

Impact of Mass Media Campaigns on Health Promotion and Change in Health Behaviour with Special Reference to COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Mass media campaigns are widely used to expose high proportions of large populations to messages through routine uses of existing media, such as television, radio, newspapers and digital media. Exposure to such messages is, therefore, generally passive. Such campaigns are frequently competing with factors, such as pervasive product marketing, powerful social norms, and behaviours driven by addiction or habit. In this research paper we will discuss the outcomes of mass media campaigns in the context of various health-risk behaviours (e.g., use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, heart disease risk factors, sex-related behaviours, road safety, cancer screening and prevention, child survival, and organ or blood donation and now related to COVID-19). We will understand how mass media campaigns can produce positive changes or prevent negative changes in health-related behaviours across large populations. We will assess what contributes to these outcomes, such as concurrent availability of required services and products, availability of community-based programmes, and policies that support behaviour change. Finally, we will propose areas for improvement, such as investment in longer better-funded campaigns to achieve adequate population exposure to media messages.

Keywords: Health Behaviour, Mass Media Campaigns, COVID-19, Pandemic, Corona Virus, Lockdown

Introduction

Health is a complex concept that involves not just the soundness of a person's body but also the state of mind and the quality of the social environment in which he or she lives. Good health and effective medical care are essential for the smooth functioning of society. Social inequality characterizes the quality of health and the quality of healthcare. The practice of public health has been dynamic in India and other parts of the world, and has witnessed many hurdles in its attempt to affect the lives of the people of this country. Since independence, major public health problems like malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, high maternal and child mortality and lately, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) have been addressed through a concerted action of the government. Social development coupled with scientific advances and health care has led to a decrease in the mortality rates and birth rates. The basic function of mass communication media is to provide information, education, instructions and entertainment to the people. Media also motivate people directly or indirectly to discharge these functions as well as interactive user feedback, creative participation in a meaningful and purposeful manner in any country for national development. In last couple of decades public healthcare professionals have begun to explore the purposive use of various forms of mass media as a means for shaping health attitudes and behaviours in society. There are different aspects of mass media effects on healthcare delivery in a social setup. Below mentioned are some of the positive and negative effects of introducing media in spreading healthcare services among masses: -

Positive Aspects of Mass Media on Healthcare:

- **Increases interactions with others** – Peer-To-Peer healthcare has become a source for patient information and support. 25% of patients diagnosed with chronic medical conditions have used the internet to find and engage with others with the same medical conditions.
- **More available, shared and tailored information** – Patients are using Google as a means to diagnose themselves. Nowadays Google health-related searches include results for over 900 medical conditions.
- **Potential to influence health policy** – Social media is without a doubt the most talked about disruption in marketing in decades but how can its impact can social media play in impacting health policy. Research shows that 31% of healthcare organizations have established social media guidelines in writing. This suggests that non-government institutions are actively implementing policy to preserve patient confidentiality but still provide a tangible and systematic policy across all staff within a healthcare organization as how they communicate, respond to and analyze information posted to or collected from social media channels.

- **Peer/social/emotional support** – Social support has been linked to positive health outcomes, with some studies suggesting that patient's adherence and general health improves when receiving support from family or peers.

Negative Aspects of Mass Media on Healthcare:

- **Regulation of Healthcare services**— Healthcare sector need to be the most regulated and will continue to be so, and with the complexity of health laws and patient privacy, data protection remains in the spotlight.
- **Spread of False information** – Misuse of media can spread to a wider coverage and a large public that can affect people's perception regarding certain healthcare practices.
- **Discrimination and demoralizing effects**-- There can be many negative impacts of mass media on healthcare, not just physically, but mentally also. With different online campaigns promoting discrimination of basis of color, body shaming, highlighting cosmetic imperfections among people of different ethnicities and regions and may induce anxiety, depression and various psychological and mental issues among masses.

Roles of Media for Health Intervention

The media can be used as the primary change agent or as a means to support other education and clinical services. We distinguish four roles of media: (a) media as educator, (b) media as supporter, (c) media as program promoter, and (d) media as supplement.

- **Media as an Educator**

In the first role, media as an educator, the media are the primary or sole means for achieving health promotion goals. The Stanford Three Community Study (TCS) provides an example of a long-term (three years), comprehensive media program to achieve cardiovascular risk reduction. The TCS actually compared two different types of interventions: mass media alone, and mass media supplemented with intensive face-to-face counselling. The study illustrated that media alone can achieve changes in risk behaviour over the short term but that the addition of face-to-face interaction enhances long-term change.

- *Media as a Supporter*

When using media as lifestyle supporter, media can reinforce old messages, support health changes, encourage maintenance of change, or keep health issues on the public agenda. Although lifestyle reinforcement is not a media outcome that has been well investigated in health promotion, it has been documented in other arenas of media use. For example, Lazarsfeld and colleagues reported that one of the most powerful effects of political campaigns was to support the audience's existing beliefs about candidates. This reinforcement and support function of media is important for coping with the problem of behavioural relapse and renewed behavioural induction.

- *Media as a Promoter*

When media are used to promote existing programs, they can familiarize audience members with health behaviour change products and services, and encourage the audience to call, write, or participate in programs. This is perhaps the most common role for the mass media in health promotion and probably the best known by the public. There are various outreach campaigns and activities which allow health care service providers to promote and educate the audiences about their service and related outcomes.

- *Media as a Supplement*

Media can play a supplementary role by being integrated into a program that includes face-to-face or other forms of intervention. In Flay's review of 40 smoking cessation programs, he found that mass media campaigns were reasonably successful in changing knowledge, attitudes, and in some instances smoking behaviour. Furthermore, mass-mediated smoking cessation clinics that provide printed materials were more effective than those that did not, and mass-mediated clinics with social support groups were more effective than either of the other methods.

India is a "Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic" with a parliamentary system of government. As a developing nation both central and state governments contribute for developmental activities. India is the largest democratic country in the world with more than 120 crore people. In the context of largescale economic development in industrial and agricultural sectors, the need for communication with the people through different media has assumed great importance. Communication with the people is necessary in any society and any form of government, especially democratic society depends much more. People must be told about government plans, programmes, policies, activities, successes and achievements. Reactions from the people to the policies and programmes must reach the policy-makers and administrators to modify, change, and continue the programme and to involve people and to get their willing participation.

Mass media is a potentially powerful tool in the effort to address the many public services and other social challenges facing this country. Media production is developing a strategic plan to address the entire scope of health communication, including research, creative strategy, production, distribution and evaluation. Under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for providing basic health facilities to all citizens, government has introduced and implemented various health schemes and programmes. This section provides information pertaining to health programmes, policies, schemes, forms etc. for specific beneficiaries, which include women, children, senior citizen, etc. Details of Union and state government agencies, departments, organizations, research institutions, hospitals are also available. And, also several health programs are introduced by the government regarding HIV/AIDS, helping youth recognize the dangers of tobacco smoking and promoting physical activity. These are a few examples of behaviour change communication that focus on ways that encourage people to make healthy choices. Development of community-wide education programs and other health promotion activities need to be strengthened. Much can be done to improve the effectiveness of health promotion by extending it to rural areas as well; observing days like “Diabetes Day” and “Heart

Day” even in villages will help create awareness at the grass root level. Schemes and programs of health care services The goal of population stabilization can be achieved only when child survival, maternal health and other health issues are addressed simultaneously and effectively. SarvaSwasthyaAbhiyan (SSA) launched for meeting health needs of all age group and reduce disease burden across rural India

- *National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) designed to meet health needs of urban poor, particularly the slum dwellers by making available to them essential primary health care services*
- *National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) to provide accessible, affordable and accountable quality health services including water, sanitation, education, nutrition, social and gender equality*
- *Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) under NRHM in 2005 Government of India modified the National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). The scheme has the dual objectives of reducing maternal and infant mortality by promoting institutional deliveries.*
- *Reproductive and Child Healthcare (RCH) program to reduce infant mortality and reduce high desired fertility.*
- *Programs for Nutritional Support for improving nutritional status particularly of mothers and children.*
- *Mid-Day Meals Scheme (MDMS) was launched in 1995 to enhance enrolment and participation of children in primary schools, simultaneously improving their nutritional status.*
- *Indian Govt in 2018 launched the world's largest health insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat Yojana for ensuring quality universal health services for all.*

National AIDS Control Organisation was set up so that every person living with HIV has access to quality care and is treated with dignity. By fostering close collaboration with NGOs, women’s self-help groups, faith-based organizations, positive people’s networks, and communities, NACO hopes to improve access and accountability of the services. It stands committed to building an enabling environment wherein those infected and affected by HIV play a central role in all responses to the epidemic – at state, district and grassroots level.

Revised National TB Control Programme is a state-run tuberculosis control initiative of Government of India with a vision of achieving a TB free India. The program provides, various free of cost, quality tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment services across the country through the government health system.

National Leprosy Eradication Programme was initiated by the government for Early detection through active surveillance by the trained health workers and to provide Appropriate medical rehabilitation and leprosy ulcer care servi

Some other national health programs are: -

National Cancer Control Program National Filariasis Control Program, National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Program, National Mental Health Program

And now the world is struggling with COVID-19 virus which has no cure yet and media campaigns are playing a vital role in spreading awareness about how to take precautions and how to be safe adopting social distancing, using mask, frequent and proper hand wash and building immunity. The content is overflowing on different media platforms to teach good habits like yoga, exercises, dancing, meditation and healthy eating habits. The content related to how to utilize this lockdown time for good and creative things is also playing major role in people’s life and saving them from depression and mental illness.

Mass Media as a Tool of Health Promotion

In a country of India’s size and population, diversity of religions, languages, regional imbalances and several other factors, it is not easy to evolve a national communication policy or generally acceptable information strategy.

Nevertheless, such a policy is essential to give some direction to mass media. The country should also have the necessary infrastructure to implement the basic policy in the shortest possible time.

Terrestrial TV: The signal for television content with advertising slots that is transmitted via land-based tower via air-waves and received at a viewer end through an air-wave antenna.

Satellite TV: The signal for television content with advertising slots that is transmitted via Satellite and received with the help of a dish, whether at the cable operators' end or Through personal direct to home (DTH) set box.

Cable TV: A TV connection which is provided by a local cable TV operator residing near the Vicinity of TV homes and provides access to terrestrial and satellite TV channels.

Print: is a term used to define any written material i.e. Newspapers, Magazines and other publications.

Radio: A device which receives transmission of audio signals and plays out the same.

FM (Frequency modulation) is only a way of transmission & receiving of the audio signal.

Cinema: A movie viewed in a cinema hall. Breaks during the movie are used as slots for health advertisements. Internet:

Internet: In the world where we live today, the power of internet is known to all, the way internet has affected the spread of health bound messages through different sections of public is clear and out there.

Outdoor: Billboards, wall paintings, traffic roundabouts, Kiosks etc constitute the outdoor media.

Public Service Advertising and health communication Public service advertising is a potentially powerful tool in the effort to address the many public health and other social challenges facing this country. Whether it's tackling childhood obesity, recruiting community volunteers, raising awareness about global warming, promoting HIV testing or raising money for medical research, PSAs have the potential to reach a large audience through mass media to get the message out. PSAs are intended to modify public attitudes by raising awareness about specific issues. The most common topics of PSAs are health and safety. A typical PSA is part of a public awareness campaign to inform or educate the public about an issue such as family planning, pollution, care for aged and disabled, cautious driving, campaigns against alcohol, drugs, smoking, animal right, and others related to health, environment and social development of the country.

National Level Media Reach: Reach of media is not equivalent to availability or access to media. It is a combination of availability and willingness of the audience to use the media within a reasonable timeframe. Thus, first and foremost, the audience should have access to the media. The presence in media is dependent upon two factors – firstly buying of paid space through Advertising and secondly media presence through editorial space. This report deals with the buying of media space.

Important Media Campaigns For Health Promotion In India

Campaigns By Private Organisations

MAX HEALTHCARE

Campaign: 'More to Healthcare'

Leading healthcare provider, Max Healthcare; recently came up with a heart-touching campaign, to acknowledge the unsung heroes of healthcare. The 'More to Healthcare' campaign has been launched as a string of bite-sized videos on various social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. The thoughtfully curated videos provide an insight into the hard work put by ICU nurses, OT technicians, ward boys, emergency response teams and even the front office executives.

DOCS APP Campaign: #BaatTohKaro campaign

India's most preferred online doctor consultation platform, Docs App, launched digital-first campaign #BaatTohKaro to encourage people to talk about health issues that are often stigmatized by society. The campaign includes a series of

videos featuring actors Aisha Ahmed and AnupriyaGoenka, who beautifully depict the emotions that individuals go through while dealing with mental and physical health issues such as pregnancy and depression. The whole idea behind the campaign is to break the societal taboos and foster a safe space where people can discuss their problems without inhibitions.

ABBOTT INDIA

Campaign: 'Grow Right'

Through its 'Grow Right' initiative, healthcare research firm Abbott India wanted to highlight the concerns parents have regarding the growth of their children. The firm partnered with parenting content platform Momspresso, and established a guild of experts to create a comprehensive set of guidelines, called the Grow Right Charter. The 'Grow Right' campaign garnered widespread attention because of its unique approach in addressing common yet neglected issues faced by Indian parents.

NEUROGEN BRAIN AND SPINE INSTITUTE

Campaign: 'One Mindful Mind'

This beautiful campaign by NeuroGen Brain and Spine Institute, bagged a Bronze at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2019 under the Print & Publishing and Health &

Wellness categories. Developed in partnership with TBWA\India, 'One Mindful Mind' is nothing but an interactive print tool kit that helps every parent turn into a counsellor for their children. The kit comprises five resources (feeling flashcards, mood journal etc.) designed to support the emotional and cognitive development of children.

FORTIS HEALTHCARE

Campaign: 'Live after you Leave'

Fortis Healthcare created a thought-provoking video campaign to promote organ donation in India. The ad film shows a young couple visiting their family on Eid, letting viewers believe a son is meeting his mother after a long time. However, the man in question is actually an organ receiver. The parents fondly recall the time spent with their son who decided to donate his organs. The ad leaves a bitter-sweet taste in one's mind, emphasizing the need for organ donation.

CAMPAIGNS BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT

Pulse Polio Program

In order to eradicate Polio from India, the govt of India launched 'The Doo BoondZindagi Ki' campaign, using Mr. Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador, the campaign greatly helped the Indian rural as well as urban population to get their children vaccinated.

Anti- tobacco and quit smoking Campaign

Quit Tobacco Movement (2008) Inspired by the Quit India Movement Used freedom struggle imagery to promote freedom from tobacco. Street plays, rallies, poster exhibitions at railway stations and public places.

TambakhuKoDhishum" (2015) Online campaign launched on 'World No Tobacco Day 2015' with NGOs in Mumbai. The campaign monitored the violations of the act related to sale and promotion of tobacco products.

Showcasing anti tobacco ads on television, in the beginning of movies in theatres, etc, using screen characters like Mukeshetc to influence people.

Campaigns to raise awareness against Coronavirus (2020)

In order to raise awareness among people regarding the Coronavirus, both the public health sector and private organisations have joined hands to run awareness campaigns using TV networks (Star, Zee, Viacom 18 etc), Social

Media Platforms (Facebook, Twitter etc), using animations, strong messages like, 'Stay home, stay safe'. **Launching social media apps like AryogyaSetu app.**

India is a digital powerhouse that still faces challenges with our health infrastructure, and it was exciting and inspiring to see India leading strategic discussions around how to best leverage digital health and artificial intelligence (AI) to improve public health.

In the past decade, India has implemented a digital health program called 'eVIN' to track immunization. The program is critically important for the country because of the size of our population. 'ANMOL' is another important digital health tool, providing better health care services to pregnant women, mothers, and new born. India continues to struggle with high maternal and neonatal mortality rates, so tracking and providing services to new moms is important—especially for the country's poorest and most vulnerable people.

India is taking the lead on using AI to drive social impact. We are concentrating our efforts where the need is greatest, starting with a focus on some of the most infectious diseases— especially TB. By using AI to improve diagnostics and ensure higher treatment adherence rates, we can accelerate the elimination of TB

The various life insurance companies, today also use mass media as a way of reaching out to people. LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION of India, has such huge campaigns to help people understand the benefits of insuring their lives. Private Sector Insurance Companies like ICICI Prudential, Bajaj Allianz etc have also come forward in their media campaigning strategies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In a country like India, where the population is around 130 crore, it is very important to provide the best health care services, to people, that are efficient and accessible. Media plays a very significant role here, as the world is changing so are channels used to inform people. With Mass Media being more powerful than ever, the public and private health care sectors have resorted to use these platforms to promote health and health behaviour change.

But are people really being benefitted?

Are these messages reaching out to all people across country, in spite of their geographical, demographical, and psychological variations?

How varying age brackets see these changes?

How strong is the media reach?

What are the most preferred mediums currently?

Is the main objective of using mass media being fulfilled?

Research Questions

1. How are people motivated by mass media campaigns when it comes to health?
2. Do people find the information given relevant and useful?
3. Have the campaigns led to any change in the choices people make regarding the health care services they choose?
4. What is the future of mass media campaigns, regarding health behaviour change?

Objectives

The objectives of this study are: -

1. To know the national objectives of communication policy.
2. To find out the various national health programs and schemes.
3. To analyse the media reach and access when it comes to delivering information.
4. To study the knowledge of public service advertisements
5. To assess the impact of health advertisements among general public.

6. To study the benefits that common public gets through these media campaigns.

Scope of the Study

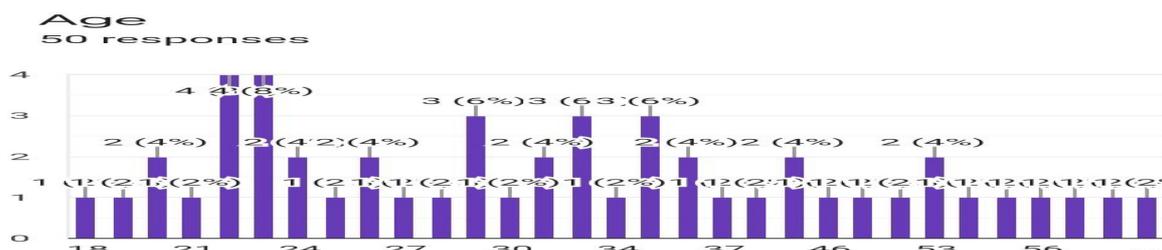
The scope of this study would attempt to project on how mass media campaigns have influenced people's choices regarding their health practices, their ideologies and how they obtain information. The study will also show how social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, etc, have become such a huge part of campaigning today and how various organisations like Health Ministry use such platforms. Media campaigns like – Pulse Polio Program, have made people aware and have drastically changed health scenario in India. Using famous celebrities, has also become a way of influencing common people.

The results from this study will educate people about how much they are under the influence of mass media when it comes to making not just little but huge decisions such as regarding their lives.

METHODOLOGY

The present study focuses on role of Mass Media in Health Promotion in India and how it influences people. The method used to answer the questions was a survey, quantitative analysis using Google forms. A field of applied statistics of human research surveys, survey methodology studies the sampling of individual units from a population and associated techniques of survey data collection, such as questionnaire construction and methods for improving the number and accuracy of responses to surveys.

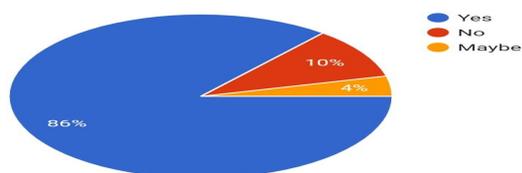
RESULT AND DISCUSSION



The Age Bracket Chosen – 18 to 60 yrs

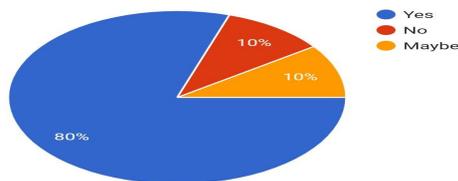
This graph shows the age bracket in which this study was conducted. We can see the peak of this study shows the age bracket of 21- 24 to be the most active, when it comes to have their decisions being influenced by media campaigns. It shows that youth today are aware and well informed about health care and media has played a significant role in it. The graph again peaks at 27 to 40. This graph shows how today there has been a drastic change regarding health awareness in people. Even people above the age of 45, are also somehow influenced by these campaigns.

Have you seen any Media campaigns in India regarding health awareness? 50 responses



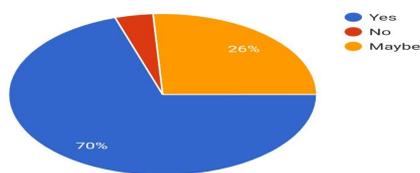
The above pie chart shows, how many people in India are well known with the concept media campaigns in health awareness. 86%- Say that they know media campaigns well. 10%- Say they don't know. 4% - Are not sure.

Are these campaigns helpful in bringing awareness to you regarding various health issues?
50 responses



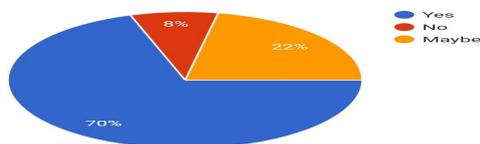
The above pie chart shows that mass media campaigns have helped people in understanding about various health issues. 80% - Say they are sure they are helped. 10% - Say they are not. 10% - Say they are not sure.

Has the developments in new media benefitted you in understanding health behaviours better?
50 responses



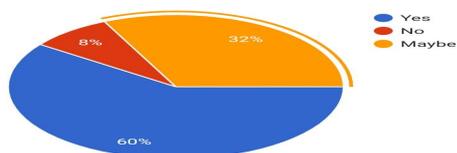
The above pie chart shows that almost 70% people have been influenced by media when it comes to their health behaviour, it could be their eating habits, their sleep patterns, how frequently they go for checkups etc. 26% say they might be.

Do you find the information provided on media platforms relevant?
50 responses



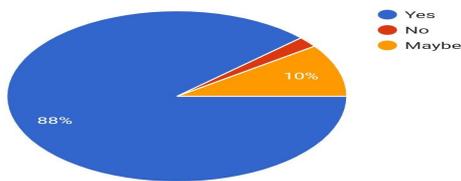
In the above pie chart 70% of people find the information given on various media platforms to be relevant. 22% are not sure, and 8% have not found such information to be relevant to them.

Have the media campaigns affected your choice of healthcare services?
50 responses



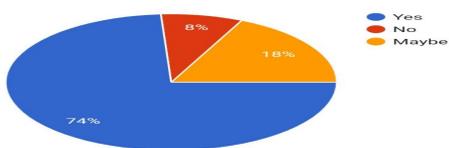
In the above pie chart 60% people agree that their choices of healthcare services are affected by the media campaigns they have seen or they see. 32% believe maybe and 8% believe otherwise.

Do you think the Indian Govt is doing enough media campai...cenario of COVID-19
50 responses



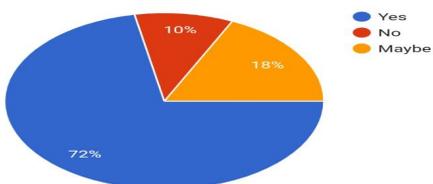
In the above pie chart 88% people believe that the Indian Govt. is doing enough campaigning in order to raise awareness about CORONAVIRUS, in the country. 10% say maybe and 2% believe otherwise.

Currently, do you think social media platforms are a better...the traditional media?
50 responses



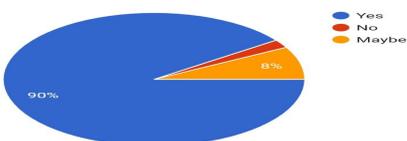
The above pie chart shows that 74% believe that social media as a platform is better for campaigning compared to traditional media. 18% are not sure and 8% disagree.

Do you think , there is a great scope in India to use mass med...ur Change in future?
50 responses



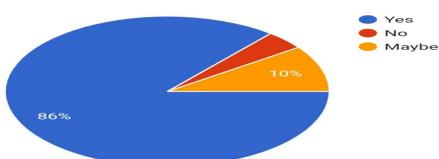
The above chart shows that 72% people believe that there is a great scope in India to use mass media platforms to change health behaviours, 18 % are unsure, while 10% disagree.

Do you know about the ' Doo Boond Zindagi Ki' campaign?
50 responses



Around 90% of the people in the study , knew about the 'Do BoondZindagiki' campaign of Indian Govt to eradicate polio, it shows how well the media has reached out to people not just in urban but rural areas as well.

Do you think the participation of both Public Healthcare Se...o media campaigning?
50 responses



In the above pie chart 86% people believe that it would be good if both public and private sector participate in health care campaigning in the country, 10% are not sure 4% believe otherwise.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study shows that indeed the scenario in India is changing regarding Health care, people are becoming more advanced and updated about the use of media and how if optimally used, such a large population can be benefitted. Although still some section of people believes otherwise, still some population is not affected by the media campaigns and maybe believe them to be frauds and not true to their sense. Through this study we understood, how India is getting influenced by the mass media campaign on such a greater extent. What one would not have thought 15 years ago, is possible now. Thanks to all the different media platforms, India is continuously trying to improve its health care services and provide assistance to more and more people. With the help of media it has become feasible and attainable.

There is still a lot of scope of improvement and development. The Public and Private health care sectors should focus on providing information to people who might not have access to a particular form of media. For example: - There is a possibility that maybe not everyone uses social media, especially in rural areas, in such cases, the Govt. should try to find other ways of delivering the messages regarding health promotion. Govt. should also come forward with more health promotion strategies (medical tourism, campaigns regarding a particular health ailment etc.), and use media even more powerfully to increase public reach. If these steps are taken, India is sure to become a health care hub for not just Indians but also for people across the world.

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