



CODEN [USA]: IAJPBB

ISSN : 2349-7750

**INDO AMERICAN JOURNAL OF  
PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES**

SJIF Impact Factor: 7.187

<http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4095770>Available online at: <http://www.iajps.com>

Research Article

**ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA DURING THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC AMONG YOUNG DOCTORS****Dr. Noor Ul Ain<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Muhammad Aaqib Sarfraz<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Tanushri Bhushan<sup>3</sup>,  
Dr. Hina Anwer<sup>4</sup>, DR. Nadia Jamil<sup>5</sup>, Dr. Maimoona Iftikhar Ali<sup>6</sup>, Dr. Saad Saleem<sup>7</sup>**<sup>1</sup>Services Institute of Medical Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan., <sup>3</sup>SSR Medical College, India.,<sup>5</sup>Sargodha Medical College, Sargodha, Pakistan.**Article Received:** August 2020**Accepted:** September 2020**Published:** October 2020**Abstract:**

**Introduction:** The history of corona virus family is very old, it begins in 1965 when Tyrrell and Bynoe found that there was a virus family who damage the respiratory pathway.

**Objectives:** The main objective of the study is to analyse the role of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic among young doctors.

**Material and methods:** This cross sectional study was conducted in Services Institute of Medical Sciences, Lahore during October 2019 till March 2020. The data was collected from young doctors of Pakistan for the analysis of role of social media during COVID-19. The data was collected through a systematically designed questionnaire which contain all the questions related to the role of social media.

**Results:** According to Pakistan's last update at 9:17 AM on June 119,536 confirmed coronavirus cases were reported in Pakistan. Out of this 119,536 almost 78,789 confirmed cases and 2356 deaths are occurred and 38,391 recoveries. The data was collected from 500 young doctors. There were 294 females and 206 males. The age range was 20 to 35 years.

**Conclusion:** It is concluded that COVID-19 is widely spreading in Pakistan and social media plays an important role. We must work to educate media consumers on what constitutes good and reliable information and how to critically think through this information.

**Corresponding author:****Dr. Noor Ul Ain,**

Services Institute of Medical Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan.

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Please cite this article in press Noor Ul Ain et al, *Role Of Social Media During The Covid-19 Pandemic Among Young Doctors.*, Indo Am. J. P. Sci, 2020; 07(10).

**INTRODUCTION:**

The history of corona virus family is very old, it begins in 1965 when Tyrrell and Bynoe found that there was a virus family who damage the respiratory pathway. This virus was named as B814 in that time. It was transmitted from animals to humans. Now, in 2020 there is a virus COVID-19 which is also belongs to the family of corona virus and they infected the whole world. People all around the world facing the situation of pandemic [1].

COVID-19 is basically a RNA virus and the nucleic acid is about 30 kb long, positive in sense, single stranded and polyadenylated. The RNA which is found in this virus is the largest known RNA and codes for a large polyprotein. In addition, coronaviruses are capable of genetic recombination if 2 viruses infect the same cell at the same time [2].

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 is cold, flu, fever and infection in lungs. There are different stages in the attacking of this virus. At stage one and at the start patient just feel flu and temperature just like common cold and flu [3]. But after seven days it becomes more worse and patient feels shortness of breath and dry cough. At advanced stage the patients become also suffered from pneumonia. There is no vaccine and antiviral therapy until now [4].

In this short communication we will talk about current situation of COVID-19 in Pakistan. It was basically starts from China from December 2019, when there was a person who died in Wuhan (a city of China) due to an unknown virus. What started as an epidemic mainly limited to China has now become a truly global pandemic. There have now been over 392,331 confirmed cases and 17,156 deaths, according the John Hopkins University Covid-19 dashboard, which collates information from national and international health authorities. The disease has been detected in more 196 countries and territories, with Italy, the US and Spain experiencing the most widespread outbreaks outside of China. There were 438,441 cases from which 19,650 died and 111,877 were recovered all around the world [5].

The first study on social media during a pandemic dates back to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, tracking the prevalence of misinformation (determined as 4.5%), terminology use ("H1N1" versus "swine flu"), public sentiments and fear, and relationships between case incidence and public concern [6]. Previous studies used the internet to collect data related to diseases, such as the search frequency of hand washing, hand sanitizer, and antiseptic topics [7]. The WHO declared

that they are currently fighting not only an international epidemic but also a social media infodemic, with some media claiming that the coronavirus is the first true social media infodemic because it has accelerated information and misinformation worldwide and is fueling panic and fear among people [8]. This is an unproven but testable hypothesis, because users of social media use the platforms to express their emotions, feelings, and thoughts, which can be a valuable source of data for researching mental health.

According to media news, there were 300 cases from Punjab and 78 from KPK. Government urges the people to be self-quarantine themselves to fight coronavirus. But now here is the question of poverty, what poor people can do? Is there any help for poor and needy families? What daily wages people can do for their families? This is really a heart breaking situation in Pakistan. Putting the country under lockdown would mean that my daily-wage workers, street vendors, small shop-owners would be locked inside their homes. But at this moment government announces some packages for daily wages and poor families. This seems very good and positive initiative for Pakistan.

**OBJECTIVES:**

The main objective of the study is to analyse the role of social media during the COVID-19 pandemic among young doctors.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:**

This cross sectional study was conducted in Services Institute of Medical Sciences, Lahore during October 2019 till March 2020. The data was collected from young doctors of Pakistan for the analysis of role of social media during COVID-19. The data was collected through a systematically designed questionnaire which contain all the questions related to the role of social media. The study investigates the pros and cons of social media towards curtailing the coronavirus pandemic disease in Pakistan. The research makes use of field survey methodology by obtaining views and responses of the young doctors through examining the messages on Covid-19 disease. The data was collected and analysed by using Microsoft Excel 2017.

**RESULTS:**

According to Pakistan's last update at 9:17 AM on June 119,536 confirmed coronavirus cases were reported in Pakistan. Out of this 119,536 almost 78,789 confirmed cases and 2356 deaths are occurred

and 38,391 recoveries. The data of provinces are shown in table 01.

**Table 01:** COVID-19 data according to provinces

|             | Confirmed Cases | Active Cases | Deaths | Recoveries |
|-------------|-----------------|--------------|--------|------------|
| AJK         | 2,566           | 214          | 70     | 2,282      |
| Balochistan | 14,607          | 1,255        | 145    | 13,207     |
| GB          | 3,542           | 371          | 83     | 3,088      |
| Islamabad   | 16,246          | 437          | 180    | 15,629     |
| KPK         | 37,418          | 419          | 1,258  | 35,741     |
| Punjab      | 98,602          | 1,216        | 2,227  | 95,159     |
| Sindh       | 134,437         | 3,158        | 2,469  | 128,810    |

#### Role of social media:

The data was collected from 500 young doctors. There were 294 females and 206 males. The age range was 20 to 35 years.

**Table 01:** Sociodemographic variables of study participants

| Variables                        | Participants n (%) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                    |                    |
| Male                             | 206 (43.9)         |
| Female                           | 294 (56.1)         |
| <b>Age (years)</b>               |                    |
| 20-25                            | 236 (65.1)         |
| 25-30                            | 245 (28.9)         |
| 30-35                            | 35 (6.0)           |
| <b>Scientific qualifications</b> |                    |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> year MBBS        | 143                |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> year MBBS        | 85                 |
| Final year MBBS                  | 83                 |
| House Jobians                    | 61                 |
| PG's                             | 128                |

The most common social media used by the young doctors were face book (82.6%) and the second most common media is instagram. Twitter and snapchat were also play important role.

**Table 2:** The social media platforms used to get news about the COVID-19

| Social media platforms | Participants |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Facebook               | 326 (82.6)   |
| Instagram              | 33 (6.4)     |
| Twitter                | 17 (3.3)     |
| Snapchat               | 27 (0.4)     |
| YouTube                | 35 (1.9)     |
| TikTok                 | 26 (0.2)     |
| LinkedIn               | 32 (1.2)     |
| WhatsApp               | 3 (0.6)      |
| Telegram               | 4 (0.8)      |
| Skype                  | 1 (0.2)      |
| Viber                  | 9 (1.7)      |

**Table 03:** Impacts of fear on study participants

| Impact scale     | Participants, n (%) |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Psychological    | 299 (58.6)          |
| Physical         | 29 (10.7)           |
| Physical psyche  | 57 (19.1)           |
| All of them      | 85 (24.6)           |
| I was not afraid | 30 (16.0)           |

**DISCUSSION:**

There were some preventive measures which is necessary to win this battle in Pakistan. The most important thing is to wash your hands properly for 20 seconds, use sanitizers and stay away from infected people. Use masks and gloves and do not leave the house until it becomes very necessary [5]. The army has said it will open all military hospitals and health facilities nationwide to assist in testing and treating virus cases. The most important thing is to be calm and pray for the better situation because there is a must win battle for Pakistan. As a nation it becomes our duty to protect our country, nation and ourselves. We hope for the better condition in our country as well as around the globe [6].

With increasing cases of immensely contagious COVID-19, Pakistan's economy is under great deterioration. The terror of fatal disease and economic distress have come up together. The country cannot bear extended lockdown and should the lockdown extend, Pakistan will suffer unmanageable economic loss. Pakistan does not have any sufficient resources to provide for the patients at the moment<sup>7</sup>. Most of the populace is working on daily wages. The shutdown of the whole country would cause death either due to hunger or from COVID-19. The current statement of Pakistan's prime minister calls for a community meeting among susceptible countries that are dealing with the pandemic. It has been decided that rather than complete shutdown, people should avoid mass

gatherings, and partial shutting down of the country will take place in order for the economy to provide for basic necessities [8].

One could argue that the panic caused by widespread information about COVID-19 in the Pakistan is worse than the number of COVID-19 cases and will have a longer-lasting effect<sup>9</sup>. It is important to communicate this to health professionals in the region and for media experts to work with these professionals to ensure that only well-vetted information is disseminated to the public. It is also important to engage the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in this effort to be prepared for future epidemics or health situations<sup>10-12</sup>. This pandemic has certainly helped the authors identify the need for educating consumers on health topics found through social media [13].

**CONCLUSION:**

It is concluded that COVID-19 is widely spreading in Pakistan and social media plays an important role. We must work to educate media consumers on what constitutes good and reliable information and how to critically think through this information. Since younger people are also consuming information from social media and then spreading it to their family and friends.

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