and new tourists market segments</li> <li>• Impact of COVID-19 economic recession on the tourism industry and structure</li> </ul>
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**Table 2: Illustration of the impacts and ramification of covid-19 on three main stakeholders.**

Destinations and strategy makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring health and safety of tourists</li> <li>• Interventions to support accessible to employees and tourism businesses</li> <li>• Crisis Communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answerability, efficacy and fairness of increased public expenditure</li> <li>• Impact of crisis communication and user-generated-content on destination branding and image building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping tourists informed and interested: Promotion of destinations</li> <li>• Virtual visits of destinations</li> <li>• Engaging with destination partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• Provision of training services to tourism operators</li> <li>• Proper Communication during crisis: promotion of positivity and positive messages to , build destination branding with good values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact and effectiveness of governmental interventions on building pliancy and gather recovery abilities</li> <li>• impact of crisis management and communication about tourists' attitudes, travel intentions and destination image building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-framing the new types of sustainable and responsible tourism</li> <li>• Setting safety and health regulations and safety standards for the tourist visiting destinations</li> <li>• Develop strategies for destination re-opening: relaxation from travel restrictions, creation of travel hives, re-opening of tourism business</li> <li>• Promotion and motivation of tourists, e.g. travel vouchers and incentives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Re-opening of tourism infrastructure, superstructure and tourism operators (e.g. airlines, train and other travel means)</li> <li>- Global co-operation for addressing climate change and sustainability issues</li> <li>- Impact of public implications on functioning and structure of tourism industry</li> <li>- Impact of public spending and implications on abstinence measures</li> </ul>
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## **Tourist Demand:**

With the social media and the use of UGC (User Generated Content), which let people connect and share their experiences with their peers, friends, relatives, but things have changed from sharing severance of health-related issues and risk, which are related with their itineraries and travel booking plans. The research conducted on the psychology of the tourist after the Covid-19 impact on their travel behaviour, their intention regarding the travel during the opening of destinations and after the post-pandemic period. Social media amplifies the amalgamation of emotional and informative experience sharing (e.g. Baxter & Diehl, 1998).

In the previous literature available for tourism research, it is mainly focused on risk related with the tourism and tourist, their decision- making process and segmenting the tourist according to their profiles (e.g. Dolnicar, 2005; Aliperti. & Cruz, 2019; Araña, J. & León, 2008). In the study conducted by Pennington- Gray et al. 2014, tourism research also depends upon the crisis management and creating the proper certification of travel intentions and this type of crisis and risk recognition for forecasting the future of tourism and also forecasting the impact of any crisis and this will also help to draft a proper strategy for the recovery of the risk or crisis (Rittichainuwat and Chakraborty, 2009). In the Covid-19 era this has become significant as with the corona pandemic, a new set of standards and guidelines have to be followed by tourism companies and organizations.

Some of the researches are also conducted to investigate the impact of social media uses on tourist and their psychology (Zheng et al. 2020), which leads to providing the information and proper communication related to pandemic through social media (Sigala, 2012; Yu et al., 2020). As the destinations are opening and the Covid vaccination drive on in several countries, it has also enabled the tourist to be prepared to live with the pandemic post effect and need to take proper care while traveling to their destinations. It is also needed to be examined that how people are reacting over it and coping up with the new normal.

During the period of lockdown, tourists have experienced and accepted the new normal and have adopted the virtual way of experiencing the tourism. This new normal and technological know how can prove to be a problem for some tourists as surveillance of tourist data, their personal information etc can violate their privacy. Another question that arises whether the tourist would like to travel in the same manner as they were traveling before with the same behaviour and preferences? The consumer psychology and behaviour of how people want to spend their time and share their social values and behaviour (congruence theory). Other than the major tourism sector, s which will attract more tourist will be of religious and spiritual places, which will in case enlighten and have a positive impact on tourism during Covid-19. This will also have a positive impact

on the tourism providers and DMO related to spiritual places tourism.

Covid-19 pandemic has also come up with the new normal of social distancing which are actions related to avoiding over-crowded places, social distancing and reducing travel. This new normal of social distancing can have a compelling impact on the tourist experiences related to leisure and outdoor activities like tracking, hiking and nature related tourism and also the leisure tourism related to spas, medical tourism etc. For some tourist, this social distancing may tend to be a negative experience as they are bounded by insecurity and health related issues.

Tourism is one of its kind experience, which is influenced by customer's emotions, perception, behaviour and attitude towards the perceived service quality and evaluation of the services offered. Whereas, the standards to be followed by the organizations regarding tourism and precautions to be taken. This has led to the experiences of the tourist about their sensory system as while entering the place, they will be observing the smell of the disinfectant or sanitizer rather than the floral or soothing smell.

### **DMOs and the Strategy formulation: Pre, during and Post Covid-19**

After the pandemic, governments and travel companies are trying to provide different types of packages with the intercession of different offers to the tourist such as, tax rebates to the organization, subsidies and payment postponement. Meanwhile, continued closure of tourism destinations by some countries has affected tourism post-Covid. This is also seen as a unique time when for the first time trains and airlines services were halted that have had an impact on the future strategy to be developed for tourism sector in the post Covid world (Hall et al. 2020).

### **Conclusions: What more for tourist and tourism and what is next COVID-19 era.**

The world has suffered like never before during this pandemic. But with the economy gradually picking up pace as countries start opening their borders with Covid vaccination drive underway globally, a research on Covid-19 tourism is way ahead of the old values and tourism practices that need to be replaced with new strategies. Studies have been conducted on knowing the real time impact on the tourism demand and providing the tourist with the adherence of quality, values and best practices of the industry. The aim of the chapter is to study transformation of the crisis into an opportunity for revamping the mindset of the people towards tourist organizations and their efforts to provide the benchmarked quality to the tourist by framing proper strategies and using social media as communication tool during the pandemic.

This pandemic has also brought some newness into it with more use of technology and driving the change to technological innovation by bringing the destinations to the tourists through virtual reality.

The pandemic has also aggravated the already arduous situation with the rise in labor cost, expenses and salary cuts, lack of job security during this pandemic, as many industries, even the tourism sector because of complete lockdown cannot survive the economic depression. Other than these, the sub sectors related with the tourism sector also faced the disparities such as food delivery sector, cab service providers, like uber and Ola and hotel industry like OYO and Airbnb are some examples. Now, with the tourism sector focusing on reinventing strategies keeping in mind the new normal to draw tourists out of the comfort of their homes, let's hope that travel and tourism once again bounces back to normal.

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## CHAPTER 13

# CHANGING DYNAMICS OF SOCIAL MEDIA SINCE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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GAUTAM, MOHD. FAISAL, RISIL CHHATRALA

### INTRODUCTION

Transmittable diseases have existed since the days when humans were hunters-gatherers; but with the development of civilization came formation of cities as well as trade routes connecting regions, epidemics became pandemics that wreaked havoc, and at times, changing the course of history. (Inside History,2020). Since the first recorded pandemic; suspected to be Typhoid in 430 BC, human population has been wrecked by diseases like Plague, Leprosy, Smallpox, Cholera, Flu, HIV, SARS and the latest being COVID.

From the communication perspective most of the early pandemics were known only through the word of mouth. People relied largely on oral communication and signals using smoke and drum beats to disseminate information about infectious diseases in a region. This later turned into written messages being sent using pigeons and snail mails being transported using humans and animals. Swift propagation of news sped up only after the invention of the electrical telegraph and eventually the telephone. (Curtis H, 2012). It can be said that technology has played a very critical role in broadcasting news thereby allowing people to be primed about the impending threat. However, it wasn't until a century and quarter later that the modern form of mass communication viz; digital communication found its way into people's lives. By the turn of the millennium, social media platforms began gaining popularity and were employed to spread the latest news and updates through dashboards. (Hendricks D, 2013). Never before now have people had so many resources, communication channels and tools at their disposal allowing them to be prepared to handle the upcoming crisis.

Due to its speed and personalization, many social media platforms gained

popularity and took precedence over traditional media like print, TV and Radio. The usage of social media dynamically changed since the outbreak of this infectious disease. (Trifonova V, 2020). Correlating this phenomenon to the laws of economics which states that consumption is driven by supply and demand, (Fernando J, 2020) during the lockdowns, people had more time which translated into more consumption of social media.

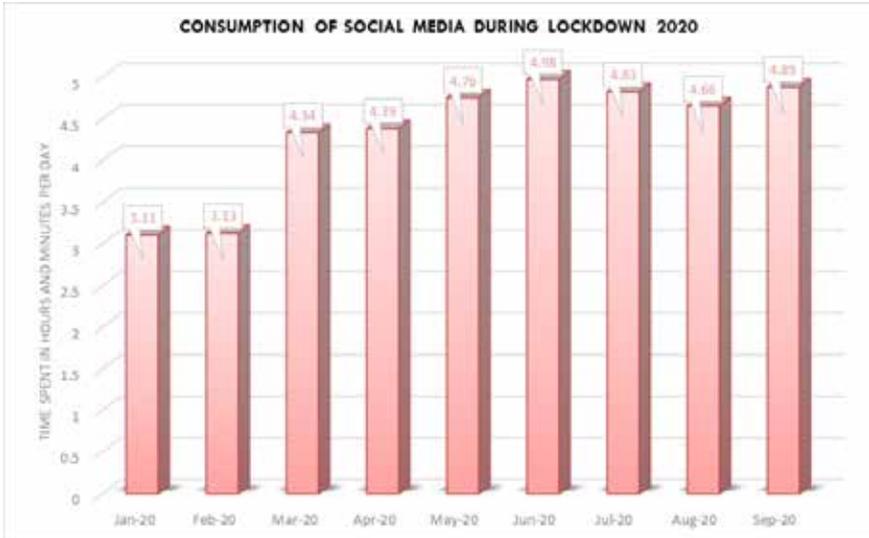


Figure 1 : Time Spent on Social Media in India (Keerley S, 2020)

Though the social media users has been steadily increasing each year, according to the survey conducted by GlobalWebIndex, there has been a significant increase of 10.5% in the usage of social media in July 2020 as compared to that in July 2019. (Trifonova V, 2020).

### SHIFTING PARADIGMS IN SOCIAL MEDIA BEHAVIOUR

Over the last decade, a plethora of social media have emerged as globally influential platforms of communication; especially able to connect with a wide audience across various geographies. The users of social network platforms almost tripled in the last decade, from 970 million in 2010 to the number passing 3.81 billion users in 2020. (Dean B, 2020). This meteoric rise in users is what has made it the second most popular form of mass communication after television.

## Going beyond “Update & Post”

To understand how COVID-19 could have impacted the way individuals as well as organizations utilized social media a quick survey was conducted. Majority (69%) of the respondents believe that the pandemic outbreak followed by national lockdown has changed the way they have been interacting on social media; while 18% of the participants were unsure, 13% were sure that the pandemic did not alter the way they communicated on social media.

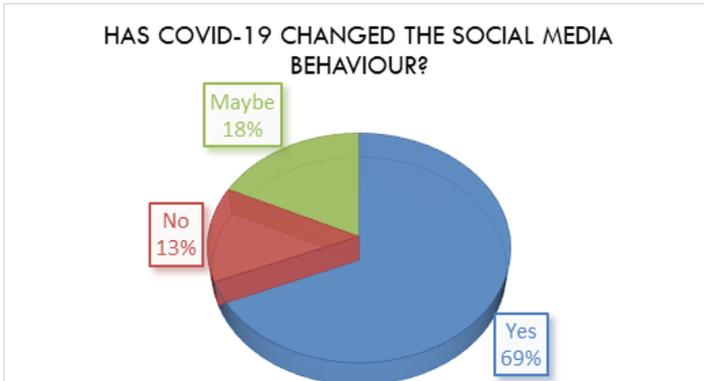


Figure 2 : Response To The Perceived Change On Social Media Since COVID-19 Outbreak

The change in social media behaviour could be correlated to the apparent tectonic shift in the time people spent on various social media, wherein there has been a huge drop in the number of people who spent less than 1 hour and 1-2 hours a day on social media by 58% and 71% respectively; whereas there has been a colossal increase of more than 600% and 300% among users who spent either 3-4 hours or more than 4 hours a day respectively on social media.

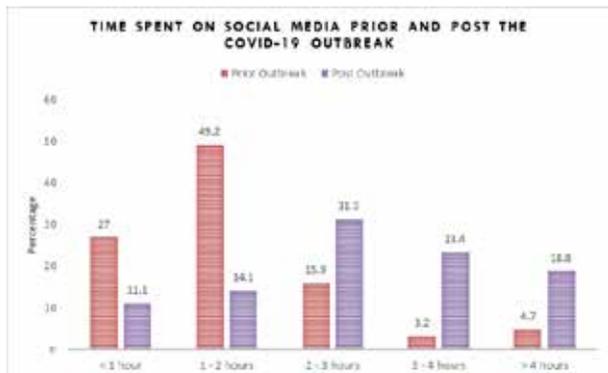


Figure 3 : Time Spent on Social Media Since the COVID-19 Outbreak

As the time spent per day on various social platforms increased, people began using these websites for reasons other than to connect with friends, family and communities. Entertainment at 26%, to get updated news about COVID-19 at 18% and online shopping at 12% were found to be the most popular alternative activities that users indulged in. While 8% of the respondents spend time on social media to avoid or be distracted from the COVID-19 news, 4% looked for psychological support in light of physical and social distancing.

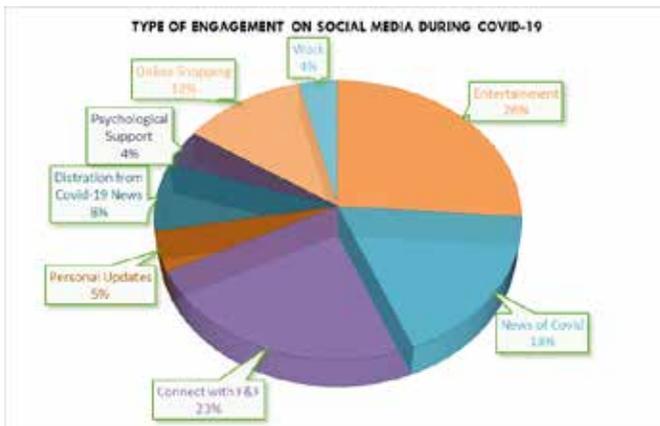


Figure 4 : Type of Engagement on Social Media since COVID-19 Outbreak

***From “increasing sales” to “building trust, credibility and authenticity”***

From the business’ perspective, the entire dynamics of conducting trade has changed since the COVID-19 outbreak.

While companies that relied largely on e-com platforms prior to the announcement of lockdown experienced a slight dip in their sales, which recovered during the nationwide phased unlock, those that depended on Business to Business and Business to Customer sales were drastically impacted leading to various pecuniary crisis.

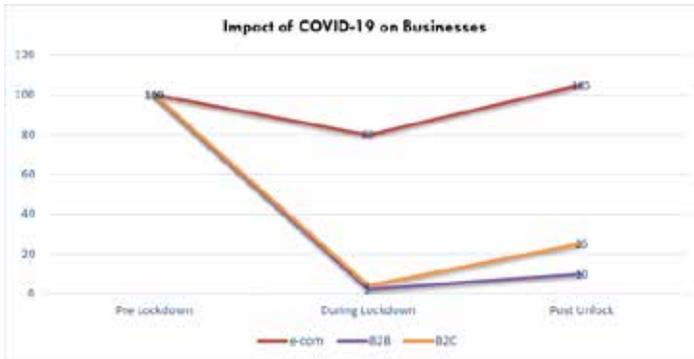


Figure 5 : Impact of COVID-19 on Businesses in India (KPMG, 2020)

Since the execution of the order for national lockdown companies have been using innovative ways to connect with their customers. From “talking to the customer” to “talking with the customer”, there has been a paradigm shift in social media posts that have become user-centric rather than self-glorifying. (Valck, 2020) While embracing communal logic businesses engaged their visitors with useful information and relevant advice rather than merely push sales.

Staying active on business social media handles may not directly boost sales; but it is a great opportunity to connect with customers and clients, boost brands, build audiences’ trust and develop business credibility and authenticity. (Chavez & Morgan, 2020) Maintaining relevant social media profiles will not only educate the customers; but will strategically channelize them to the official website, which could translate into potential increase in sales.

Prior to the national lockdown due to COVID-19, most organizations viewed social media as a tool to connect and reach out to customers only; but now, companies are dynamically using social media to build ‘esprit de corps’ among its employees who have been circumstantially forced to be confined within their homes for days and weeks on end. During the initial weeks of the lockdown, employee morale had dropped as fear, apprehensions and angst set in. Work From Home (WFH) became the new normal and this caused a sudden increase in psychological and emotional workload, heightened stress and anxiety levels, which is not good for long term employee well-being and company productivity. Alongside video conferencing platforms, organizations actively employed their social media handles to improve employee engagement. From announcing wellness initiatives (both physical and emotional) to providing support and encouragement to employees and their family members, companies have been using

to enhance camaraderie amongst the team. (Sarokhanian N, 2020)

### **“Virtually Engaging Citizens Through a Crisis”**

The Government of India, previously considered as a slow adopter of social media, has compensated by creating official social media pages for many government departments and ensuring that they are regularly updated. Following the norms stipulated in the “Framework and Guidelines for Use of Social Media by Government Organisations”, majority of the senior government officials stepped up their presence on social platforms – either to ensure timely and reliable propagation of news about COVID-19 or to quell any misinformation going viral while assuaging panic among people.

Shri Narendra Modi, the present Prime Minister of India is known for reaching out to the citizens of the country through various social media handles. Using Twitter extensively to share important news with people, most of his nation-wide addresses are streamed lived on his Twitter handle. (Awasthi P, 2020). These networks have played a vital role in becoming a reliable and verifiable platforms of communication between the government and citizens. Many government officials capitalized on the penetration and speed of social media to create and disseminate pandemic updates as well as rules and regulations to be observed during the lockdown. Becoming an ideal two-way communication between the denizens and government officials or constitutional functionaries at various levels, social media facilitated swift information distribution and at many times, provided prompt grievance redressal. Reaching out to senior officials and political leaders using social platforms have now become an established norm. The success of lockdown and following precautionary measure when stepping out of the homes can also be largely attributed to social media. (Sahni H, Sharma H, 2020).

Social media took on the role of a catalyst and an open channel for communication as well as enhancing trust between law enforcement agencies and the masses. Being a unique situation quite unlike many disasters, the law enforcement agencies used creative as well as cogent messages across various social networking sites. From posting creative video messages to promoting precautionary measures to stay safe, to providing health and emergency helplines, social media was abuzz with challenges being confronted by “Corona Warriors” and appeals to the general public to help and cooperate with the officials. This could also be considered as a strategy to off-set the impact of the viral videos and images of coercive steps that the police had to resort to tackle lockdown violations by many people. (Herald, 2020)

### **“Alleviating the Crisis with Passion and Dedication”**

With millions of followers on social media, many celebrities; including Bollywood

actors, sportsmen and women, artists and influencers, were active on their media handles during the lockdown. From interacting with their fans to reinforcing the need to stay indoors and maintain social distancing, to quelling myths about the COVID-19 that were trending, these famous personalities in the country were seen urging people to refrain from stepping out of their homes and imparting the importance of sanitization. (Gupta, Agarwal, Singh, 2020). Taking up the challenge to alleviate the crisis and help stranded migrant workers, Bollywood actors responded to 'call-for-help' tweets and messages over social media. Some celebs endorsed campaigns launched by various NGOs to raise funds, call for volunteers, create awareness about being empathetic to family members of COVID patients and not ostracise them. (Khanvilkar S & Dwivedi V, 2020)

As the lockdown extended into months, many artists performed at e-concerts, which were streamed live through social media platforms providing entertainment as well as raising awareness about the pandemic and safety measures. (Michel P, 2020)

While majority of the posts on social media by celebs were focused on staying positive and staying safe through the crisis, there were some brickbats flung at a few media personalities for their insensitive personal posts on their media handles. While they were chided by the community, these posts were either taken down or retracted with heartfelt apologies. (Cummins E, 2020)

UNRAVELLING THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA

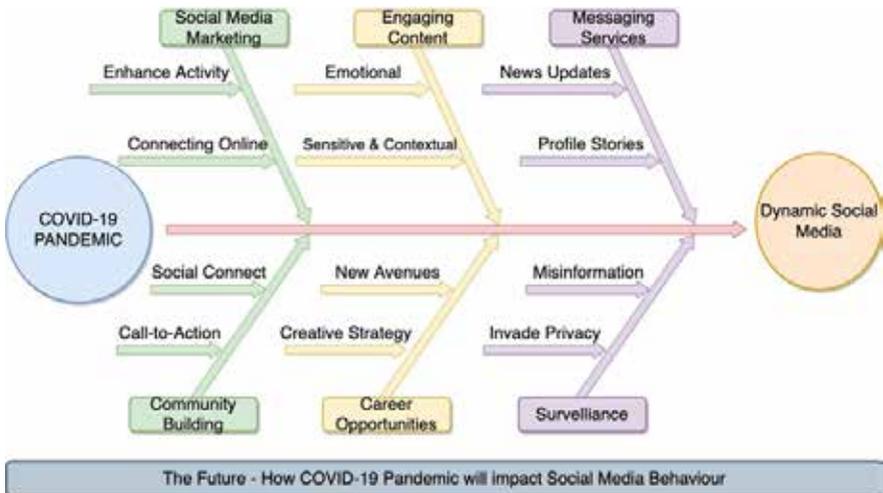


Figure 6 : Speculations of how the Dynamics of Social Media are Going To Change

## **1. Social Media Marketing – Enhancing Visibility Online**

What the future holds is an unhindered exponential growth for all forms of digital media; social platforms included. With Work From Home (WFH) and learn from home, people's dependency on digital platforms will continue to increase and organizations that will adapt their campaigns and PR pushes to primarily focus on Social Media Marketing (SMM) will benefit as this is and will be the quickest and comparatively inexpensive way to reach millions of people. (Snyder C, 2020). From an overall marketing point of view, one significant change that has occurred is that the global markets have shifted their focus from a 'push marketing' to a 'pull marketing'; which means that companies are focusing on attracting the customers to their brand and fostering long term relationship with them over time. (Valck, 2020). SMM is the most ideal platform to achieve this as the connect with the customer is direct and personal. Combined with technologies like AI, crawlers and 'bots' to assist is identifying and retargeting customers, (Gupta J, 2020) SMM will provide optimum return on advertisement investment to organizations with zero to minimal spillage of ad-spends.

While re-aligning their marketing strategies, marketing professionals will depend on predictive modelling and segmentation on social platforms to connect and build a deeper meaning relationship with customers leading to more 'following'. Optimization – be it money, content or media - and Understanding the audience's social media behaviour are going to be the keys to successful social media marketing. (Bern T, 2020)

## **2. Engaging Content – Emotional & Sensitive Messaging**

The most dynamic change will be seen in the content being posted online. The pandemic has made companies realize the digital and emotional penetration that social media has. Hence rather than just focusing on treating audiences as purse strings, professionals will engage in creating personalized content that will connect with individuals at an emotional level. (Baer J, 2020). Going beyond individual's hesitation at sharing personal contents and capitalizing on the comfort to share content already posted on social media, it can be expected that there would be a lot of specifically designed 'shareable content' developed so that it becomes easier to share and disseminate. (Bhargav J, 2020). With the user base expected to surge rapidly in the coming years, companies will remain agile and have effectually engaging presence on social media platforms.

To break out of the clutter and draw the audience's attention it is imperative that the 'message' be right. Unlike the traditional mass media, digital platforms have various tools that can help reach out to 'ideal' customers; which makes it vital that the messages will be meticulously designed. Efficient messages would be those that

touch the emotional aspect of the customer and focus on his/her needs rather than that of the organization. (Baer, J, 2020)

The concept of hard sell is on its way out. The key to connecting with the audience is to “NOT SELL”; but “EDUCATE and ENGAGE” and social media being a personal platform, communication will be customized to appeal to the emotions of the customers. (Snyder, V, 2020). There is going to be a dramatic shift in the tones of the campaigns and posts across all social media and the way forward will be to include the customer into the branding activity. The rapidity at which users comment and react to posts on social media is indicative that they expect instant response to their messages; which means that along with the content, response time will also become critical in maintaining customer satisfaction. (Sixt A, 2020)

Since the last couple of years, video content and live streaming on social media has gained a lot of popularity and this facet will continue to be trendy. What makes this feature alluring is the ability to interact, which can be more effective than text or even image. It has been estimated that in the coming couple of years, live video consumption will increase 15 times to attain 17% share of all internet traffic. (Sixt A, 2020)

One of the recent feature to be added to almost all social media is “Stories” a section that be called as ‘ephemeral content’. Unlike posts on the regular page that will be forever (unless deleted by the user), content in Stories is driven by the viewers’ FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) as these posts can be accessed only for 24 hours making these more interesting and watchable. In a recent study 62% people said that they became more interested in a product or brand after viewing it in the Stories. (Business, 2020). Brands are going to make the most of this strategy by posting a lot of rich media – videos and photos with as little written content as possible. (Pratt M, 2020)

### **3. Messaging Services – News Updates & Profile Stories**

Through Wave 1 to Wave 4 (February – August), there has been a steeped increment in mobile messaging and interactive services. From an average of 20 minutes prior to the outbreak, it has risen to an average of 24 minutes per day. (Chaffey D, 2020) Since 2014 accessing news on social media platforms has been steadily growing; but since the outbreak going onto social networking sites for news updates has become a sort of habit. Termed as “Doomscrolling” where a long stream of demoralizing and depressing news across social media is read by the viewer, the word emphasises the demand for latest news on social media. 36% of the people globally use social media to receive New Updates; (Chaffey D, 2020) though most of them later move onto official news sites or websites to authenticate the information they read or saw on NewsFeeds. However, social media will continue to dominate the ‘breaking news’ realm. Technology has allowed the development

of 'Adaptive News Dissemination' – meaning, individuals can choose the kind of news that reach him/her which has made these media preferred source of authentic information; especially since the trust factor is much higher when news is shared or made viral through reliable and known contacts. (Jones K, 2020)

#### **4. Community Building – Connect & Call-to-action**

The present pandemic crisis has to some extent brought out the social aspect of social media wherein a lot of people created and shared events, community aid-work to help the destitute, community care, contributing and conscientious, empathetic care of fellow beings. It can be expected that social organizations and NGOs that largely depend on individual donations will continue to take advantage of the social media reach to garner support in terms of volunteers, funds and donations for their causes.

On the other hand, the initiatives to be active on social media handles, started by the present government have had positive reviews; which could mean that there is a high possibility that the government officials will continue to engage with citizens on various issues through their official social accounts. (Mandava H, Pulipaka S, 2020). However, the dichotomy of this predicament is that while social media presence can help reach out to millions of users swiftly, it could end up hampering the work of young officers. Though the social media has played a pivotal role during the pandemic by providing timely official news updates, it will prove to be challenging for the officials to keep up with the quick response and dynamic communication strategies that these platforms demand as they aren't trained with such complex and multi-dimensional challenges. (Mandava H, Pulipaka S, 2020). Hence at this point of time, it would be difficult to predict if the government will continue to engage on these platforms.

#### **5. Career Opportunities – New Avenues & Creative Strategy**

Since the social media is going to play a pivotal role in the future of personalized communication, it is going to create a lot of professional opportunities in terms of technical user interface, security and privacy protection professionals, content development, user behaviour, influencers, predictive modellers and digital marketeers. From designing better User Experience (UX), to developing better security and protection on social media, to employing marketing and brand professionals with in-depth knowledge of social media behaviour, there will be a boom in terms of careers for all. (Wiltshire E, 2020). The highest prospect will be for 'influencers'. (Mathew S, 2020) While film stars, sports personalities and other eminent people will continue to draw users on social platforms, there is a niche for individuals who are social media icons in their own right; have established credibility in this domain and can draw, influence audiences. With millions of followers these experts have the ability

to impact users with a single post and get paid millions per sponsored post, which makes this a lucrative career option for most social media buffs.

### **6. Surveillance – Invasion of Privacy & Misinformation**

In 2013, when the Mumbai Police set up a ‘social media cell’ to monitor and study social media behaviour of users, the aim was to enhance national security and become a pre-emptive strategy to fight terrorism. (Hindu, 2013). Other law enforcement offices across other states soon followed suit. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the government agencies have been monitoring personal disclosure information across social media; along with other digital surveillance tools, to better control the spread of COVID-19. (Jalan T, 2020). While this kind of monitoring may prove to be helpful to limit the contagion, it is expected to have irreversible harm on individual’s privacy and digital rights.

Personal privacy across social media is expected to plummet as the government will continue to deploy digital surveillance tools to monitor and exercise control over citizens. (Srivastava K, 2020) While on one hand, national interest and security are at stake, on the other hand misuse of individual’s data and personal security is a solemn concern – a difficult trade-off.

## **CONCLUSION**

Pandemics across history have triggered the collapse of empires, weakened pre-eminent powers and institutions, created social upheaval and resulted in wars. (Johny S, 2020). It also brought to the forefront the lacuna in the health care systems across nations. However, this is the first time in the history of mankind that a pandemic has transformed not just the physical; but also the digital lives of millions of people across the world. With an unprecedented number of people spending a lot of time on social platforms, there are bound to be ramifications, which could change the dynamics of social media permanently. (Trifonova V, 2020)

While this world-wide pandemic can be considered as having created huge opportunity for organizations and media companies to engage and strengthen the connect with their captive audience, it can be a bane for millions of users who could become susceptible to viral misinformation or give up their right to digital privacy.

COVID-19 will certainly be remembered in the annals of history as the pandemic that compelled users, corporates, social media marketers, NGOs, law enforcement offices and the government to ADAPT and be ADEPT at communicating effectively over social media.

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## CHAPTER 14

# A STUDY ON THE GROWTH OF DIGITAL JOURNALISM DURING COVID

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SHIRISH SHARMA

### **Introduction**

Coronavirus (COVID-19) has changed the face of journalism. This analysis is of the paradigm shift, which profoundly impacts journalistic approach with respect to digital platform. When the fear of Coronavirus halted normal life on tracks, it was journalism through digital platform that developed a bridge between the government and people to spread information about the precautionary measures and steps taken to curb the deadly virus.

Digital journalism is a form of journalism responsible for posting news and content on the internet. The content includes either text, audio, image, video or often clubbed together to make more informative content and keep the user up-to-date. The switch from paper to digital, to e-newspapers, omitted some hurdles like space and time and effective informative delivery to the larger audience with the publication of online articles, which also increased the access to news. The practice of justification of information depended upon the digital platform. This pandemic some possibilities have been created for producing, distributing and consuming journalism and informing an innovative journalism practice.

Majority of the readers rely on different media platforms and formats to consume news; professional journalism communication remains their primary concern. Development of technology for information communication and usage of internet, developed the approach to shift towards the online platform.

Change in strategies developed by journalists over time for collection of information during lockdown proved effective. This pandemic taught every journalist and even the common man to evolve. Journalists found different measures to maintain the continuity of the articles with only handful resources. Involving the audience in a discussion over the digital platform and obtaining the user generated content for the engagement, to maintain the news flow has become a norm now.

The vast majority of the audience are on social media for the updates on Coronavirus news, where they get the room for interaction and expressing their stance and ideas through the shares, posing, commenting and suggesting. Updates are being provided by the authorities through the pages on Facebook. Online meeting of World Health Organization (WHO) is featured for the latest updates. The role of Facebook and Twitter in the life of a journalist has been projected in a different format in terms of the update for the articles published and the related information etc. Coronavirus has affected everyone— health-wise, economically, socially, psychologically.

Once the coronavirus is controlled, digital journalism will grow with its pace and find some innovation each day. From the day one of the news of the pandemic till today each day is a learning stage for journalists.

Digital journalism can be defined as content created by a journalist and posted on online platform. The created content could be in the form of text, audio or video format. In traditional journalism, the content is to be printed and distributed, which makes digital journalism much faster in comparison. The regular updates help people have access to news and events 24X7 with the help of internet. Now-a-days people are busy in their lives, this is the reason journalists furnish much shorter news as compared to earlier times. The articles are to the point, small videos like GIF animations is also created that can be accessed within a few seconds. Some of the news agencies offer few second snippets of interviews and the conferences. The main idea behind digital journalism is to provide a one stop solution to obtain lots of information in much lesser time. From the Facebook or YouTube, the information is also retrieved that is linked with the hyperlinks of the videos or photos.

Social media platforms like YouTube, a space for sharing the video and made available to watch it online, became much popular during lockdowns not just for journalists but common man also. Originally YouTube was created in 2005 and became one of the most popular sites on internet. The watch hours of the videos are approximately six billion hours every month of 100 hours of video uploaded every minute. Diversified topics are searched and accessed through this platform. The site is kept up-to-date with the user-generated content, this is the reason each time there is something new and latest to be watched, people prefer YouTube. You'll find amazing and creative videos made by people just like you, and also the journalists.

Twitter is a 'microblogging' system that allows you to send and receive short posts called tweets. Tweets can be up to 140 characters long and the links of relevant websites and resources can be included. Twitter users follow other users. If you follow someone you can see their tweets in your twitter 'timeline'. Also, you can

follow organizations and individual with similar academic and personal interests. You can create your own tweets, or you can retweet information that has been tweeted by others. Retweeting means that information can be shared quickly and efficiently with a large number of people.

For what is happening in the world, Twitter is a window to get a glimpse of the trending news topics and information besides some hyperlinks for detailed reading. Journalists own some of the most active accounts on Twitter for the latest news updates. Sometimes minute by minute on ground reports are updated by the national media outlets for everyone. Often it has been seen that the breaking news are also featured through this medium by the journalists. Twitter is having a feature that people can participate in and reply to the journalists directly on an update provided, unlike a traditional TV broadcast or newspaper article. People are more likely to reply to journalists who are willing to engage with them by replying, retweeting, answering questions, or soliciting news tips. This, in turn, increases a reporter's followers and drives more interest and trust in the journalist's work. The direct access to an unusual quantity of the content, provided by these social media platforms and may also magnifies the rumors and questionable information.

The spreading of information and to accelerate the content flow, algorithms are arbitrated taking into account users' preferences and attitudes. This was the influencing point for the shift magnification of the digital journalism. The news paradigm extremely impacts the construction of social perceptions by the shift from the traditional medium. It influences the progression of public debate especially when issues are censorious policy making, and for political communication. The online users tend to acquire the information clinging to their worldviews, to ignore dissenting information and to create groups around shared accounts. Hashtags (#) helps the journalists in monitoring the stories. People also use the hashtags while updating something through their accounts. This could also help the journalist to keep an eye on the topics people are interested. From the multiple sources, the information compiled and executed using the hashtags.

Before the internet it was impossible to interact to the journalist, now people can react. People can share their views and comment in the space provided in the article and get involved in the discussion as well. The content is harder to control as there is an open window for feedbacks. Traditional journalism does not have the feedback section. Furthermore, when transmission is high, misinformation might easily multiply. Fake news and inaccurate information may spread faster and wider than fact-based news. Copyright and plagiarism are also very important aspects that have to be taken into consideration. Many websites like Grammarly, provide the facility to detect plagiarism, which helps avoid copyright issue. Digital journalism

was in practice even before the pandemic but now its pace has accelerated manifold.

The year 2020 witnessed a global threat named COVID-19. Lockdown was implemented in almost all the regions with the spread of the pandemic, human gathering and interactions were compromised and unsafe, which resulted in the shutting down of the places including colleges, schools, malls, temples, offices, airports, and railway stations. This opened up the chapter of work from home and thus internet was accessed frequently. Besides most people shifted to the internet and internet-based services for communication purpose, grocery order through Zomato market and through other stores getting online and providing the contactless delivery option. Compared to the pre-lockdown, internet services have seen rise in usage approximately from 40 % to 100 %. There was a massive change in usage patterns and behaviour that showed a rise in the use of information systems and networks. With new emerging patterns of work resulted in the office work shifting to the home and the meetings going completely online, employees started adjusting to the new normal. Across most organizations whether in business, society, or government, the changes were accepted. There was no time for the organizations and people to plan for the changes and other arrangements to implement the new setups. They have had to adjust, try, experiment, and find ways that did not exist before.

It all started with deployment of countermeasures and effective information by the government which strongly influence people's behaviour. For the behavioral response of the population, models to forecast virus spreading are starting to account with respect to public health interventions and the communication dynamics behind content consumption. Some of the websites and mobile application were also introduced like; Aarogya Setu application etc. As per the information shared by the government, Aarogya Setu uses contact tracing to record details of all the people you may have come in contact with, as you go about your normal activities. If any one of them, at a later point in time, tests positive for COVID-19, you are immediately informed and proactive medical intervention is arranged for you. If you make a first or a second-degree contact with a COVID-19 positive person, Aarogya Setu alerts you and gets you timely medical help. The self-assessment test also helps you in identifying possibilities of infection. The app helps the Govt. of India identify hotspots, hence aiding in curbing the spread of the infection. The greater number of people use it, the more effective the app will be in chaining the pandemic.

The change in the digital journalism during COVID-19, was affected by the shift of the different fields of reporting to digital platform. To understand this let us start with education sector. Due to the Novel Coronavirus lockdown of 40 days (first and second phase), in all the institutions, a total of about 10 million academic hours will

be compromised, which will be rather difficult to compensate. The University Grants Commission through its advisory instructed all the institutes to continue classes in online mode as per feasibility and engage ICT tools available for use in academic discourse. The faculty members of the university and colleges are also requested by its advisory to make use of the various online tools in order to reach out to the students. To assist this endeavor, there are many open access tools available, which are already used by many universities and colleges to reach out to students located in remote areas. For example, Amity University started using Microsoft Teams as the medium of communication for the lectures and problem-solving sessions. MS Teams provides facilities like white board to explain something during the class. Also, with the help of screen share innovative measures were taken that involves live working on the required software, etc. The UGC advisory has instructed the faculty members to develop online teaching content, such as instructional materials using modules, PowerPoint presentations, recording video lessons, and even audio teaching materials that can be shared through different content sharing platforms and messaging applications like WhatsApp, Messenger, Telegram, etc.

The UGC's recommendation for the faculty members and students has been to avail maximum benefit from various digital/ICT initiatives of MHRD, UGC, and its Inter-University Centers. Among the ICT facilities, SWAYAM is one of the most user-friendly MOOC (massive open online course) platforms. To achieve the three cardinal principles of Education Policy viz., access, equity and quality, Government of India initiated the program of SWAYAM. The objective to design this program is to provide a platform for the best teaching learning resources to all. SWAYAM seeks students to join the mainstream of the knowledge economy this brings up to build a bridge for the students who have remained untouched by the digital revolution. In order to ensure that best quality content is produced and delivered, nine National Coordinators have been appointed. They are: All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) for self-paced and international courses, National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) for Engineering, University Grants Commission (UGC) for non-technical post-graduation education, Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC) for under-graduate education, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) for school education, National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) for school education, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) for out-of-school students, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore (IIMB) for management studies, National Institute of Technical Teachers Training and Research (NITTTR) for Teacher Training programme.

Swayamprabha is another ICT facility for viewing digital courses on television. The government facilitates different digital content through National Digital Library,

e-PG Pathshala, Shodhganga, e-ShodhSindhu and Shodhgangotri. Accelerate hands on learning, the government initiated eYantra that creates a laboratory for training in embedded systems in collaboration with IIT Bombay. Online learning has become an indispensable part of academic and professional education during this novel coronavirus pandemic. The University teachers have been exploring to create a more appealing and effective online learning environment.

During the crisis situation like the COVID pandemic, the synergy between the digital services and digital media resulted into an effective resource. However, for the safety of the journalists, UNICEF released a mantra that mentions: Our responsibilities are to cover news and not to become the news. We should not contribute to further spreading the Coronavirus or COVID-19. We not only have a responsibility towards ourselves but also to our families and society in general. If a government spokesperson, senior official or minister is giving a statement, agree among yourselves to record them from at least six feet away. Try to stand without huddling. Better still, convince dignitaries to conduct digital press conferences with questions from journalists taken up live. There are plenty of technological platforms available to make this happen. Avoid clip-on mics to avoid physical contact and to maintain appropriate distance. Use directional mics as much as you can and hold it from a distance. If you are in a contaminated facility, do not place your equipment on the floor. Do a hand-held shoot.

World Health Organization (WHO) came forward on the digital media platform to share the detailed information of COVID-19. WHO, as the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations system, adheres to the UN values of integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity. The values of the WHO workforce furthermore reflect the principles of human rights, universality and equity established in WHO's Constitution as well as the ethical standards of the Organization. These values are inspired by the WHO vision of a world in which all peoples attain the highest possible level of health, and our mission to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable, with measurable impact for people at country level. WHO started the online press conferences and press release to share Covid-related information. From January 2021 till date WHO is been organizing such event from the digital media platform, whether it is a briefing session for the pneumonia due to the Novel Coronavirus or a conference regarding the outbreak. It also started some campaigns to spread the message of togetherness. WHO and the International Olympic Committee are teaming up with the United Nations to encourage individuals and communities around the world to be #HEALTHYTogether. The three partners and Olympic athletes will spotlight the collective effort and global collaboration needed to stay healthy and reduce the

spread and impact of COVID-19. A WHO survey showed that many people who had severe COVID-19 disease were already living with or at risk for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). The results emphasize the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle including being physically active, having a healthy diet, and avoiding tobacco and alcohol.

Later, journalists' groups have recommended for press conferences to be conducted online following the rise of new infections particularly involving cabinet members and members of parliament. National Union of Journalists (NUJ) in a statement urged all quarters to give full cooperation to journalists on duty so that they could disseminate all information to the public effectively. Media personnel are among the most exposed to Covid-19 infection while carrying out their duties. Online press releases can draw more attendees since guests need not waste time in traffic and can attend from long distances. This became new normal for the journalists. Different measures were taken to organize the online press conference. Talking about the platform, some video conferencing software limits the number of participants that can attend at any one time. Others limit the length of sessions. Paid platforms typically offer better customer service – which could be very valuable if you encounter technical problems. For conferences that are open to the public, social media networks, like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube, can draw interested attendees and influencers in addition to journalists. Supporting documents are made available online to the reporters.

In 2020, the annual World Press Freedom Conference (WPFC) co-hosted by UNESCO and the Kingdom of the Netherlands was held in a new, innovative format: merging digital and in-person elements. Sessions were livestreamed from the World Forum. The theme of WPFC 2020 was 'Journalism without Fear or Favour', an expression coined by Adolph S. Ochs, founder of the modern New York Times. The conference discussed the necessity to stand for free, safe and independent media, and protect to journalism against persistent and new forms of control. It addressed several issues like: Press freedom is important but under COVID-19 the importance of free information gathering is even more urgent; journalists and media play a crucial role in the dissemination of reliable information to the public, to help deal with the pandemic and monitor the decision-making process while at the same time, they face restrictions while doing their work. Thousands of journalists, academics, politicians, students, NGOs, legal experts and other interested parties worldwide took part in the conference, despite travel restrictions.

The journalists never thought to entirely work from home, but COVID-19 taught them to be ready for such things. Getting online may be a pain in the beginning but later it proved to be an ally for journalists. Although reporters have to work in

the field as well for the appropriate information to be shared, even though reports are filed online. Discussion forums have been developed for the meeting of senior journalists. For the panel discussion on news channels, journalists are providing their interview bytes online.

News websites and apps have registered a spike both in time spent on the site/app and the number of users visiting the sites to track the latest updates since the coronavirus outbreak in India. Print publications are leveraging the digital medium for distribution as physical newspaper distribution is yet to take off in some parts of the country. HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Paytm and Samsung Electronics are some of the companies to have tied up with various national and regional newspapers for digital distribution, including The Indian Express and Financial Express. Additionally, newspapers that were behind paywalls and required users to register to read e-papers have relaxed these requirements, allowing more people to easily access e-versions online.

Digital journalism has made considerable efforts in response to the pandemic, it is still facing some challenges. Firstly, misinformation is a pressing problem. Rumors, fake news, and deliberate misinformation have been spreading on social media platforms, causing distrust and further endangering public health. To respond to the infodemic caused by misinformation, some efforts have been made to correct the misinformation. Useful corrective actions such as more coherent information that provides alternative explanations to misleading information and appeals to credibility should be continuously, widely, and frequently distributed. Secondly, there is a lack of formalized guidance to guide the use of digital media in large-scale epidemics. The COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to worsen, and more effective strategies are needed. Although digital journalism has played an important role, it is strongly recommended that it should be further used to improve trust, build social solidarity, reduce chaos, educate the public for prevention measures. Visual data is used increasingly to demonstrate the distribution, transmission, and trend of this coronavirus outbreak. As newsrooms move permanently to a more distributed model—making use of different media in different places—there will need to train and support journalists on using digital platform effectively.

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mainstream Media and Academics. He is UGC-NET in Mass Communication and specialises in Print Production. Advertising Design is an area in which he is very keen and interested and hence, his research majorly focuses on it. His Ph.D topic is also related to Advertising design.

- **Abhishek Kumar** is engaged in as Assistant Professor at Amity Institute of Biotechnology, Amity University Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow Campus. He is an expert in the area of management with specialization in R&D management and related field such as scientific productivity, R&D management and scientific industrial growth. He also teaches ethical issues in R&D, Intellectual Property Rights, Biotechnology and Patent Law. Dr. Abhishek is credited with experience in project management and consultancy and scientific information dissemination from Biotech Consortium India Limited, New Delhi.

- **Rekha Pachauri** is currently working as an Assistant Professor at Amity School of Communication since December 2018. She is pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Advertising and possesses 5 years of teaching experience. She has worked in Radio Industry and was associated with Radio Mirchi and BIG FM as a Radio Jockey and Copywriter respectively. She holds a great interest in working with the community and has been associated with organizations like WaterAid India and UNICEF as a Project manager before joining Amity. Her current interests are political advertising, Social media management, and Podcasting.

- **Soumen Bhattacharya** is currently associated with Amity University Lucknow Campus as Manager- Digital Media & Communication. As a researcher, he has a keen interest in Digital Media. He has presented his research at various national and international conferences and has an MBA degree in Media Management.

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## AUTHOR'S PROFILE

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- **Arpita Singh**, currently working as Trainer (Photography) Teaching Faculty, Amity School of Communication, Lucknow. I am having experience in cinematography and photography for the past 6 years. I have worked for UP Government, UP Tourism, and many Ngo's. I put my heart and soul into the field of films and photography. I have a keen interest in documentary filmmaking and worked on social projects of different NGOs as a freelancer. I always think Visual impact changes the thought process and in today's world change is needed. There are many subjects around us that need to be addressed and I feel our generation should take a stand to highlight burning issues with the medium of Visuals.

- **Mohammad Faisal**, Presently serving as an Assistant Professor in the Amity School of Communication, Amity University Lucknow. A Ph.D. in Business Administration and MBA from the Faculty of Management Studies and Research, Aligarh Muslim University. A UGC NET qualified faculty with an experience of more than 12 years in industry and academia. He has presented several research papers in National and international conference and also published research work in reputed journals. His field of interest is branding, entrepreneurial marketing and marketing of financial products.

- **Alishah Syedain**, Assistant Professor at Amity School of Communication, Amity University Lucknow An alumnus of AJK MCRC Jamia Millia Islamia, A PhD Research Scholar in Street Theatre , a writer, film making enthusiast and a faculty of Electronic media

- **Amit Massey** I come from the capital of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow. I did my master's in journalism and Mass Communication from Amity University Lucknow Campus. I had the privilege of working in media organizations like Sahara Samay, Star Plus and Sadhna TV. In the year 2014 I moved into academics and started working as a Senior Lecturer with Department of Mass Communication, Babu Banarasi Das University Lucknow. Since 2016 I am working as an Assistant Professor in Amity School of Communication, Amity University Lucknow. Television Production, TV Journalism, Film Production are my core specialization. I am also pursuing Ph.D. in political journalism from Amity University.

## AUTHOR'S PROFILE

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- **Upasana Saxena**, It is rightly said teaching is the creator of all professions. Upasana Saxena is an Assistant Professor at Amity University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. She has five years of work experience in different corporate sectors. She is pursuing her Ph.D. in management from Maharishi University of Information and Technology, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. She is a business graduate from SRM University, Chennai and a mass communication graduate from Makhn Lal Chaturvedi Rashtriya Patrakarita University, Bhopal. She has published her research papers in different National and International Journals which includes UGC care group I and group II journals. She has been recognized for the best research paper in an International Journal. She has attended different National and International conferences and her research papers and chapters have also been published in conference books. Being a passionate and ardent believer, she is continuously making a presence in the research area. She is also a reviewer in one of the international peer-reviewed journal.

- **Menon Vaidehi Raghavav**, is a communication professional with experience in Advertising, Hospitality, and Graduate Education . She has around 24 years' experience of which 15+ years has been spent learning & sharing knowledge. Vaidehi holds a Bachelors degree in English Literature and a Masters in Communication Science. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D in the area of studying the impact of social media on the usage of English language.

- **Shirish Sharma** is currently working as Teaching Associate at Amity School of Communication since January 2019. He has more than 2 years of teaching experience at university level to UG & PG students. He also has an industry experience of about 7 years having worked at The Times of India, as a senior graphic designer responsible for infographics, page designing and feature pages, before joining academics. His areas of interest include Graphic Designing, Advertising and Visual Communication.

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