

<https://doi.org/10.48047/AFJBS.6.14.2024.7319-7351>



African Journal of Biological Sciences

Journal homepage: <http://www.afjbs.com>



Research Paper

Open Access

ROLE OF MEDIA IN BRINGING HEALTHCARE-RELATED BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES (A STUDY IN RURAL AREAS OF DELHI)

Shobhna, Dr. Sandeep Kumar, Dr. Abhishek K. Singh, Dr Manish Dubey

PhD Research Scholar, Amity University, Gwalior, 7827881779

anchorshobhna@gmail.com

Associate Professor, Auro University, Gujarat, 7000945315

drsandeepkumar153@gmail.com

Associate Professor, Media Cluster, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies,
Dehradun, 8860244897, asingh8319@gmail.com

Assistant Professor, Amity School of Communication, Amity University Madhya
Pradesh, manish.dubeymd01@gmail.com

Volume 6, Issue 14, Aug 2024

Received: 15 June 2024

Accepted: 25 July 2024

Published: 15 Aug 2024

[doi: 10.48047/AFJBS.6.14.2024.7319-7351](https://doi.org/10.48047/AFJBS.6.14.2024.7319-7351)

ABSTRACT

Media plays a crucial role in spreading awareness and information among the society. Primary healthcare is one of the areas that has been made better with the use of media because it has met the biggest challenge of reaching the masses. Any kind of facility or the implementation of governmental policies and programs is unsuccessful until people aren't aware of it or do not use it. Media is one of the health communications tools to reach people and make them aware. It has played its role as well by working for different causes like spreading awareness related to sanitation and hygienic practices, maintaining a clean environment, tobacco, cancer, polio, malaria, dengue, HIV HIV-related awareness through various programs and campaigns. But still, in many areas, it can be seen, that people are still unaware of primary healthcare systems or the effective and necessary measures to be taken to live a healthy life in healthy surroundings. This marks a question on the effectiveness of media being a health communication tool in spreading healthcare awareness and bringing behavioral changes. In this research, the author has analyzed the role of media in bringing behavioral changes among people residing in rural areas related to primary health care. The study has been conducted in rural areas of Delhi to record the responses. The author has used SPSS software for the analysis and representation of data to draw out the conclusions of the study.

KEYWORDS

Media, mass media, healthcare, prevention, precaution, Mohalla clinics, Asha, television, government, hospitals, rural areas, behavioral change, health behavior

INTRODUCTION

Media has always played a crucial role in bringing massive changes and development to society. Since, the times of traditional media where street plays, folk music, folk dance, puppet shows, radio, television, and many more were the modes of mass communication, media is being used by the people and for the people of society to fulfill various purposes. Media has become one of the most pivotal tools in this society as it is playing the most impactful and responsible role in everybody's lives with all the current updates, news, and happenings in the world (media, 2024). With the advanced technological tools and techniques, modes of mass media have also developed and in today's scenario of the digital world where almost everyone is making use of the internet, people have got their hands on the latest information and different platforms through one click with their mobile phones or other electronic gadgets. If providing the statistics for the same then as per research of April 2024, there were 5.44 billion internet users globally, which amounts to 67.1% of the total population worldwide (Petrosyan, 2024). If the social media users, then the number comes to be 5.07 billion worldwide which is 62.6% of the total global population (Petrosyan, 2024). The use of the internet and the era of online technology have brought huge changes from the flow of information to the utilization of it by netizens. Online digital platforms are getting more popular with the times and almost everything like marketing, promoting, doing job tasks, getting education, shopping, availing medical facilities, booking appointments, conducting meetings, advertising, etc. is getting digitalized because of its popularity and ease of use. As it is a new ever-changing and emerging field, internet access, social media platforms, and mobile communication are all leveraged for access to the availability of health information (Kanchan & Gaidhane, 2023). Nowadays media is playing a crucial role in the healthcare sector as well; by providing necessary information, spreading awareness, and providing access to the use of telemedicine, e-healthcare

applications, m-health facilities, and many more. The fact is nowadays, mass media is increasingly becoming popular as an effective communication strategy to deliver preventive health messages as well (Redman, Spencer, & Senson-Fischer).

Behavior change communication

When we discuss healthcare, behavior change communication acts as a vital pillar in ensuring it. If the communication strategies are adopted and executed effectively then it will become easier and better to bring behavioral changes among people on a larger scale. Behavior change communication can be defined as “an interactive process of an intervention with individuals, group or community to develop communication strategies to promote positive health behaviors according to the social environment and surroundings and hence helps people in solving and minimizing their health problems (Behaviour change communication, 2024). Behavior change communication holds high importance in health promotion and communication as it helps in increasing knowledge, boosting community discussion about health, promoting positive attitudes among people, creating demand and supply for the needy, giving a boost to the services related to prevention, care, and treatment, awareness about healthcare, etc (behaviour change communication, n.d.). For the development of effective BCC messages, it must meet certain criteria like research-centered, benefit learning, and service interrelated which are developed professionally and are interrelated to the behavior change (Wagle, 2019).

There are several principles involved in behavior change communication, which are as follows:

- Objectives of social and behavioral change
- Concise, clear, and tailored messages to the audience
- Two-way communication for feedback and improvement
- Measurement of impact to monitor changes

Steps involved in developing the Strategic Communication Plan:

- i. The very first thing is understanding the program, which takes place through collecting primary and secondary data. Further, the role of communication comes, that adds value to the program through the participatory process, which helps in understanding the mentality of people, barriers, and contexts, that will be addressed by Social and behavior change communication strategy (Deepmala, 2019).
- ii. The objective of the communication plan must be clear and defined before being handed. This will help in measuring the impact of efforts. This helps in providing a clear understanding of the role communication played while adopting the Behavior Change Communication strategy.
- iii. A deep understanding and identification of your audience will increase the effectiveness of communication. If the identification of the audience has been done correctly then communication can be established in a more targeted, appropriate, and effective manner.
- iv. The next step involves developing messages and then testing those messages so that they can resonate with the audience. The message developed must be concise and clear as it helps in better understanding. Further testing these messages with the targeted audience helps in identifying the effectiveness of messages and then the iterations can be made based on that.
- v. Now the role comes for the selection of communication tactics and materials. The communication channel to be used completely depends upon the audience and the communication objectives. Through which sources the audience receives information or messages, whose opinions they value- these things matter a lot. Communication tactics have a vast area of options provided like interpersonal communication, mass media, social or community interaction, and many more. These tactics can be combined and used to make things happen effectively and it must be two-way in nature that encourage feedback response as well.

- vi. Finalization of strategy depends upon the complete process that involves messages, selection of communication channel, and measuring its impact based on objective, context, and targeted audience. The communication plan adopted must support and reinforce the Behavior Change Communication strategy (Behavior Change Communication Strategy , 2013).
- vii. The last step involves the measurement of results. A strategy must always be selected in such a manner that the impact and communication objective can be measured and further can be linked to the program, social, and behavioral results. The impact of BCC can be measured by the immediate output, final and intermediate outcomes based on the implementation duration (Khan, Bhatnagar, Hazra, & Kamar, 2012).

Media in bringing behavioral changes

Media is known as the watchdog of society, and it is true because it is one of the most powerful sources of information which also reflects like a mirror of what is happening in the society. The power of media is beyond the limits and this factor of media must be utilized in the best possible manner. Media has always been used as a powerful communication tool and has also helped in bringing development and creating awareness in society. At the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the media has performed its role so well in spreading awareness, and information and has also proved as an excellent source of entertainment. Therefore, it can be analyzed that the use of media has made lives easier and better with the ease of use and getting things done cost-effectively. No doubt, many platforms of media have also been misused which led to numerous negative consequences like the spread of fake news, misinformation, disinformation, misguiding people, creating panic situations among people, and killing mental peace which resulted in anxiety and depression as well. But no one can deny the fact that it was the only source of information, education, and entertainment during those hard times when everybody

got locked inside their homes. With this, many things and work made a turn to the use of online platforms and set an example of being multifunctional. While talking about primary healthcare, then again media has played a major role in spreading the word about it to the people. Media can be seen as an educator that educates people and increases their knowledge.

Since the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, much research has been done on the capability of media to influence behavioral changes among people, and further also mass media plays a major role in communicating the necessary measures to be taken for healthcare (Aman & Jahan, 2020). The use of visual representation of any message or information makes it easier to understand for the audience be it through television or the use of social media platforms (Kalu, 2023). With the changing times and increasing popularity of digital media, its use in healthcare can also be seen and the strategic use of it as a healthcare communication tool is more effective as compared to other methods of communication. The strategic use of digital technology in behavior change communication has included a huge variety of platforms and strategies, most of which hold on more intensity, clarity, reach, frequency, and interactivity (Evans, et al., 2022). “Disseminating health and nutrition information and motivating people to adopt new behaviors, especially in communities who are residing in rural areas with poor literacy rate and infrastructure challenges, it has become a concern and an ongoing challenge for the health practitioners and here the role of media comes as a rescue (Pilla, et al., 2018)”. Media holds the potential to educate the masses on a larger scale by providing a larger coverage of public health issues and concerns (Gever & Ezeah, 2020). Media can also be seen as a promoter that promotes campaigns, messages, new medical services, governmental health programs, policies, and schemes.

In terms of generating awareness, again role of media cannot be denied. But when one talks about bringing behavioral changes among people then it becomes quite difficult as there are certain parameters to assess like media interventions, formative research using media, and

further the conduct of evaluation (Evans D. , et al., 2022). But still, the media cannot be sufficient to do the needful excellently. The reason is that the use of mass media can disseminate information but cannot change the habits of people as it needs a proper understanding and takes time. Knowing about something and then inculcating that into practice are two different things. Only being aware does not solve the purpose, it is a need to consider the fact that how media has brought changes in the behavior of people and to which extent. Media being a strong communication tool has influenced the lives of people and many have incorporated the changes in their lifestyles after becoming aware.

Primary Healthcare does not focus on just the treatment rather there are many a thing that falls under this category including the knowledge related to preventive and curative methods and media is one of the communication tools that works for this purpose, other than this there are other forms of communication as well. The need is that communication has to be established between healthcare professionals, practitioners, and the masses. To minimize the burden on the public health system, it is mandatory to adopt the behavior change on a wide scale, and this is possible with the right amalgamation of government, media, practitioners, healthcare professionals, several organizations, and stakeholders (Singh, Muttreja, Chowdhary, & Kalaan). There are several shreds of evidence based on research that health communication through mass media has helped in bringing behavioral changes among people especially related to reproduction and other health measures (Ryerson, 2003). The only concern is to see such changes on a larger scale irrespective of many limiting factors, discrimination, or geographical boundaries, and for this cause increased efforts of media are needed. The increase in engagement, content production, and systematic and evidence-driven approach with the influence on attitude and knowledge can help in bringing healthcare-related behavioral changes at various levels of individual, community, or group (Using social media for health behavior change, 2023).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many areas where it is difficult to reach people and as a result, most of the population remains unaware of healthcare facilities. **(Singh & Ratnamala, 2018)** The research paper titled as “Role of Media in Creating Awareness about Health Facilities in Scheduled Caste of Purvanchal” discusses the role of media in spreading awareness among people residing in underdeveloped areas. The researcher has highlighted two major limitations in such areas- underdevelopment and poor socio-economic status. The researcher has concluded that television is the most effective media tool to reach people and convey messages related to healthcare as compared to other media tools, which are radio and newspaper. **(Saraf & Balamurugan, 2018)** The research article titled as “The Role of mass media in Health Care Development: A Review Article” has reviewed the available literature that discusses the role of media in presenting health issues and spreading knowledge and awareness among people. The researcher has discussed both the aspects of mass media usage in healthcare with the advantages and disadvantages. The results show that it is a fact that mass media is a successful way of communication at national as well as rural levels as it has presented and resolved many health issues like HIV AIDS, cancer, diabetes, tuberculosis, and many more. The only thing that must be taken into serious consideration is the use of mass media it must not be misused as it often behaves as a platform for spreading misinformation or disinformation. It has also played a major role in bringing behavioral changes among people related to health and has helped in developing a positive attitude and keeping updated, which has helped the people residing in rural areas on a large scale.

(Majali, Alsoud, Omar, & Alhassan, 2021) The research article titled “Social Media Use as health awareness tool: A Study Among Healthcare Practitioners” it is discusses regarding the

use of social media as a tool to spread health awareness among people. The researcher has highlighted the importance of social media as an effective tool to reach people for spread awareness cost-effectively and conveniently. With the advancement in technology, everyone is making use of new media and so is the result of adopting this method by the health practitioners also as the use of social media has brought massive changes in almost every sector. This study reveals the fact that this communication method has spread awareness among people related to the prevention and treatment of disease.

Mass media campaigns are another effective strategy for health communication to connect with hard-reach people irrespective of any differences. (**Ibrahim, 2021**) The research article “The Role of Media Campaigns in Raising Awareness of Development Issues and Their Relationship to the Level of Anxiety in Adolescents” has analyzed the role and effectiveness of mass media campaigns as there are many such campaigns organized through satellite channels to spread awareness, building up confidence and sense of responsibility, increasing developmental issues and many more. The author concluded with the positive aspects of mass media campaigns as having clear goals, being consistent, innovative designs, bringing positive changes, presenting development issues, and many more. (**L. Lapointe, 2013**) The other research article titled “Collaborating through social media to create health awareness” also focuses on the use of social media in creating awareness regarding the treatment and prevention with the help of mass media campaigns. The researcher has highlighted the issue of cancer awareness and how campaigns played a major role in the cause. The other research work carried out in Saudi Arabia has also focused on the role of social media in spreading health awareness and it is being used by health educators as a health communication tool (**Wadd Mohammed, 2021**). The research Health Educators, the paper titled “Usage of Social Media for Health Awareness Purposes among Health Educators and Students in Saudi Arabia” has analyzed the role of social media in disseminating health information. The study reveals that more than half of the population

makes use of this platform to seek health information as it helps in increasing awareness, spread knowledge, and helps in improving health habits.

(Razak, 2020) The research article “Changing awareness about health behavior: A study among young Instagram users” discusses the role of social media in bringing health behavior changes. This study reveals the use of online media as being a good platform from which people can seek help and information related to health improvement. Not only this, but it has also brought many health behaviors changes as they can even get indulged in social interaction and can get feedback as well. **(Inga Saboia, 2020)** One of the other studies, titled as “Are you ready for the challenge? Social media health challenges for behavior changes” has highlighted the use of social media in bringing healthy behavioral changes among people. In this research article, it is discussed one of the social media platforms i.e., Instagram which has brought change among people regarding their weight loss and has pointed out the issue of eating habits. This is one of the examples that depict the role of social media in bringing behavioral changes. With more effort and discussing other issues as well, then it can be beneficial for changing the perception and behavior related to other healthcare issues as well. The research paper titled “Digital and Social Media Opportunities for dietary behavior change” has analyzed the role of digital and social media in bringing behavior changes among people. It is true that with time, there has been a huge difference in consuming, communicating and receiving media messages and digital platforms have become accessible to almost everyone. “There are opportunities to influence behavior online using similar techniques to traditional health promotion programs; to positively affect health-related knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy **(Aileen F. McGloin, 2014)**”. The researcher has highlighted the pros and cons of making use of digital media as it is a vast platform and multi-dimensional, so it possesses its challenges as well like misguiding information, privacy issues, lack of evaluation, and many more. But it must be utilized in the best possible manner as it is easy to reach and cost-effective.

OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the role of media in communicating health-related messages.
- To analyze the effectiveness of media in bringing behavioral changes among people.

METHODOLOGY

The author has adopted a qualitative as well as quantitative approach for conducting the research work. The research work has been done on primary data as well as secondary data. A thorough study was done with the available research articles, books, news articles, etc. to get a deep understanding and analyze the role of media as a communication tool and the effectiveness noted so far in bringing behavioral changes among people related to primary healthcare. A structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions was framed and distributed among the respondents of the selected sample population. The selected population size for the research study is 300 respondents, 100 respondents from each selected district. In total there are 12 districts in Delhi, the researcher has chosen 3 districts with the help of a simple random sampling method. The selected districts are Southwest Delhi, Northeast Delhi, and Shahdara. Further two rural areas from each district are taken into consideration by using a convenient sampling method which are Dhansa, Chhawla, Badarpur Khadra, Sabhapur, Maujpur, and Seelampur respectively. Further 50 respondents from each rural area are selected for filling the questionnaire and recording responses for the study. For the analysis of response recorded, data representation, and hypothesis testing, SPSS software is used. Through this software, the tables and figures are also obtained based on the recorded responses of respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

For this study, the researcher surveyed by taking 300 respondents as the sample size, among which 150 males and 150 females were chosen. 217 respondents were married and 83 were unmarried. The majority of respondents belonged to the age group of 26-35 years, 71 respondents were from 18-25 years, which makes 23.7%. only 12% of responses were recorded from the age group of 46-55 years and 13.7% of respondents aged more than 55 years of age. The majority of respondents i.e. 113, 37.7 % had a family income between 10,0001 to 20,000 Rs per month, then 85 people had a family income between 5,001 to 10,000 Rs per month. 18 % of respondents had their family income below 5,000 Rs per month and only 16% of respondents were earning more than Rs 20,000 as family income. 132 respondents, the majority of respondents, especially females, did not have any education, they had never been to school. 26.7% of the total respondents, 80 of them had completed their primary education. 58 respondents had their high school qualification and 16 respondents had completed their higher secondary education. Only 14 respondents had their educational qualification of graduation or more which makes 4.7 percent of the total sample size.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	150	50.0
	Female	150	50.0
Marital status	Married	217	72.3
	Unmarried	83	27.7

Age group	18-25	71	23.7
	26-35	84	28.0
	36-45	68	22.7
	46-55	36	12.0
	56 and above	41	13.7

Family Income (in Rupees per month)	below 5,000	54	18.0
	5,001 to 10,000	85	28.3
	10,001- 20,000	113	37.7
	20,001 and above	48	16.0

Educational Qualification	No education	132	44.0
	Primary (class 1-5)	80	26.7
	High school (class 6-9)	58	19.3
	Higher secondary (class 10-12)	16	5.3
	Graduate and above	14	4.7

Table 1. Demographic variables

The analysis of the data provides valuable insights into the role of media in spreading awareness regarding primary healthcare and its impact on the behaviour of individuals, especially those residing in rural areas. Among the surveyed population of 300 individuals, a significant majority (77%) were found to be aware of national health policies, programs, and schemes, while 23% reported being unaware. This underscores the need for targeted efforts to enhance awareness among a segment of the population.

Aware of national health policies, programs, and schemes			
		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Yes	231	77.0
	No	69	23.0
	Total	300	100.0

Table 2. Awareness level about national health policies, programs, and schemes

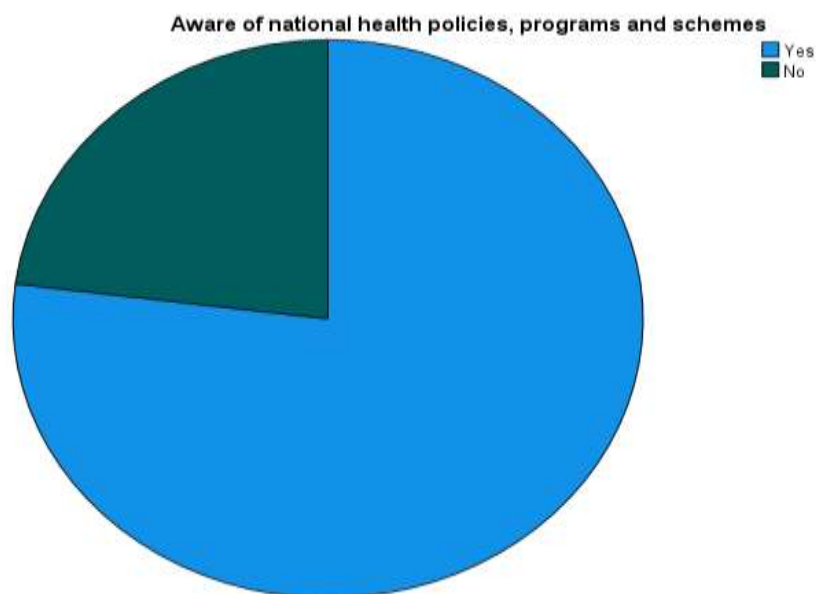


Fig 1. Awareness level about national health policies, programs, and schemes

When assessing the frequency of exposure to health-related messages or information, the data revealed a substantial engagement, with 45% encountering such information monthly and 39% on a weekly basis. Least number of responses were recorded for coming across a health-related

message on an annual basis. Only 12% of respondents agreed to getting such information daily. This shows that the information related to healthcare is not reaching to the audience with more frequency and at regular intervals.

How often do you come across any health-related message or information?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Annually	10	3.3
	Monthly	136	45.3
	Weekly	118	39.3
	Daily	36	12.0
	Total	300	100.0

Table 3. Number of times coming across health-related message

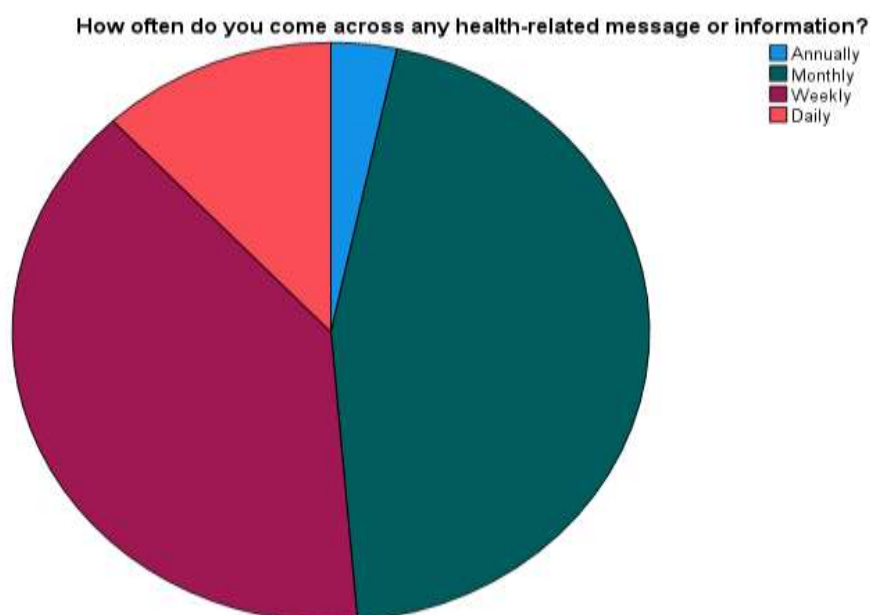


Fig 2. No. of times respondents come across health-related message

The perception of the role of media in providing information related to primary healthcare varied among respondents. A notable 50.3% agreed and only 1% strongly agreed that media plays an important role, while 9% expressed a neutral stance and 27.3 % disagreed to varying degrees. 36 respondents, making 12% of total respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that media plays an important role in providing health-related information, due to various reasons. This suggests that a significant portion of the population acknowledges the media's influence in disseminating healthcare information.

Do you think Media plays an important role in providing information related to primary healthcare?			
		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Strongly Disagree	36	12.0
	Disagree	82	27.3
	Neutral	28	9.3
	Agree	151	50.3
	Strongly Agree	3	1.0
	Total	300	100.0

Table 4. media plays an important role in spreading primary healthcare-related information.

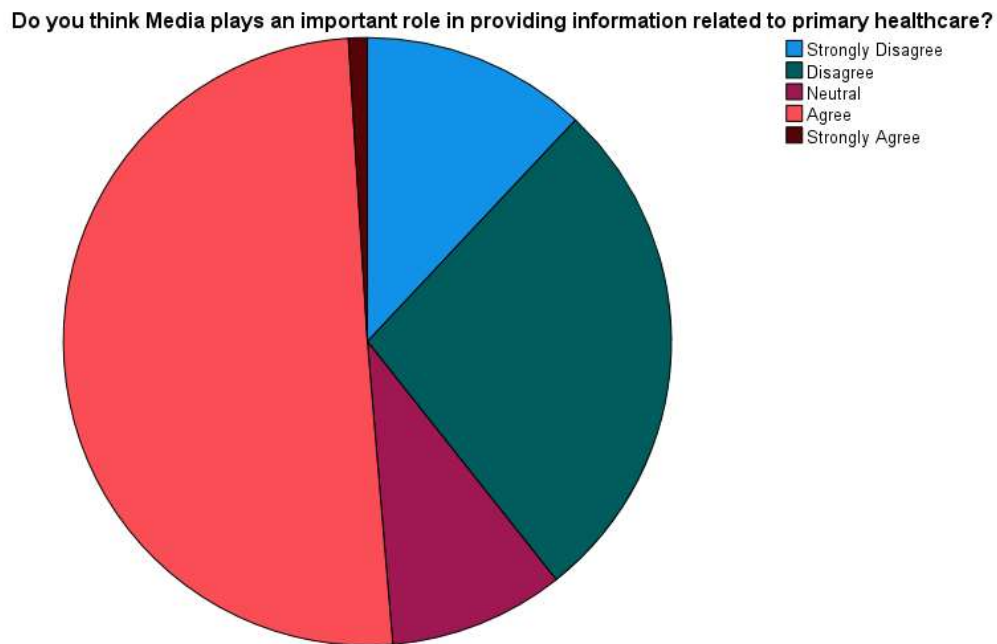


Fig 3. Media plays an important role in spreading primary healthcare-related information.

Furthermore, the willingness to share health-related knowledge was observed, as 3.7%, 28.7%, 32.7%, 31.3%, and 3.7% reported doing so never, rarely, sometimes, often, and always respectively. This indicates a potential ripple effect in spreading health awareness through interpersonal communication.

Do you prefer to share health-related knowledge with others?			
		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Never	11	3.7
	Rarely	86	28.7
	Sometimes	98	32.7

	Often	94	31.3
	Always	11	3.7
	Total	300	100.0

Table 5. People sharing health-related information further

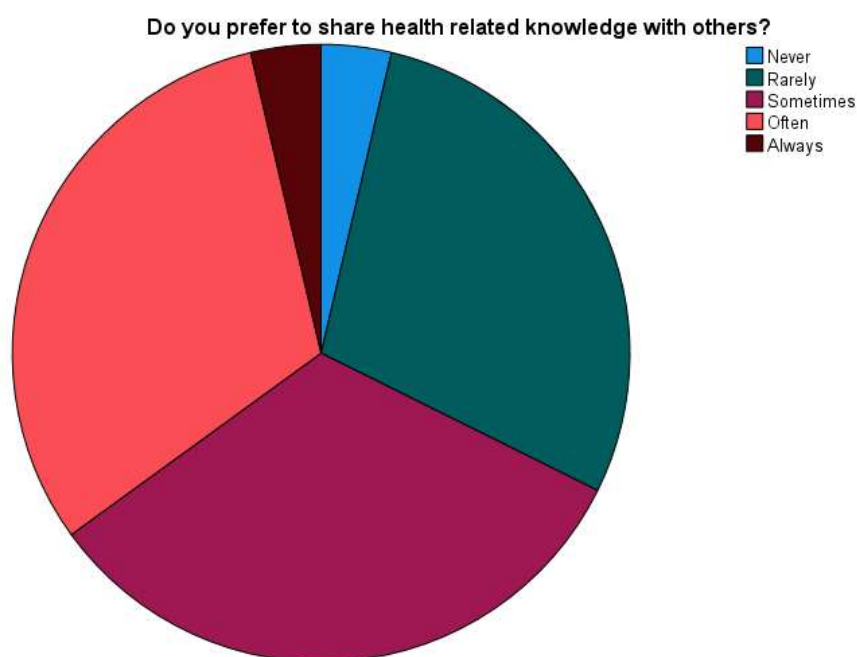


Fig 4. People sharing health-related information further

Examining the impact on health literacy, the majority 169 (56.3%) believed that media plays an essential role in improving health literacy very rarely, while the rest held a contrary view. 42 respondents (14%) believed that media never helped in improving health literacy, and 29 of them (9.7%) suggested it as sometimes. 18.7% of responses were recorded as often and at the least only 4 respondents believed that media always plays an important role in improving the health literacy of people. This emphasizes the need for continued efforts in leveraging media platforms to enhance health education and literacy levels among the population.

Do you think media plays an important role in improving your health literacy?			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Never	42	14.0
	Rarely	169	56.3
	Sometimes	29	9.7
	Often	56	18.7
	Always	4	1.3
	Total	300	100.0

Table 6. Role of media in improving health literacy

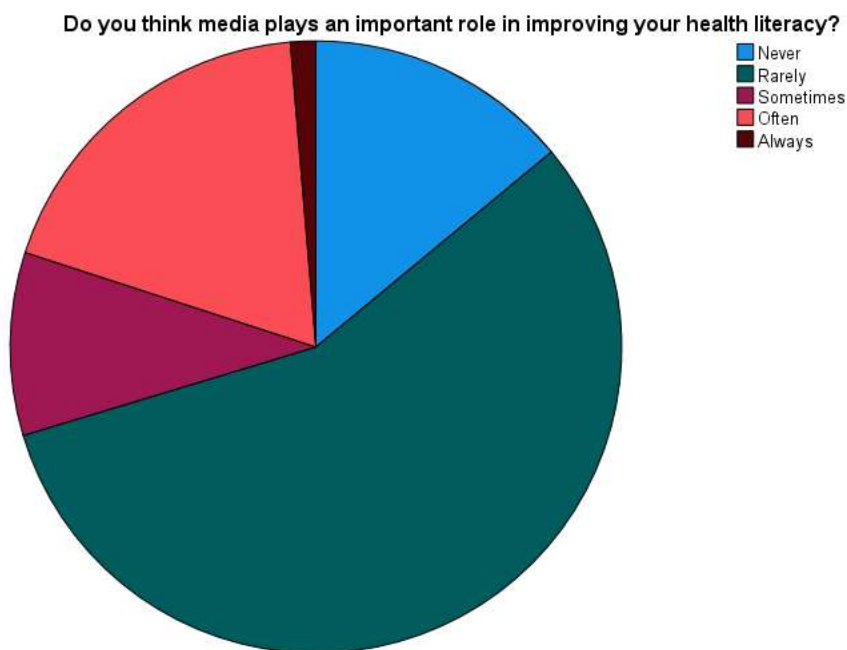


Fig 5. Role of media in improving health literacy

Regarding behavioral changes influenced by health information, the data indicated that a substantial number of individuals experienced positive changes, with 60% reporting maintaining a clean environment, 27% adopting hygienic practices, and only 2.3% of respondents adopting behavioral changes in making regular health visits. Only 17 respondents (5.7%) agreed to adopt behavioral changes regarding increased health concerns. 5% of people adopted the change of seeking medical facilities whenever needed, else previously they used to neglect the sickness until it reached its worst stage. These findings underscore the potential of media interventions in fostering positive health behaviors.

What all changes have come in your behavior after getting health information?			
		Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Maintaining clean environment	180	60.0
	Adopting hygienic practices and sanitation	81	27.0
	Making regular health visits	7	2.3
	Increased concern regarding health	17	5.7
	Seeking health professional's	15	5.0

	help, whenever needed		
	Total	300	100.0

Table 7. Behavioural changes after seeking health information

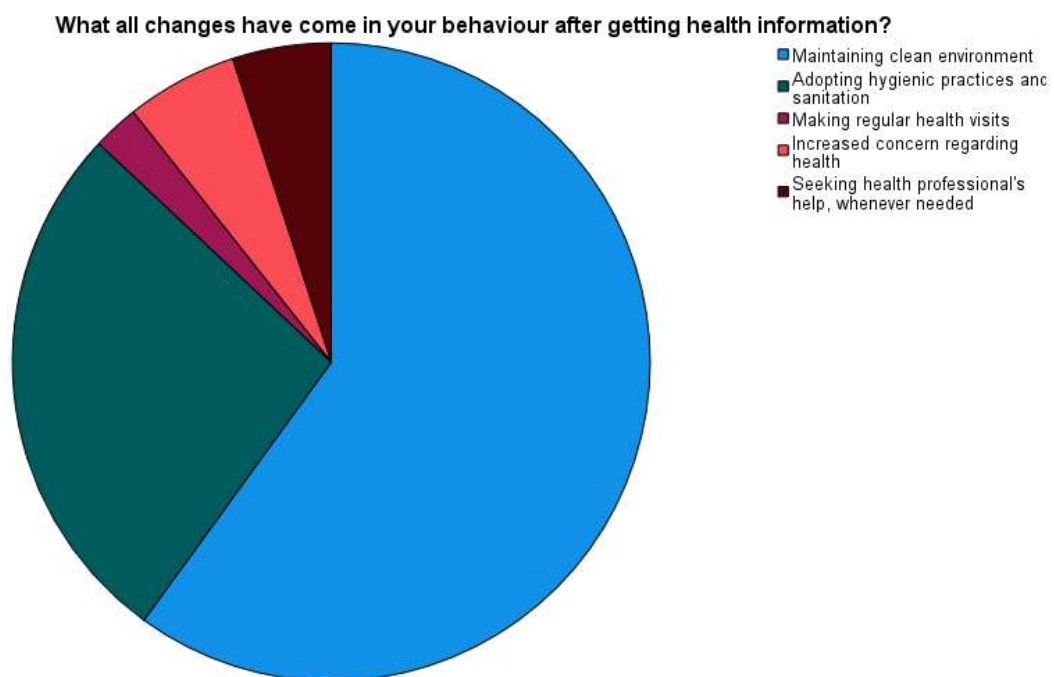


Fig 6. Behavioral changes after seeking health information

In conclusion, the analysis suggests that media has a significant role in spreading awareness and influencing behavioral changes related to primary healthcare. While there is a positive inclination among a considerable portion of the population, there are opportunities for targeted interventions to address awareness gaps and further enhance the impact of media in promoting better health practices, especially in rural areas.

One-Sample Chi-Square Test

Hypothesis Test Summary

	Hypothesis	Test	Test Statistic	df	Sig. ^{a,b}	Decision
1	The categories of Aware of national health policies, programs and schemes occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	87.480	1	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
2	The categories of How often do you come across any health-related message or information? occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	150.880	3	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
3	The categories of Do you think Media plays an important role	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	226.900	4	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

	in providing information related to primary healthcare? occur with equal probabilities.					
4	The categories of Do you prefer to share health related knowledge with others? occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	134.633	4	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis.
5	The categories of Do you think media plays an important role in improving your health literacy? occur	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	271.967	4	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

	with equal probabilities.					
6	The categories of What all changes have come in your behaviour after getting health information. occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	358.733	4	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8. Hypothesis testing using chi-square test.

The One-Sample Chi-Square Test results for the hypothesis "Media plays an important role in bringing behavioral changes related to healthcare" indicate highly significant findings across all five questions analyzed in the survey. The test statistics for each question are notably large, reflecting a substantial deviation from the expected distribution under the null hypothesis.

For the question regarding awareness of national health policies, programs, and schemes, the test statistic of 87.480 with one degree of freedom yielded a p-value of 0.000. Similarly, the frequency of coming across health-related messages or information produced a test statistic of 150.880 with three degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. These results imply a rejection of the null hypothesis, suggesting a significant association between media exposure and awareness of national health initiatives.

The question on the perceived importance of media in providing information related to primary healthcare generated a test statistic of 226.900 with four degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. Likewise, the preference for sharing health-related knowledge resulted in a test statistic of 134.633 with four degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. Both findings support the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating a strong association between media influence and the willingness to share health information.

Furthermore, the One-Sample Chi-Square Test for the role of media in improving health literacy yielded a test statistic of 271.967 with four degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000. This implies a rejection of the null hypothesis, providing strong evidence that individuals perceive media as playing a crucial role in enhancing health literacy.

In summary, the results of the One-Sample Chi-Square Test consistently support the hypothesis that media plays a significant role in bringing about behavioral changes related to healthcare. The highly significant p-values across all questions suggest a strong association between media exposure and various aspects of health awareness, information sharing, and literacy. These findings underscore the importance of leveraging media platforms to positively influence health-related behaviors and attitudes among the surveyed population.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To analyze the role of media in communicating health-related messages and the effectiveness of bringing health-related behavior changes among people, the author has framed some research questions based on which the analysis and results can be drawn. According to the research study and the survey conducted among respondents, several findings can be concluded. According to the demographic variables of the respondents, an equal proportion of males and females participated in the research study conducted which is 50%. The majority of

the respondents that is 72% of the sample population were married, this signifies that they had a family and were aware of the health issues or concerns that normally be in the households. The majority of respondents belonged to the age group of 18 years to 45 years of age, which included the adults of the younger generation and the older too. If discussing the family income, then majorly respondents had their family income per month lying between 10,000rs to 20,000rs, and the least were earning below 5,000rs and more than 20,000rs as well, based on their education or the work area. If discussing the education qualification, then a majority of people had no education, 44% of the total respondents had never been to school and the least had their qualifications as higher secondary or above. The literacy rate plays a major role in the development and creation of a well-aware society. It is seen that little or no education is the major limiting factor while discussing the awareness level in a society, especially related to healthcare. There are numerous governmental healthcare programs, schemes, and policies to avail medical facilities for individuals and families, but the study shows that still, 23% of respondents were not aware of them. This points out the lack of communication, there is no use in bringing or updating healthcare programs and policies if people are not aware of them or how to make use of it. The occurrence of health-related messages through media is very important to ensure the flow of messages and information to the audience and for this, the frequency of such content must be more, but according to the responses recorded, majorly (45%) people come across such messages on monthly basis, 39% on weekly basis and the least (12%) on daily basis. This points out the ineffective occurrence of health-related content.

While discussing the role of media being an effective communication tool, half of the population agreed with the statement, whereas 9.3% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, 12% strongly disagreed and 27.3% disagreed and this reflects the dissatisfaction towards the communication strategy through media and shows its ineffectiveness up to some extent. Further, the interaction also plays a significant role in

increasing awareness and spreading the information further, and the results show that most people prefer to share their knowledge further with others, which is a good thing that helps in increasing awareness even if it is through word of mouth at various levels. More than half of the respondents (57%) agreed with the statement that media helps in improving health literacy, but others (14%) believed that it is never helping and 9.7% of respondents replied that sometimes, this depicts that media is improving health literacy but can be done better.

Discussing the behavioral changes based on the information or content presented by media, then it can be analyzed that the media helps in spreading the information and awareness but to change the attitude or behavior and inculcating those health practices differ from person to person or in the other manner, more efforts need to be done. Despite the flow of information related to health, surroundings, sanitation practices, cleanliness, and seeking medical help whenever needed, still, some people still do not follow such instructions and do not adopt healthy practices in their daily lives. Only 60% of respondents had inculcated the change in their behavior of maintaining a clean environment and consumption of clean water and food. The changes in the adoption of hygienic and sanitation practices are seen but only 27% of people follow that completely. Making regular visits to the health centers, seeking medical help whenever needed and increasing health concerns are still on a very poor scale. The findings show that media is helping in communication and bringing behavioral change but it needs more efforts to work effectively. The flow of messages and information has to be increased and a lot more efforts are needed for the adoption of health-related behavioral changes among people.

CONCLUSION

The study analyses the role of media in spreading primary healthcare awareness and further bringing behavioral changes among people residing in rural areas of Delhi. It is analyzed that

the fact cannot be denied that media is an effective tool of communication in the health sector as well but being similarly effective in bringing behavioral changes is a whole different scenario. This study reveals that media has helped them get health-related information and increase their awareness level but not very effectively. Health literacy has improved among people but adopting the changes in their lifestyles needs more effort, as still it can be seen that there are a huge number of people who are unaware of healthy sanitation practices, seeking professional help whenever needed, they often try to cure a disease with home remedies or taking medicines from some local medical shop, without even getting a professional prescription. Lower literacy rates and lesser family income are also a few of the limitations, which act as a barrier to understanding the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and adopting changes in their lives. The other limitation is if discussing the occurrence of health-related messages or information through media, then it is also lower with lesser frequency of occurrence and not very effective. The majority believe that television is a better communication tool for them due to poor literacy rate, lack of technical knowledge to make use of digital media, and having only one or two smartphones in the whole family, which affects the number of times somebody comes across such messages and this affects the number of times somebody comes across health-related information. So, it can be concluded that keeping various factors in mind the efforts must be increased to bring behavioral changes among people more efficiently and effectively and the media must enhance its working style as well to establish a better understanding and connection with the masses.

REFERENCES

- Aileen F. McGloin, S. E. (2014, October 16). Digital and social media opportunities for dietary behaviour change. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 74(2), 139-148. doi:10.1017/S0029665114001505
- Aman, H. S., & Jahan, N. (2020, October 16). *advance*. doi:10.31124/advance.13093403.v1
- (2013). *Behavior Change Communication Strategy for primary healthcare services in iraq*. USAID. US Agency of International Development . Retrieved May 11, 2024, from https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00K4N3.pdf
- *Compass*. (2023, Dec 5). Retrieved May 12, 2024, from [thecompassforsbc.org: https://thecompassforsbc.org/sbcc-tools/using-social-media-for-health-behavior-change-technical-how-to-guide](https://thecompassforsbc.org/sbcc-tools/using-social-media-for-health-behavior-change-technical-how-to-guide)
- Deepmala. (2019, September 12). *linkedin*. Retrieved May 11, 2024, from [linkedin.com: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/principles-bcc-deep-mala](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/principles-bcc-deep-mala)
- *eGyanKosh*. (n.d.). Retrieved May 11, 2024, from [egyankosh.ac.in: https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/34526/1/Unit-1.pdf](https://www.egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/34526/1/Unit-1.pdf)
- Evans, D., Abroms, L., Broniatowski, D. A., Napolitano, M. A., Arnold, J., Ichimiya, M., & Agha, S. (2022, July). Digital Media for Behavior Change: Review of an Emerging Field of Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (IJERPH)*, 19(15). doi:10.3390/ijerph19159129
- Evans, W. D., Abroms, L. C., Broniatowski, D., Napolitano, M., Arnold, J., Ichimiya, M., & Agha, S. (2022, July 26). Digital media for behavior change: Review of emerging field of study. (F. Fischer, Ed.) *National library of medicine*, 19(15). doi:10.3390/ijerph19159129

- Gever, V. C., & Ezeah, G. (2020, Aug 9). The media and health education: Did Nigerian media provide sufficient warning messages on coronavirus disease? *National Library of Medicine*. doi:10.1093/her/cyaa020
- Ibrahim, S. A.-S. (2021). The role of media campaigns in raising awareness of development issues and their relationship to the level of anxiety in adolescents. *Journal of Southwest Jiaotong University*, 56(2(2021)). doi:https://doi.org/issn.0258-2724.56.2.27
- Inga Saboia, A. M. (2020, July 28). Are you ready for the challenge? Social Media Health Challenges for Behaviour Change. *Health, Technology & Behavior Science*, 43(543–578 (2020)). doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/s40614-020-00261-z
- Kalu, N. (2023, April). Importance of visuals in behaviour change communication. Retrieved May 11, 2024, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370394570_Importance_of_visuals_in_behaviour_change_communication
- Kanchan, S., & Gaidhane, A. (2023, Jan 13). Social Media Role and Its Impact on Public Health: A Narrative Review. (A. Muacevic, & J. R. Adler, Eds.) *National library of medicine*, 15(1). doi:10.7759/cureus.33737
- Khan, M. E., Bhatnagar, I., Hazra, A., & Kamar, M. (2012). *Situation analysis of behavior change communication activities in bihar: a step towards developing a comprehensive BCC strategy*. Assessing Family Health Practices in Bihar State, India, Population Council, New Delhi. Retrieved May 11, 2024, from https://knowledgecommons.popcouncil.org/departments_sbsr-rh/80/

- L. Lapointe, J. R. (2013). Collaborating through Social Media to Create Health Awareness. *46th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (pp. 792-801). IEEE. doi:10.1109/HICSS.2013.135
- Majali, T., Alsoud, M., Omar, A., & Alhassan, I. (2021, February 01). Social media use as health awareness tool: a study among healthcare practitioners. *Multicultural Education*, 7(2). doi:10.5281/zenodo.4487282
- *National Health Mission*. (2024). Retrieved May 11, 2024, from arogyakeralam.gov.in: <https://arogyakeralam.gov.in/2020/03/27/behaviour-change-communication-bcc/>
- Petrosyan, A. (2024, May 7). *statista*. Retrieved May 10, 2024, from statista.com: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/617136/digital-population-worldwide/#:~:text=As%20of%20April%202024%2C%20there,population%2C%20were%20social%20media%20users>
- Pilla, L., Nicholson, J., Cotes, G., Cunningham, S., Booher, P. K., Granger, & Kristina. (2018). *USAID- Spring*. (JSI Research & Training Institute) Retrieved May 11, 2024, from spring-nutrition.org/: <https://spring-nutrition.org/publications/reports/community-media-social-and-behavior-change>
- Razak, A. A. (2020). Changing awareness about health behavior: A study among young instagram users. *Journal of Behavioral Science*. Retrieved August 16, 2022, from <http://hdl.handle.net/123456789/696>
- Redman, S., Spencer, E. A., & Senson-Fischer, R. W. (n.d.). The role of mass media in changing health-related behaviour: a critical appraisal of two models. *Health Promotion International*, 05(1), 17. doi:45152007

- Ryerson, W. (2003, Nov 5). *The Communication Initiative Network*. Retrieved May 12, 2024, from comminit.com: <https://www.comminit.com/content/effectiveness-entertainment-mass-media-changing-behaviour>
- Saraf, R. A., & Balamurugan, J. (2018). The Role of Mass Media in Health Care Development: A Review Article. *Journal of Advanced Research in Journalism & Mass Communication*, 5(1&2, 2018), 39-43. doi:10.24321/2395.3810.201807
- Singh, D. M., & Ratnamala, V. (2018, November). Role of Media in Creating Awareness about Health Facilities in Scheduled Caste of Purvanchal. *International Journal of Research*, 7(11). Retrieved 2022
- Singh, S., Muttreja, P., Chowdhary, D. N., & Kalaan, M. K. (n.d.). Relevance of Social and Behavior Change and Communications in the Media on COVID-19 Response. In S. Singh, *Health Dimensions of COVID-19 in India and Beyond* (pp. 309-315). Singapore: Springer. doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-7385-6_17
- vedantu. (2024, May 9). Retrieved May 10, 2024, from vedantu.com: <https://www.vedantu.com/civics/what-is-media>
- Wadd Mohammed, T. A. (2021). Usage of social media for health awareness purposes among health educators and students in Saudi Arabia. *Informatics in medicine unlocked*, 23(100553). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.imu.2021.100553>.
- Wagle, K. (2019, Sep 23). *Public health notes*. Retrieved May 11, 2024, from publichealthnotes.com: <https://www.publichealthnotes.com/1142-2/>

