



RESEARCH PAPER

Communication Phenomena of COVID-19: A Longitudinal
Study of Mainstream Indo-Pak English Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

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The COVID-19 phenomenon is continually evolving. This longitudinal study evaluated COVID-19 communication patterns of mainstream Indian and Pakistani English Newspapers—*Dawn* and *Hindustan Times*—at the inception of the COVID-19 pandemic and precisely after 12 months. The study has analyzed editorial data of one year in two phases—March 1st to 31st, 2020, and April 1st to 30th, 2021—by applying thematic analysis with media framing theory. After precise data mining using open and axial coding, the study has compared, contrasted, and evaluated thematic patterns in both phases. Themes that are common in both phases are Lockdown; Economy; Health; Infodemic; Education and Precautionary Measures. Two contrary themes are Vaccines Discrimination and Oxygen Shortage. The findings denoted that editorials of two neighboring countries presented almost similar issues. The editorials educated and informed the policymakers, government officials, and people about the changing and developing nature of the COVID-19 epidemic. This comparative study adds to the voice of COVID-19 communication phenomena and health communication literature.

Introduction

The second wave of COVID-19 came with numerous challenges for the world. The coronavirus persistently changes through variation, and the new variant becomes more deadly than the previous one; hence further information is required to deal with it effectively. Since the COVID-19 phenomenon is still ongoing, this study continues prior research of the authors (see, Ishfaq, Gillani, & Akhtar, 2021) on the same subject to explore new communication dimensions of the COVID-19 phenomena. This

longitudinal study combines the researchers' previous study (Ishfaq, Gillani, & Akhtar, 2021) and this study to compare and contrast similarities and differences in how the COVID-19 communication phenomenon is changing and evolving. It has been exceedingly difficult for developing and developed countries – no matter how sophisticated their healthcare infrastructure is and how robust their economic conditions are – to contain the COVID-19 outbreak. Perhaps, it is due to the lack of immediate informed and effective decision-making and preventive measures for the safety of people.

The countries with the highest COVID-19 cases are America, India, Russia, Brazil, Italy, and France (Rasheed, Rizwan, Javed, Sharif, & Zaidi, 2021). Worldwide vaccinations have already been launched, but scientists are uncertain about long-term benefits due to the unfolding new variants of coronavirus (Hafeez, Din, Zia, Ali, & Shinwari, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly changed our lives. In countries that share borders with Pakistan, the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly devastating, like China, the epicenter of coronavirus, in North Iran, a country with a high mortality rate (Rasheed et al., 2021). As the COVID-19 pandemic spread rapidly during the first wave, the Pakistani government imposed an uncompromising lockdown on public transportation, restaurants, hotels, markets, malls, educational institutions, and marriage halls (Rashid & Piracha, 2020).

Mass media become the eyes of the people because of the intangible nature of pandemics and contagious diseases. Media coverage of the coronavirus escalated due to curiosity and urgency than any recent health emergency (Ducharme, 2020). In health communication, the media worked as an "arbitrator"; the media played a critical role in increasing public awareness of precautionary measures issued by health care authorities and the governments (Mutua & Oloo, 2020; Mheidy & Fares, 2020).

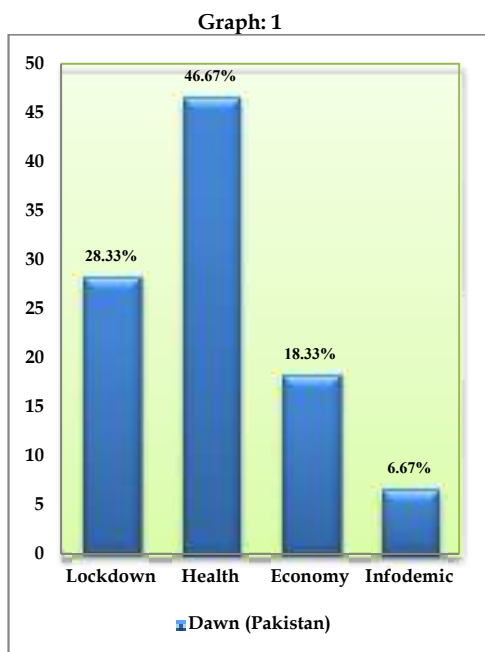
Print media play a central role in disseminating information at the mass level. The editorial is the official mouthpiece of any news organization. It highlights the most critical events and expresses an official opinion of the news organization. This study focuses on the editorial section of two mainstream Indian and Pakistani newspapers – *Hindustan Times* and *Dawn*. The researchers choose Indian and Pakistani newspapers because the two neighboring countries share the same living, working, cultural and environmental conditions.

Since this study comprises two phases. In the first phase, four different themes evolve after reading editorials word by word and doing manual coding in the light of theoretical framework and research questions. Four themes of the first phase – March 1st to 31st, 2020 – are as under:

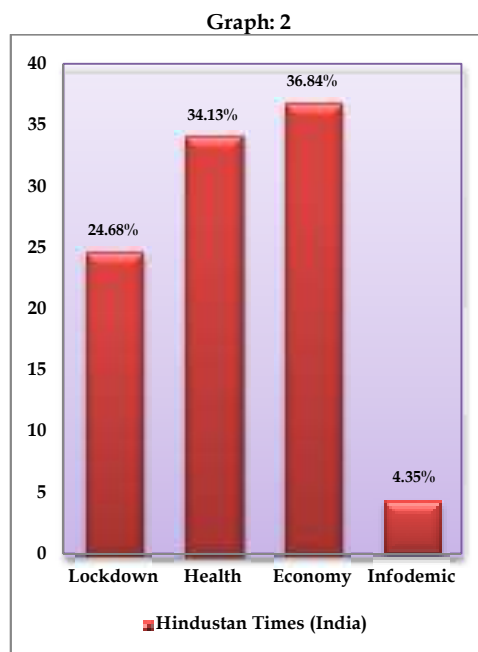
(1) lockdown, (2) health, (3) economy, and (4) infodemics

Graph 1: Percentage of different themes covered by *Dawn* (Pakistan) for the first phase – March 1st - 31st, 2020.

Graph 2: Percentage of different themes covered by *Hindustan Times* (India) for the first phase—March 1st - 31st, 2020.



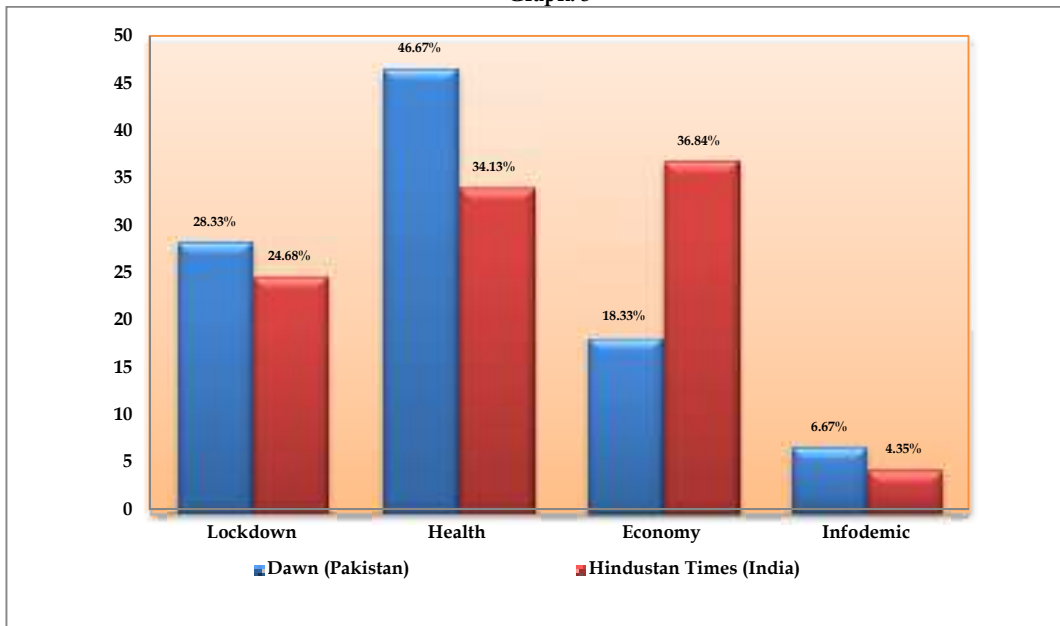
* a graphical representation of coverage percentage given to different themes by *Dawn* (Pakistan) for first phase in the month of March, 2020.



* a graphical representation of coverage percentage given to different themes by *Hindustan Times* (India) for first phase month in the of March, 2020.

Graph 3: Percentage comparison of themes covered by *Dawn* and *Hindustan Times* (India) for the first phase – March 1st - 31st, 2020.

Graph: 3



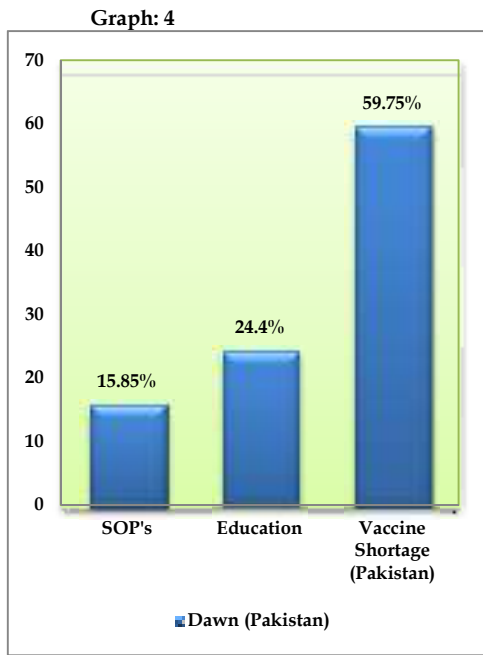
* a graphical representation of comparison of different themes by *Dawn* (Pakistan) & *Hindustan Time* (India) for first phase in the month of March, 2020.

In the second phase of the study, two common and two separate themes appeared in the editorials of both the newspapers.

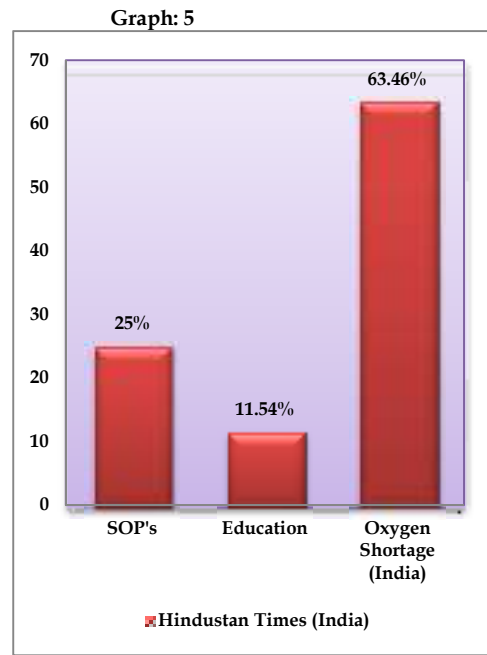
- (1) SOP's, (2) education, are similar in the *Hindustan Time* and *Dawn* (3) *Dawn* is focusing on vaccine shortage in Pakistan, and (4) the *Hindustan Times* is discussing Oxygen Shortage (India).

Graph 4: Percentage of different themes covered by *Dawn* (Pakistan) for the first phase—March 1st - 31st, 2021.

Graph: 5 Percentage of different themes by *Hindustan Times* (India) for the second phase—April 1st - 30th, 2021.

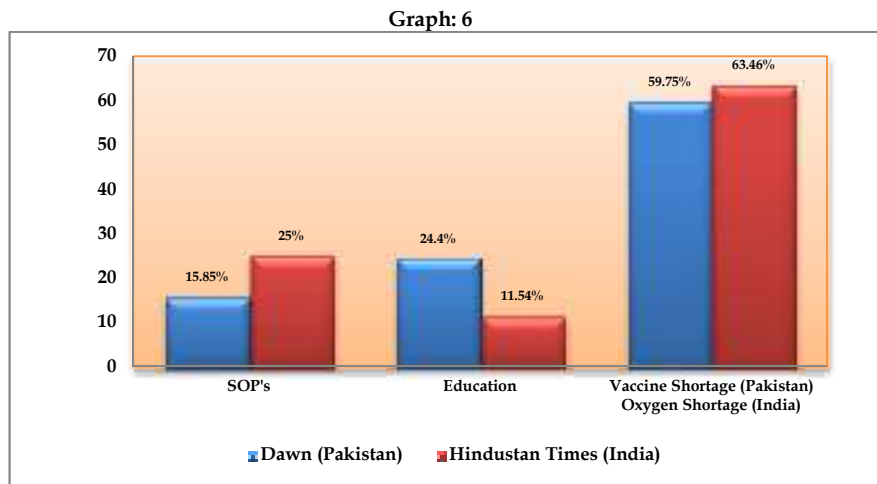


*a graphical representation of coverage percentage given to different themes by *Dawn* (Pakistan) for second phase in the month of April, 2021



*a graphical representation of coverage percentage given to different themes by *Hindustan Times* (India) for second phase in the month of April, 2021.

Graph 6: Percentage comparison of themes covered by the *Dawn* (Pakistan) and the *Hindustan Times* (India) for the first phase – April 1st - 31st, 2021



* a graphical representation of comparison of different themes by *Dawn* (Pakistan) & *Hindustan Times* (India) for second phase in the month of April , 2021

Literature Review

Media's role during the Pandemic

The media facilitates the acquisition of up-to-date information regarding public and health care workers (Karasneh et al., 2021). The media played a critical role during epidemics related to health issues in the 21st century. This has been observed in recent pandemics, including the current COVID-19 pandemic and the previous Ebola, MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome), and others. World Health Organization encourages governments to take dynamic steps to communicate with people about pandemics and share pertinent information about pandemics to halt the spread of COVID-19 disease and facilitate the people's cooperation with the government (World Health Organization, 2020).

COVID-19 and Precautionary Measures

The COVID-19 pandemic captured the attention of different media platforms. In times of global pandemic, mass media can play a pivotal role in shaping public opinion and influencing public opinion (Afridi, Hussain, Hashmi, & Asghar, 2021). As a way to deal with anxiety and the fear of pandemics, effective public reporting is essential (Ogbodo et al., 2020). In different countries worldwide, social activities and travel have been prohibited to curtail the spread of COVID-19 (Guan et al., 2020). Since COVID-19 has been spreading rapidly in Europe as a result of relaxation in measures of precaution, such as restricting outgoings, public gatherings, and social distancing, social activities have been restricted to prevent the spread of the second wave of the virus (Looi, 2020).

Health Emergencies and Communication

Communication is a central human trait that distinguishes it from other creatures. In the health crisis and pandemics, communication is the only source of hope. In communication studies, the role of mass media and communication has been explored during public health emergencies and pandemics in history (El-Behary, 2021). To reduce the spread of COVID-19 disease, immediate and extensive measures must be taken to associate with people and modify their behavior (Ngai, Singh, Lu, & Koon, 2020). A disease like the COVID-19 requires good communication to inform the public about the condition and its updates, to motivate them to take precautionary measures, to reduce the spread of the disease, and to inspire confidence in the government's ability to deal with the issue (Zhao, Cheng, Yu, & Xu, 2020).

Material and Methods

This is a longitudinal study. The study employs a qualitative analysis technique. Qualitative methods are exceptionally distinct, manifold, and subtle (Holloway & Todres, 2003). Thematic analysis is a primary method of qualitative research. The coding procedure is the component of research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The current study focuses on the data mining approach using the open and axial coding method. The primary trait of mining-text is its promptness, information acquired from online text streams, and instantly accessible for several usages (Pyo & Kim, 2019). Every single editorial related to COVID-19 is a unit of analysis in the chosen time frame of the study.

Data

Editorials related to COVID-19 published in the mainstream Indian and Pakistani newspapers—*Hindustan Times* and *Dawn*—in March 2020 and April 2021 were chosen for the first and second phases, respectively. The significance of this period is crucial because most of the countries of the world, including Pakistan and India, imposed a lockdown in March after the declaration of the corona virus as a global pandemic.

Theoretical Framework

Media framing helped a lot in seeking important information related to pandemics (Liu and Kim, 2011). This study uses media framing theory. Due to the framing process, media can capture the public's attention regarding a specific phenomenon (Entman, 2007).

Results and Discussion

The section below presents eight themes related to COVID-19 communication phenomena according to the *Dawn* and the *Hindustan Times* during the chosen period of study time— March 1st to 31st, 2020, and April 1st to 30th, 2021.

Findings of the First Phase

Shutting Down the Country

Lockdown is the only option to minimize the risk and save the citizens' lives at a time of great danger. After the declaration of COVID-19 as a "pandemic" (World Health Organization, 2020), the best potential preventative measure to diminish the transmission of virus countries was shutting down. Most European countries declared the lockdown on March 23, 2020 after the grim situation of COVID-19 (see, Walker,

2020). All the educational institutions, whether public or private, will be shut down, including shopping malls, all types, and public gatherings and traveling, are now restricted. Throughout the human history of pandemics, these restrictions have existed (Jahanbegloo R., 2020). Pakistan and India observed an extensive shutdown across the country from March 2020.

An editorial published in the *Hindustan Times* about shutting down of the country discussed that it is a fact that the lockdown is a harsh step for a country like India, whose population is 1.3 billion; still, it is necessary to take action, and citizens must follow the government's instructions (Hindustan Times, 2020a). If lockdown is thriving and people observe the instructions, there may be a slower spread of Covid-19. *Hindustan Times* (2020b) recommends some measures that government should take immediately, i.e., monitor the situation strictly, there may be the possibility to extend the lockdown, the government should draw up an economic plan for poor and daily wagers, government should also improve the health infrastructure and equip paramedics with essential facilities.

An editorial published in *Dawn* suggests that a country-wide lockdown is compulsory to stop the transmission of COVID-19. Coronavirus spread rate increases through physical contact; that is why a complete closure is required now, i.e., a total ban on national and international traveling and closing borders with Iran and Afghanistan (Dawn, 2020a). There are two opinions on a complete shutdown. Both are factual; the country's economic conditions cannot afford the lockdown; the situation would be worse for the poor people to meet both ends. On the other hand, if we delay lockdown, the COVID-19 problem may worsen; hence, governments should proactively take measures (Dawn, 2020b).

Under this theme, both newspapers present the seriousness of the infectious disease of COVID-19 and encourage the government to take the right step of lockdown for the safety of their citizens for breaking the chain of COVID-19 transmission. *Dawn* emphasizes that all the political parties must forget party interest and show national interest (Dawn, 2020c). The government should force the citizens to follow instructions and SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures). While *Hindustan Times* focuses on the citizens' behavior, the supply chain of essential goods and suggests that services should continue (Hindustan Times, 2020c). Both the newspapers provide information to the people and educate them regarding the deadly corona virus.

COVID-19 and Economic Trauma

After the outbreak of COVID-19, all the nations are in an impasse situation--socially and economically. The pandemic enormously affected the economy of the

countries. Coronavirus stopped all economic activities. The World Bank and World Health Organization jointly presented an assessment in 2019 about the impact of global GDP at 2.2 percent to 4.8 percent, which was startling (Chaudhry et al., 2020). We observed the economies surrounding this "catastrophe," and these foretell look genuine. The epidemic coronavirus appeared when economies of the world were more incorporated. This incorporation is the leading cause of the hasty spread of the COVID-19 worldwide and proved as a catalyst for economic distress (Sharma et al., 2020). Coronavirus pandemic has multispectral effects on the financial activities of the world.

Editorial published in *Hindustan Times* regarding the economy convey that so many sectors are disturbed economically (Hindustan Times, 2020d). There are some assessments by the United Nations that the Indian economy will bear 350\$ million loss on trade and development (Hindustan Times, 2020e). Indian Economy does not depend much on China; hence there may be no direct impact on the Indian economy like other countries with direct economic dealings with China (Hindustan Times, 2020f). Across the world, COVID-19 has drastic consequences on the global economy. Safety measures are suitable, but the closing of everything is a big problem for economic activities. It is becoming a significant cause of unemployment. At this stage, the government should take the essential decisions for that daily wagers who do not operate with the formal economy. Due to coronavirus, factory production reduced, and unemployment increased, ordinary people are without a source of revenue and face a shortage of basic needs.

Dawn (2020d) says that China is a global economic hub; due to the massive lockdown in China, the world's economies are under colossal pressure. The lockdown in China has disrupted the supply chain worldwide. There is a severe shortage of labor for industry. At the initial stage of the COVID-19 outbreak, the virus is not spreading rapidly in Pakistan, but cases are increasing slowly. According to some experts, it is a good thing regarding exports. However, if we close our eyes and behave shortsighted, the situation could be horrible. Due to globalization and interconnected economic systems, transport, aviation, shipping, tourism is going downswing. For instance, the IMF rescues the developing countries and makes them bound to spend the money on health; it would be an outstanding initiative for providing resources in their hands. This economic trauma will worsen very soon if the financial managers and their corresponding team do not develop a consensus about immediate decisions.

Both newspapers present deep thoughts about the economic conditions of different sectors. *Hindustan Times* points out that India's economy is not linked with China; India considers it a positive sign (Hindustan Times, 2020g). Moreover, Pakistan believes that lockdown has slowed down the supply chain globally. Editorials under

this theme explained that coming days are crucial, and now economic decisions will decide the country's future.

Health Management Challenges

The COVID-19 phenomena harshly affected the countries' health systems worldwide. This outbreak of COVID-19 is damaging the healthcare system of developing countries. Due to this, it is becoming more dangerous for society. The pandemic is taking the developing states to havoc with their neglected and underfinanced public health care system (Gates, 2020). It is a bold wake-up call concerning the poor health infrastructure and medical facilities. Health professionals and experts fear that the consequences of allowing this pandemic to spread without bold decisions and reliable management options may cause unprecedented devastation for humans (Prompetchara et al., 2020). The health care systems of developing countries will be overloaded with an excessive amount of COVID-19 cases. The situation would be deplorable in those countries where health care policies and strategies are weak. It would become a tragedy due to a sudden increase in COVID-19 outbreaks for different regions (Lai et al., 2020).

Editorial published regarding health issues in *Hindustan Times* describes that at the initial pandemic stage; the Indian government felt hesitant testing the infected peoples and could not test every citizen in the country. The Indian government is doing too little for a country whose population is 1.37 billion and taking an initial random sample of 1,100 people (Hindustan Times, 2020h). It is indispensable to manage the situation very carefully to counter health crises. Editorial suggests that a public-private partnership is a decision to immediately ramp up the testing capacity and fight against outbreaks (Hindustan Times, 2020i). The government should allow private hospitals and labs for COVID-19 tests. It is the direst health emergency, and it needs highly appropriate measures to manage these crises (Hindustan Times, 2020j).

Pakistan faces many health challenges; hence *Dawn's* editorials focus on the grim health situation. There is a shortage of proper equipment in Pakistani hospitals, and medical staff is not fully trained to deal with the pandemic (*Dawn*, 2020e). Due to limited paramedical staff, the workload is increasing rapidly, which will cause another big trouble (*Dawn*, 2020f). To manage these shortcomings, coordination and proper planning are required (*Dawn*, 2020g). It is important to follow health protocols to avoid virus transmission to medical personnel from infected individuals (*Dawn*, 2020h). To deal with the situation government should take decisions in advance, and citizens must show responsible behavior (*Dawn*, 2020i).

Under this theme, both newspapers talk about managing this health crisis; shortage of testing kits and personal safety equipment is an essential issue. The paramedical staff is under massive virus threat due to direct dealing with the infected people. Proper training and personal safety are necessary for frontline workers. The fact presented in both newspapers informs the decision-makers, policy, and planning sections to think out of the box and take compulsory measures to fight against this immensely growing health crisis.

Countering the Infodemic

The dispersion of information during pandemics has been widespread and extensively without authenticity and reliability. After announcing the "pandemic," a vast wave of information about COVID-19 caused the misinformation (Mheidly & Farse, 2020). WHO called this phenomenon a serious "Infodemic" through this spread of false news and misinformation quickly and more than the virus (Yu et al., 2020). The definition of "Infodemic" is that due to some particular occurrence, a heavy increase of inaccurate information about a specific issue, and its spread in a brief time (Zarocostas, 2020). Infodemic/false news caused anxiety, uncertainty, panic, and nervousness.

This fake news and misinformation situation was observed during pandemics worldwide, including Pakistan and India. The *Hindustan Times* (2020k) discusses that COVID-19 is a new phenomenon with no recent history. In every part of the world, people are concerned about the symptoms of this infectious disease and the possible treatment procedures and protocols. These circumstances caused fear, panic, anxiety, and uncertainty among the citizens and were converted into misinformation; hence fake news spread rapidly due to that factor. The *Hindustan Times* (2020l) reports that people infected with this deadly virus feel shame and guilt and face racial assault. To counter this situation, the government must start counseling and mental therapy for the suspected people and patients because people's mental health suffers a lot (Hindustan Times, 2020m).

The editorials published in *Dawn* describe that different social media platforms disseminate misleading information about virus symptoms and their cure (Dawn, 2020j). In Pakistan, some of the messages spread rapidly as a homemade remedy for Coavid-19 are drinking garlic water, taking hot air through nostrils, and a fake notification circulating. Dawn emphasizes that citizens must follow authentic news sources and do not believe in photoshop images, understand the country's situation, and behave like a responsible citizen; if the information is not trustworthy, do not spread it to others (Dawn, 2020k).

Both newspapers' editorials present this theme with a little bit of difference. Hindustan Times focuses on mental health because people target infected persons due to lack of knowledge or misinformation. The victims need empathy and kindness from the community. Dawn talks about the community's myths, causing misinformation and fake news. According to the newspaper, people must follow reliable news sources for this pandemic situation and not forward any information that makes trouble for society.

Findings of the Second Phase

An Absolute Need to Observe SOPs

Each country has taken steps to control the COVID-19 outbreak, such as lockdowns, smart lockdowns, or partial lockdowns and full lockdowns, for containing the spread of COVID-19. The most effective way is to take precautionary measures, such as social distancing, hand washing, quarantine, and rapid testing, to curb the spread of COVID-19 (Hafeez et al., 2021). Almost everyone seems relaxed and doesn't adhere to preventive measures and standard operating procedures (SOP) in their daily lives at restaurants, malls, hotels, wedding halls, educational institutes, etc. This leads to a steady increase in the ratio of COVID-19 cases. Any method to combat the COVID-19 pandemic will be effective only if the general public follows the relevant guidelines issued by concerned authorities (Roy et al., 2020).

Hindustan Times writes in its editorial that Indian citizens are showing irresponsible behavior, markets and shopping malls are overcrowded, people are jostling for space at bars and eating places, Indian weddings are in full swing, and thousands of festivals are currently underway (Hindustan Times, 2021n). Several states of India are taking measures, including the prohibition of larger get-togethers, putting curfews on bars during the night, and banning gatherings of more than five people (Hindustan Times, 2021o). *Hindustan Times* (2021p) suggests that Indian political leaders must take responsibility themselves and stop political rallies and religious congregations because the results of these activities are horrible in response to the deadly COVID-19 outbreak.

According to an editorial in *Dawn* (2021), the rates of COVID-19 cases are constantly high due to citizens' carelessness. They are avoiding Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) like hand washing, wearing masks, large gatherings, as well as disregarding global COVID-19 health protocols. The government will give Army and Police the task of making people obligated to follow SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 disease (Dawn, 2021m). *Dawn*

newspaper suggests that the government must create a level of understanding about SOPs (Standard Operating Procedure) of COVID-19 among the people (Dawn, 2021n).

Under this theme, both newspapers consistently emphasize on COVID-19 SOPs such as social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands, avoiding crowds, etc, and urging governments to take steps and make the public aware that following SOPs (Standard Operating Procedure) is the only way forward to survive against COVID-19.

COVID-19 and Educational Setback

"Globalization" has now become Coronaization without any geographic or demographic definition. It's almost one year after World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 a pandemic; fifty percent of students around the world still face full or partial school closures (UNESCO, 2021). Due to school closures, vulnerable children face a dropout risk (Smith, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic is responsible for the closure of educational institutes worldwide. The ability of educational systems in developing countries to deal with school closures and provide assistance with e-learning has been inadequate (UNESCO, 2021). Generally, the term used in literature, "learning loss," depicts reducing students' skills and knowledge (Pier, Hough, Christian, Bookman, Wilkenfeld, & Miller, 2021).

As *Hindustan Times* says in its editorial due to immense increase in COVID-19 cases government take decision to cancel the board examination (Hindustan Times, 2021q). According to an editorial in the *Hindustan Times*, this year is very difficult for students regarding learning; every student does not have equal opportunities and resources to manage digital learning or e-learning (Hindustan Times, 2021r). Furthermore, it is recommended by *Hindustan Times* that all stakeholders, including students, parents, guardians, school council members, and examination board members, think of a substitute for the structure of student evaluation (Hindustan Times, 2021s).

According to an editorial in Dawn, current studies reveal that the COVID-19 new strain is affecting children more than before (Dawn, 2021o). *Dawn* (2021p) reports that countries like Bangladesh, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have postponed the examination for O/A levels. According to *Dawn* (2021q), online classes are hindered by the lack of android devices and laptops, poor internet connections, and electricity problems. *Dawn* newspaper editorial suggests that the federal education minister should consult with all stakeholders and explore how other countries deal with this issue (Dawn, 2021r).

Under the theme "COVID-19 and educational setback", both newspapers present true impressions concerning the issue. Both newspapers assert that the accessibility of supporting material like internet, smartphone, and connectivity issues is the main stumbling block in e-learning. Both newspapers suggest that all stakeholders must be involved in making further decisions.

Discriminatory Vaccine Dispersion

The scientists have succeeded in making the COVID-19 vaccine in record time. The epidemic of COVID-19 is still a national and international disaster, and this vaccine program needs robust transparency. AstraZeneca-Oxford's COVID-19 vaccine has been approved in addition for many European countries as well as Argentina, Nepal, Pakistan, Mexico, Brazil, and India (Acharya, Ghimire, & Subramanya, 2021). The biggest obstacle, in practice, is the lack of funds for vaccination in countries with low income and insufficient health care to manage vaccination (Liu, Salwi, & Drolet, 2020). Approximately 90 countries had acquired at least one vaccine of COVID-19 by February 19, 2021 (Acharya et al., 2021).

As a result of the approval of the COVID-19 vaccine, many countries in the world have administered the vaccine, and the people have some measure of confidence. However, low-income nations still experience difficulty in accessing the vaccine. This problem is caused by the fact that many wealthy countries have booked the vaccine in advance (Ritchie et al., 2021). According to *Dawn's* newspaper editorial, Tedros Adhanom, director-general of WHO, said that the imbalance distribution of COVID-19 vaccine between rich and developing nations is exceptionally alarming. Furthermore, many countries don't have vaccines for their healthcare workers or other vulnerable groups (Dawn, 2021s).

In an editorial in *Dawn*, it is reported that the WHO vaccine program Covax, whose primary purpose is to facilitate vaccines for those countries that are unable to purchase them, has been left behind, with the time period of 15 days, 2 million doses were delivered through the Covax program to 92 countries, but only the UK received the same number of doses (Dawn, 2021t). *Dawn* newspaper editorial suggests that there is no way to defeat COVID-19 without collective action. COVID-19 will always be a problem for humanity until discriminatory behavior persists (Dawn, 2021u).

Oxygen Shortage a Phenomenal Mismanagement

Humanity has faced many severe health crises since the end of World War II. The continuing coronavirus COVID-19 epidemic resulted from SARS-CoV-2 yet created global health challenges. During the COVID-19 pandemic, rural hospitals of

India were facing an acute shortage of medical oxygen (Madaan, Paul, & Guleria, 2021). Any facility that belongs to healthcare that provides emergency, trauma, obstetric care, and surgical treatment should be able to access ample oxygen supplies. That is why oxygen has been ranked among the top essential medicines by the WHO (WHO, 2019). Following the COVID-19 pandemic second wave, with an increase in hospitalizations and casualties, the healthcare system of India was badly affected because there were not enough medical supplies and drugs available (Pal, 2021). India is considered the leading country in terms of the pharmaceutical industry.

The family members of infected people and the general public request aid from the government and private organizations and expect that they will supply oxygen and other life-saving medicines to COVID-19 patients (Dapke et al., 2021). According to the editorial in the *Hindustan Times*, India has restricted oxygen supply for industrial and commercial purposes, switched oxygen for COVID-19 patients, and started importing 50,000 metric tons of oxygen solely for medical purposes due to severe oxygen shortages (*Hindustan Times*, 2021t).

An editorial published in *Hindustan Times* reveals that this dreadful oxygen deficiency is evidence that many crucial infrastructures have yet to be implemented due to the lack of administrative ability and misreading of the COVID-19's potency (*Hindustan Times*, 2021u). *Hindustan Times* (2021v) experts from the industry say India can produce about 7,000 metric tons of oxygen for medical purposes. Still, there is a lack of tankers and oxygen cylinders for transport and storage.

Hindustan Times editorial reveals that the high court of Delhi stated, "beg, borrow, or steal, but help the inhabitants as much as possible to ensure their survival." The Indian Supreme Court questioned the central government about managing the COVID-19 national road map, including the distribution plan for medical oxygen (*Hindustan Times*, 2021w).

Conclusion

COVID-19 has caused significant socio-economic, financial, and health challenges in almost every nation; however, there are some issues, such as the absence of healthcare knowledge about COVID-19, avoiding the Standard operating procedures, and preventive measures that could hinder government efforts to control and combat the pandemic. Communication protocols by the government and its different community awareness departments have played a vital role in dealing with the pandemic dilemma. People understand health issues more when the media frames the health issues.

Media frame issues to understand crisis coverage (Durham, 1998; Haider-Markal, Delehanty & Beverlin, 2007). Media framing of COVID-19 educates the community in acquiring needed preventive measures to control the pandemic and confine the morbidity and fatality ratio. As framing greatly depends on emotions, ideas, and concepts reserved in human memory; hence media frames draw their basis to cognitive psychology in the condition of node and related to one another across the semantic path (Price & Tewksbury, 1997).

A theme of "shutting down the country" is integrated with a set of media frames related to the need for lockdown in the clearing of the COVID-19 chain of transmission; the brutality of infectious diseases; preventative measures; and the continuation of supply chain services.

Under the theme "COVID-19 and economic trauma," there are frames that refer to current economic conditions, the epidemic's impact on the economy, the interconnectedness of economies, and the IMF's rescue plan. These implications will have severe consequences for the global economy. Editorials belonging to this theme were significant for decision-makers to counter a massive economic trauma.

Editorials falling under the theme of "Health management challenges" are framing issues on the massive scale of health crisis; medical equipment shortage; necessary health protocols; fatal threat to frontline workers from the virus; health management shortcomings. This information is primarily for health managers and policymakers to take essential measures against the rapidly intensifying health emergency.

Editorials dealing with the theme "Countering the infodemics" are accompanied by frames that describe misinformation, empathy, fake news, mental health, lack of knowledge, anxiety, and explain the necessity for citizens to follow credible circumstances in the present situation. As a result, the research supported the idea that the media can use framing to draw attention to a particular issue (Entman, 2007).

A theme of "An absolute need to follow SOP" is integrated with a set of media frames related to the need for preventive measures in the clearing of the COVID-19 chain of transmission; the brutality of infectious diseases; social distancing; hand washing; avoiding public gathering, and follow global health protocols.

Under the theme "COVID-19 and Educational Setback", there are frames that refer to the current situation, e-learning is the need of the hour; availability of supporting material for e-learning or online learning such as laptops, smartphones,

strong internet connection, etc. All relevant stakeholders should be involved to take any decision. Editorials belong to this theme were significant for decision-makers.

Editorials falling under the theme of "Discriminatory Vaccine Dispersion "are framing issues of vaccine distribution; discrimination in the national and international level; developed and developing countries should work together to flatten the curve of COVID-19. Rich countries' vaccine administration ratio is much higher than low-income countries.

Editorials dealing with the theme "Oxygen Shortage a Phenomenal Mismanagement" are accompanied by frames that describe that dreadful Oxygen shortage is due to the administrative deficiency by the central government of India; miscalculation in the intensity of COVID-19 epidemic. As a result, the research supported the idea that the media can use framing to draw attention to a particular issue (Entman, 2007).

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