

# Character's Of Media On Covid

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"Whoever controls the media, controls the mind"

— Jim Morrison

Media plays one of the most important aspect in a democracy or help the government to get the situation and the demands or needs of the mass. On December 31, 2019, China informed the World Health Organisation about the cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan city, which subsequently spread to other countries. Initially, the virus was named as a severe acute respiratory syndrome - coronavirus-2, some media reports also called it the Wuhan virus, and now, the disease is named COVID-19. Due to non-availability of any vaccine and treatment for COVID, the Government of India enforced the lockdown from March 25, to May 31, 2020 to contain the spread of COVID-19. During the 1st week of February, mass media focused on China's tally and screening at airports. In India, the first COVID case was reported in Kerala on January 30, 2020. Meanwhile, mass media started promoting hand hygiene and other preventive measures. The WHO declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on March 11, 2020. From this day, media started constant reporting on COVID which created anxiety among the public, leading to impulsive buying of hand sanitizer's, face masks, and daily need products. Simultaneously, media started covering the shortage of personal protective equipments (PPE) for health care workers. The unlock process started from June 1, 2020 onward in a phased manner. During the lockdown period, the central and state governments got adequate

time to strengthen the institutional capacity to handle COVID cases both in terms of infrastructure development and capacity building. Mass media played a very important role in creating awareness among the general public and in the dissemination of the Government orders/guidelines to the health workers, sanitation workers, including the police at grassroots levels. Although NPIs and government-imposed travel restrictions can be burdensome—requiring significant alterations in human behavior, which is difficult to maintain over extended period—the media can ensure compliance with these important measures by educating the public on their effectiveness at fighting diseases and preventing additional outbreaks. This news was further suppressed as Indian singer Kanika Kapoor was the highlight for spreading the disease by attending a party and meeting many celebrities at Luck now on March 15. On April 5, media became a part of the festivity by switching off residential lights for 9 min and light a candle or Diya on their balconies. Along with all these, some media platforms showed the hotspots and the COVID condition of Italy. Footages of people falling on the streets, overburdened hospitals, and dead bodies in the churches showed that the problem may worsen in future if the adequate preventive measure is not taken. In April, a gathering in Delhi's Nizamuddin Markaz (center) in India reported a number of its members to test positive for COVID. At the end of the first lockdown on April 14, 2020, the #lockdown two started. Social media was flooded with trolls about the new task. Soon, it shifted to migrant workers traveling hundreds of miles to reach their homes amid lockdown. The media coverage helped the laborers for starting special trains called "Shramik express." After being in

lockdown for over a month, media showed photos and footages of a clean environment and clean air. The low movement of automobiles and closed factories improved the environment by 60-65%. In May, America became the new hotspot of the virus after Italy. Media showed the protests of Americans against the extended lockdown. Along with this, all internet platforms start showing India's status of coronavirus in the small box on almost every website. Our media was also taking other aspects very carefully like one of the main objective was to understand whether, on the eve of the second wave in India, topics related to COVID-19—in contrast to other topics of discussion, such as politics, protests, and entertainment—were a fading topic of discussion. Not only by mass media but our media was very active to deliver updates in the case of COVID-19 by their social media handles. We have seen many tweets from our media official handles and this was very helpful for others to take good idea about the current situation out there.