

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT



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About the Journal

The International Journal of Communication Development is a new journal devoted to the analysis of communication, mass media and development in a global context in both Indian and international perspective. Authors are encouraged to submit high quality, original works which have not appeared, nor are under consideration, in other journals.

The International Journal of Communication Development examines the way in which similarities and differences open up scope for discussion, research and application in the field of communication, mass media and development. This journal seeks innovative articles, utilizing critical and empirical approaches regarding global communication including, but not limited to, systems, structures, processes, practices and cultures. These articles could deal with content, as well as its production, consumption and effects, all of which are situated within inter- and trans-national, cross-cultural, inter-disciplinary and especially comparative perspectives.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The intersection of gender, media, and society has been a focal point of academic research, particularly in understanding how media representations shape societal norms and values. The latest edition of International Journal of Communication Development (IJCD) research journal delves into various aspects of this intersection, offering a comprehensive look at how gender roles and identities are portrayed in different media forms, from Bollywood films to digital discourse.

The first paper titled "**Reading the 'New Woman' Trope: Women and Sports Films in Bollywood**" by Sadhna Kumari and Dr. Shuchi Yadav, sheds light on the evolving portrayal of women in Indian cinema, specifically in sports films. This genre has traditionally been male-dominated, with women often relegated to secondary roles. However, recent films like *Chak De! India*, *Bhag Milkha Bhaag*, *M.S. Dhoni: An Untold Story*, *Dangal*, *Sultan* and Akshay Kumar's *Gold* have begun to challenge this narrative, presenting women as empowered, independent, and athletic.

The second paper titled "**Gender Roles in Agriculture Based Hindi Films: A Content Analysis**" by Sweta Suman, Rupa Upadhyay, and Dimple Adlakha, examines how Hindi films depict gender roles within the agricultural sector. The study highlights that while men are often shown as the primary breadwinners, women's roles are largely supportive, reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes. However, the paper also notes a gradual change, with some films beginning to depict women as active participants in agriculture, challenging the traditional patriarchal narrative.

Moving from traditional media to the digital realm, the third paper titled "**Digital Discourse: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Social Media Trends and Theories**" by Dr. Padmini Jain and Abhishek Kumar Rai, offers an in-depth exploration of how social media platforms are reshaping public discourse. The paper emphasizes the role of algorithms and artificial intelligence (AI) in shaping the content that users consume, which in turn influences public opinion and societal norms, including those related to gender.

The fourth paper titled "**Stealth Passage: Encrypted Text Concealed with Hashing**" by G. Rajamuneeswaran and colleagues, although primarily a technical paper, has broader implications for digital security and privacy in the context of media and communication. In an era where digital communication is pervasive, the ability to securely transmit information is crucial. This research highlights the importance of encryption and hashing techniques in protecting sensitive data, including personal and professional communications that may involve gender-related discussions or confidential information of female journalists and activists.

The fifth paper of this edition titled "**Decoding Democracy: The Imperative of News Media Literacy in Contemporary Digital Landscapes**" by Dr. Durgesh Tripathi, Dr. Priyanka Sachdeva, and Ms. Surbhi Tandon, addresses the critical need for media literacy in the digital age. The paper argues that in a landscape dominated by digital media, where misinformation and biased narratives can spread rapidly, media literacy is essential for empowering citizens to critically engage with news content. This is particularly important for marginalized groups, including women, who are often misrepresented or underrepresented in mainstream media. Enhancing media literacy can help individuals discern biased portrayals and challenge the stereotypes perpetuated by digital content.

Lastly, the role of mass media in promoting health literacy, explored by Dr. Ramya K Prasad and Dr. Deepa Makesh, highlights how media can be a powerful tool in disseminating health information. In the context of global health challenges, from pandemics to lifestyle diseases, the media's role in educating the public on health matters is crucial.

Overall this edition of research journal (IJCD) collectively highlight the evolving representation of gender in Indian media and its broader socio-cultural implications. From Bollywood films to social media, the portrayal of gender roles is undergoing significant changes, reflecting and influencing societal attitudes towards gender equality. However, the journey towards truly equitable representation is ongoing, and it requires continued critical engagement with media content, both traditional and digital, to challenge and redefine the narratives that shape our world.

Dr Durgesh Tripathi
Editor, IJCD

Reading the 'New Woman' Trope: Women and Sports Films in Bollywood

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Abstract

This paper explores the evolving representation of women in the sports genre of Hindi cinema, highlighting a significant shift from stereotypical depictions of passive female characters to more nuanced portrayals of empowered women athletes. Through a narrative analysis of three films—*Panga* (2020), *Rashmi Rocket* (2021), and *Shabaash Mithu* (2022)—the study examines how contemporary filmmakers employ gender-sensitive techniques to create complex female protagonists who navigate societal challenges, including class, caste, and patriarchal norms. These films reflect the emergence of the "new woman" trope, which counters traditional narratives of victimization and objectification, portraying women as independent, capable, and assertive in their respective sports. The paper also discusses the broader implications of these cinematic shifts for gender representation in Indian sports films.

Keywords: Hindi cinema, sports films, gender representation, patriarchy, empowerment, Bollywood.

Introduction

The sports genre in Hindi cinema has witnessed a phenomenal transformation in representing women on screen in the last decade. Contemporary filmmakers are attempting to take a more gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive approach, right from conceptualizing a story idea, writing strong female characters and screenplays. Shah Rukh Khan's *Chak De! India* (2007), Farhan Akhtar's *Bhag Milkha Bhaag* (2013), Sushant Singh Rajput's *M.S. Dhoni: An Untold Story* (2016), Amir Khan's *Dangal* (2016), Salman Khan's *Sultan* (2016), and Akshay Kumar's *Gold* (2018) are some of the key examples of this shift. The dominance of cricket on-screen, and its symbolism of hypermasculinity, also underwent a critical shift as 'other' sports, such as hockey, wrestling, boxing and athletics started becoming prominent in storytelling. Through these shifts to 'other' sports, the representation of women and portrayal of female characters also seems interconnected. While the above sports films have storylines revolving around the lives of women sportspersons, their agency remains shadowed until the male-lead (Shahrukh Khan as a coach or Amir Khan as a father) steps in and 'helps' them achieve their goals. Consequently, cinema plots featuring male Bollywood star actors in a variety of roles as athletes, coaches, partners or spouses have largely dominated the genre of sports films in Hindi cinema.

However, women-centric sports films are increasingly attracting filmmakers in India; Bollywood is a case in point where contemporary Hindi sports films are emerging as a popular pursuit. There have been, however, slow yet steady shifts seen in films like *Dil Bole Hadippa* (2009), *Mary Kom* (2014), *Sand Ki Aankh* (2019), *Panga* (2020), *Rashmi Rocket* (2021), *Saina* (2021), and *Shabaash Mithu*

(2022), which have challenged the existing tropes of female characters on-screen. Their achievements, however, are not all about standing on victory podiums but are also accompanied by layered, complex social inequalities based on caste, class, gender and age. While women in these films are portrayed to be jostling with interwoven patriarchal norms, prejudices and biases, they are also simultaneously negotiating, asserting and empowering their 'selves' in everyday life.

Representation of women, through female characters in these films, reflects an emergence of what can be identified as trope of the 'new woman' (Nijhawan, 2009) in Bollywood. The author highlights the rising popularity of items songs in Bollywood which is now marked by shifts in the image of the woman dancer(s): from a sexualized object of desire(s) towards one who has agency over her actions and desires. Through the cinematic analysis of song *Kajra Re* from the film *Bunty Aur Babli* (2005) the author argues that the dance-song sequence is directed in a manner where the actor Aishwarya Rai is depicted through her assertive eyes; her body movements are of an assertive rather than submissive woman longing for a man's desire (for example Helen from *Teesri Manzil* 1996) (Nijhawan, 2009). The focus, here, is on the desire of the woman rather than the man. The choice of camera movements highlights this shift in focus where the assertion of woman's autonomy and choice are primary motive. For Nijhawan (2009), this is a significant rupture in the older notions of women that were chaste and her (re)emergence as a 'new woman' who is independent and individualistic.

In light of above arguments, the paper aims to address and respond to issues of women's representation in sports films in India by exploring films where women as sportspersons are portrayed as independent, competent individuals with strong acumen to achieve status of 'champions' in their respective fields. *Panga*, *Rashmi Rocket*, and *Shabaash Mithu* films have been chosen for their focus on women as multilayered protagonists, negotiating complex notions of class, caste, and regional identities on the one hand and patriarchal dominance on the other.

This paper attempts to explore the rise of the 'new woman' trope in these three sports films as a response to tropes on victimization, objectification, and marginalization of woman/women. Through a narrative analysis of these three sport films, the shifting nature, patterns and themes of women's representation in sport film genre in India would be discussed. The focus is on discerning film techniques used by filmmakers and their role in constructing an agency-driven, gender-sensitive frame of representation on screen.

The paper is divided into three sections. First section discusses the overview of sports genre in Hindi cinema, which has witnessed shifts in women representation on-screen over the last decade; from using stereotypical images of women as passive figures to ones with agency and decision-making ability. The second part of this paper briefly reviews literature on portrayal of women in sports films both in Indian and global contexts, along with research objectives, questions, and methodology. This is followed by analysis of three film stories, culminating in the final concluding remarks.

Women in Sports Films: An Overview

The representation of gender and the portrayal of women in cinema has been of interest among scholars who have highlighted the influence of both Hollywood and Bollywood influence in terms of

production and marketing (Kavoori and Punathambekar, 2008). Hindi cinema, particularly, has been able to carve out a distinct place for itself, especially post globalization where different film industries have come up with their own production houses in their cultural contexts (Kumar, 2008) like Mumbai for Bollywood, Ramoji Film city for Telugu films industry and so on. Hollywood cinema, on the other hand, has emerged as a metonym for the Western culture. that symbolizes and captures the ethos of America.

The representation of gender in cinema, particularly in Bollywood and Hollywood, has long been scrutinized, with scholars exploring how these industries construct discourses of masculinity and femininity (Crosson, 2013, p. 103). In parallel, the portrayal of women in sports films has emerged as a significant area of study, shedding light on the intersection of gender dynamics within the sporting arena and cinematic narratives. Hollywood's engagement with sports narratives can be traced back to its early inception, where films were (and are) created in a way that portrays and celebrates virtues such as power and strength. Such portrayal has also been historically epitomized in sports like boxing (Scott, 2010). These narratives are predominantly centered around male athletes, rendering women into supporting, more passive roles. This trend has also been observed in films like *The Pinch Hitter* (1917) and *Brown of Harvard* (1926) (Crosson, 2013, p. 106).

In her work on representation of women in cinema, Laura Mulvey critically engages readers to understand the complex and problematic depiction of women in sports films, where they are objectified or portrayed as disruptive figures (Mulvey, 1975; Crosson, 2013, p. 108). Despite gradual shifts towards more progressive representations of women in sports films post-1970s, challenges persist, filmmakers often resort to familiar tropes of objectification and victimhood to appeal to male-dominated audiences (Tudor, 1997, p. 80-81). Films such as *Blue Crush* (2002) and *She's the Man* (2006) illustrate this trend, where female protagonists conform to conventional gender roles despite their athletic abilities (Crosson, 2013, p. 120).

Bollywood cinema also follows similar discourse, where, even though, the portrayal of women in sports has undergone transformation, it has its own set of challenges. Antara Mukherjee (2018), in her discussion of women's representation and its evolution in post-liberalization Bollywood, has highlighted the industry's tendency to sideline female protagonists in sports films. Films like *Azhar* (2016) and *M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story* (2016) are centered around male protagonist while female actors are written as lacking in both agency and narrative depth (Mukherjee, 2018).

There are instances, however, where Bollywood filmmakers have attempted to disrupt gender norms through sports narratives. Mukherjee (2018) cites films like *Dil Bole Hadippa* (2009) and *Mary Kom* (2016) as examples of 'counter-cinema', where women are portrayed as more than mere objects of desire on screen. These films, along with films like *Chak de! India* (2007) and *Bend it Like Beckham* (2002), present alternative constructions of women in sports, breaking away from stereotypical representations and offering nuanced portrayals of female athleticism and agency (Mukherjee, 2018). While these films foreground women's experiences and portray complex interplay of gender, sexuality and feminism within sports narratives (Chakravarty, 2020), they may also reinforce traditional notions of masculinity, thereby perpetuating patriarchal norms (Chakravarty, 2020).

More recent films such as *Panga* (2020), *Saand Ki Aankh* (2019), and *Shabaash Mithu* (2022) have responded to conventional representation of women, offering a more nuanced portrayal of women's experiences in sports (Yadav & Jha, 2023). Incorporating a feminist lens, these films have visualized and vocalized issues of gender discrimination, ageism, and societal expectations while also highlighting the transformative power of sports in empowering women and effecting social change (Yadav & Jha, 2023).

In conclusion, the representation of women in sports films reflects broader societal norms and values, with both Hollywood and Bollywood grappling with issues of gender stereotyping and representation. While progress has been made in challenging traditional narratives, continued efforts are needed to foster more inclusive and empowering portrayals of women in sports cinema.

Research Objectives

1. To highlight the changing nature of women's representation in sports films, from secondary characters to empowered women in Hindi sports films.
2. To map Hindi sports films that have used gender-sensitive filmmaking approach and to investigate the 'new woman' trope in these films.

Research Questions

1. With the steady transformation in representing women in sports films, how do filmmakers choose gender-sensitive film techniques?
2. How does women's agency as sports personalities acquire representation and empowerment in Hindi sports films?

Research Methodology

The paper employs narrative analysis method where focus has been on the plot of the films along with narrative moves and functions. In the context of films, the specificity of the medium also stands out where the cinematic medium along with elements of time (plot duration, story) and space (framing, editing, point of view) are essential components through which narrative analysis of the films are undertaken (Bordwell, 1985). While these elements are essential, the audio and visual systems such as sound, and *mise-en-scene* also plays an essential role in narrative analysis (Kuhn & Westwell, 2012). While discussing the three films, *Panga* (2020), *Rashmi Rocket* (2021), and *Shabaash Mithu* (2022), the paper analyses specific scenes and themes crucial for understanding the gender-sensitive representation of women in these sports films.

The next section analyses three films: *Panga* (2020) which is a story about a mother's comeback to the Kabaddi Nationals while she navigates through her dreams and the challenges she faces on the court by selector and her team mates; *Rashmi Rocket* (2021) is about Rashmi's struggle to challenge gender discrimination she faces on field because she has higher level of testosterone in her body; *Shabash*

Mithu (2022) is a biopic on India's former women cricketer Mithali Raj's journey in the male dominated sport of cricket in India.

***Panga* (2020): A Mother's Comeback to Kabaddi Nationals**

Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari directed *Panga*, which centers on the life of Jaya (actress Kanga Ranaut), a Kabaddi player who works in Indian railways, is married, and has a son. She was a Kabaddi player who, due to certain circumstances, left the game and settled for a married life. The film diverts from the traditional tropes of sports films where the sport coach is always a man. There is also Meenu (played by Richa Chadda), a coach and Jaya's ex-teammate and friend. Railway officials remind Jaya, as events unfold, that she is no longer a Kabaddi player and cannot take leave without informing them. She is often in a dilemma about whether she is a good mother, but she finds support from her husband, who recognizes her sacrifices for him and his son.

Her husband reminisces about Jaya's Kabaddi days, when she excelled for the railway Kabaddi team and even qualified for the Asian Games, but she gave up her career for their newborn son. She agrees to start practicing at her son's request. Despite her son's request, she takes the defeat by young players seriously and intensifies her practice. She finds support from her husband, son, and her friend Meenu to come back. Even when offered, she declines to join the Eastern Railway team. The camera tracks her journey from the game to the practice session. The family faces a dilemma as Jaya immerses herself in her training, leaving her husband and son at home alone. The shots cut to their lives. On the other side, she plays her selection match, but her son fails to perform on stage during a school function.

Post selection Jaya becomes a household name via the news, where people support her choices and struggles. When the national team selection process commences, people question Jaya's abilities and use her as a sympathy prop to draw attention from the audience. The selection board chooses Jaya based on her popularity and the sympathy she receives for returning to the court as a mother. Jaya's disappointment is evident when they decide to keep her as a reserved player. The film follows a formulaic approach, with the first part setting the scene, the middle half advancing the story, and the final part achieving the resolution. In the final scene, Jaya finally gets a chance to play on the team and prove her worth to the national team. India wins the final match, with Jaya leading the team to victory by crossing the final line. The camera's slow movement symbolizes her struggle and journey.

A distinct trope in the film is that of a female coach rather than the conventional, arrogant male authority. Generally, male characters in most of the sports films are strict and former players who had to quit their dream due to circumstances in their lives. For example, in the film *Mary Kom* (2014), we see characters such as coach Kabir from *Chak De! India* (2007), Mary Kom's coach, or Mahavir sternly instructing their school-going daughters in *Dangal* (2016). The protagonist brings their dreams to life by rigorously training and preparing them for both the nation and competition. Richa Chadda, Jaya's friend and current Kabaddi coach, plays Meenu in *Panga*. This implies that Jaya decides to return to the sport on her own initiative and with a desire to reclaim her identity as a national Kabaddi player.

Panga deviates from the stereotypical representation of women who are either sacrificial figures or too ambitious to break the chains of monotony. The film also does not exaggerate the melodramatic sequences, especially with his son when she departs for training, leaving him and her husband behind. The mother-son duo does not dominate the narrative of the film; it actually focuses on Jaya's comeback to the game. Even on screen, the film does not explicitly show Jaya's husband as a sacrificing husband but rather a supportive husband, which contests the usual representation of male partner, brother, and father.

Rashmi Rocket (2021): Questioning Gender Biasness

Akarsh Khurana directed *Rashmi Rocket*, which features actress Tapsee Pannu as Rashmi, a tourist guide. The director introduces Rashmi as an independent woman who makes her own decisions, distinguishing herself from other girls by not confining herself to the house. She rides a bike, wears jeans and a t-shirt, and does many other things, such as looking after her mother's business in the village to support women. Rashmi introduces her athletic spirit to the audience by running to rescue one of the Army personnel she was giving a tour of the area. She decides to resume athletics in accordance with her mother's wishes. Soon, the bar of her performance is all over the media and gets popular like a rocket.

The camera cuts directly to the selection room, where her natural ability and sportsmanship on the field are evident. The series of gender harassment starts when she is called *launda* (man) by her physio. The film immerses viewers in the transformation of athletics, showcasing a budget crisis-free environment, well-equipped gyms and training facilities, and coaches of high caliber, in contrast to the depiction in *Chak de! India* (2007), where girls faced discrimination and lacked government support. When she wins three consecutive medals and undergoes a medical test to determine her gender and drug consumption, it casts doubt on her spirit. We witness the manifestation of gender discrimination in the form of medical checkups, derogatory remarks from teammates, and media reports. The film employs the usual troop of media, in which Rashmi's character is assassinated by calling her male, *raja* and *Mardana* (masculine). This is the moment where the film tries to reflect on the issue of discrimination among female athletes in sports. One of the board members secretly arrests Rashmi to enable her athlete daughter to compete and win medals for the nation, further triggering the sequence.

The film offers a different perspective than the usual Bollywood sports film, with a legal angle to the sports on screen. The film's concluding part takes place in a courtroom, where the sportsperson seeks justice, rather than on the field. Usually, the protagonist, who is a sportsperson, finds justice on the field by upholding the nation's pride despite societal and political challenges. However, *Rashmi Rocket* successfully defended the nation's image in court.

Shabaash Mithu (2022); A Story of Hope and Resilience and Women Friendship

Srijit Mukherji directed *Shabaash Mithu*, a biopic on the life of Indian woman cricketer Mithali Raj, who has poignantly contributed to making women's cricket in India a household name. Actress Tapsee Pannu plays a leading role as Mithali Raj, aka Mithu, in this film. Despite cricket's popularity in India,

women's cricket has not been able to make a mark among cricket fans. The reflects upon the challenges women face in a highly male dominated in cricket, India where men are respected for their performance while women continue to disappear in crowd.

The film introduces this issue with a very striking scene where a boy is urinating while he stands, and another child enters the frame trying to urinate while standing. The scene cuts to the boy's face, where he says, "*Ye patti logo ka kaam nahi hai* (this is not the girl's job)". The scene cuts to the field, where the girl, Noorie, takes a wicket among all the boys and beats the boy. Noorie finds herself compelled to learn Bharatnatyam to conform to feminine behavior. Noorie and Mithali find solace in an isolated field, where they only play. They face the real task when the girls play their first match against the boys. When Mithali does not miss a single ball, it clearly illustrates the uneasiness among the boys.

The first time Mithali went against the patriarchal norm was when she chopped her hair to play cricket. The film depicts women's struggles in cricket through the character of Noorie, a talented bowler who marries at the age of 15 and forfeits her opportunity to play for the national team. Mithu grapples with societal expectations, the cricket board's disinterest in female players, and her quest to earn respect for the Indian women's team. In a kitchen and dining area, we witness the deteriorating condition of the women's cricket team, where players engage in discussions about pickles, the traditional method of making leather from animal skin, and their views on men. Mithu is not welcomed by the team, and they ask her to prove herself on the field.

The film also features typical plot elements, including a jealous senior player who fears imminent replacement. The board meeting was full of male board members who decided the future of the women's cricket team by asking them how many people knew about women cricket players. In one of the scenes, a board member asks the peon who is a big fan of cricket to tell at least one women cricket player, which he fails to do while the entire cricket team stands in front of him. We capture the moments of humiliation when the women's cricket team, route to England, receives a request to reduce the weight of their baggage as the men's cricket team passes by, to which the entire airport responds with a chorus of "India, India." No one from the team could sleep after the humiliation at the airport. Like other sports films, the second part depicts Mithu's journey in cricket after her coach's death. In a monologue, Mithali expresses her frustration with the lack of respect, saying, "*Ghure ke bajey agar gaur se dekhte toh dikh jate*" (Instead of staring at us, had you noticed, then maybe you could see us).

As the World Cup approaches, the "women in blue" come to life on screen, and Mithali returns to the cricket team after reuniting with Noorie. The series of winning matches in the World Cup starts, and the team finally makes it to the final to play against England. Almost all sports films achieve resolution through the team's victory in the match, but in this case, the team's loss mirrors real-life events. The media and the public greet the team at the airport upon their return, appreciating their efforts. When they receive recognition and respect from the women in blue, the team finds resolution. The film, which revolves around Mithu's life and the discrimination in women's cricket, concludes with the PM's voiceover, "*Aap cup bhale na laye ho, magar apne pure Hindustan ka dil jeet liya hai.*" (even if you didn't bring the cup home, you have won the heart of every Hindustani). Overall, the film highlights the struggle and resilience of the women team through female friendship. The film gracefully addresses social issues like caste, sanitation, and gender discrimination, not just cricket.

Conclusion

In discussion of the above-mentioned three films, we find that Hindi films have registered a slow transition in depicting women in sports films from being passive characters to active participants in their storytelling. The changing film techniques employed to depict story-telling have made this transition possible. Instead of using regressive dialogue and limited space on screen, filmmakers are now choosing full-length films centered around women and their issues. For example, *Panga* shifts from a heavy focus on the mother figure to Jaya's return to the national league. In *Rashmi Rocket*, the quest for justice unfolds within the confines of the courtroom, departing from the traditional depiction of victory in the game's final match. The director of *Shabaash Mithu*, focuses on telling the story of the Indian women cricket team rather than the final win, so he chooses not to make the final match the ultimate winning game. In conclusion, the shift in representation of women in sports films in Hindi cinema is a significant step towards empowering women on screen.

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Gender Roles in Agriculture based Hindi Films: A Content Analysis

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Abstract

India is known as the "land of farmers" and most of its citizens work in agriculture directly or indirectly. Despite being primary food producers globally, women's contributions often go unnoticed. Films play a crucial role in shaping societal perceptions, especially regarding gender roles. However, Indian cinema frequently perpetuates stereotypes, portraying women as subservient to men. Many studies demonstrate that films have a significant influence on people's opinions, particularly their gender orientation. The way women are portrayed in Indian cinema, particularly in terms of their servitude to males, reinforces gender stereotypes about women in Indian society ((Bagchi 1996 and Ram 2002). The present study titled "Gender roles in agriculture based Hindi films: a content analysis" was undertaken with an attempt to explore the representation of men and women in agriculture based Hindi films in terms of their profession, labor division, power dynamics, ownership and access to the resources and the representation of women in agriculture sector. To investigate this, a study was conducted, analyzing three films: Mother India (1957), Peepli Live (2010), and Kadvi Hawa (2017). The analysis aimed to explore representations of men and women in agriculture, including profession, labor division, and power dynamics. Results highlighted a dearth of Hindi films addressing rural themes like agriculture, with most reinforcing traditional gender norms. Women are often depicted as docile homemakers, while men are portrayed as dominant providers. The study underscores the need to challenge these stereotypes and recognize women's significant yet overlooked contributions to agriculture.

Keywords: Gender, Media, Films, Agriculture, India, Development

Introduction

India is known as the "land of farmers" since most of its citizens work in agriculture directly or indirectly. The Indian farmer is considered to be a living idol in India since they are the hardest-working farmers in the world and is constantly occupied, toiling away for their crop's day and night. But the majority of farmers are in horrible condition. In India, less than one hectare or two hectares of land is farmed by marginal or small farmers, respectively. According to the National Crime Records Bureau's most recent data, 5,563 agricultural workers committed suicide in 2021. (NCRB). There was a 9% jump in suicide rates of farmers from 2020 to 2019. On the other hand, at least 1.6 billion rural women, primarily farmers, live in rural areas of the world, accounting for more than one-fourth of all people. The agricultural workforce majorly comprises women, who help in developing nations and account for almost half of the world's farmers. Women simultaneously perform household duties, participate in communal events, and labour in agricultural fields, yet their triple contribution to the growth of the nation is still ignored or devalued. 50% of the world populations, i.e. women are the potential human resources in the development of the country. They can take up any profession while

continuing to be mothers, caregivers and performing other reproductive activities (Kaushik, 1996). Women should be seen as a resource that ought to be acknowledged, valued and treated as human resources rather than material resources. Contrarily, rural women's contribution to creating social and economic capital remains hidden as a result of their exclusion from plans and programmes, which prevents them from accessing tools that could increase their socio-economic contribution to society. Therefore, only 5% of all agricultural extension resources are focused on women, who own merely 2% of the land and only 1% of all agricultural financing. Women are disproportionately vulnerable to "shocks" like illness, death, floods, and drought because of the extreme poverty and marginalisation that their unequal access to resources exposes them to. According to statistics, about 70% of economically active women work in the agricultural sector in low-income nations with a food shortage, where they are essential to ensuring food security.

Many films in Hindi cinema talk about social issues, but if we talk about rural themes like agriculture, the number of films can be counted on fingers. This shows that the film industry also doesn't give much importance to such issues. Secondly, there exists a gender gap in society, due to which women are considered inferior to men and consequently are unable to realize their full potential. This gender discrimination can be seen in films also because films are made or produced from the male's point of view. Women do productive work (work to earn money), reproductive work (caring & nurturing children, taking care of the sick & elderly, doing household chores, etc.) and take part in community-managing activities simultaneously. Women's reproductive work is not considered in society, and is undervalued and unpaid; also, it is regarded as a woman's duty due to their gender. As women's reproductive work is not recognised and not given economic value, women are economically not empowered. Women also contribute to the agriculture sector and half of the world's farmers are women. Even though women perform so many duties and work more than men, they remain the invisible partners of development.

Films are a popular media of mass consumption which plays a key role in moulding opinions, constructing images and reinforcing dominant cultural values. The narratives of Hindi films have undoubtedly been male dominated and male centric. Themes have been explored from the male audience's point of view. The heroine is always secondary to the hero. Her role is charted out in the context of any male character which is central to the script. It may be the hero, the villain, the father, the boss, an elderly male figure etc. The heroine is devoid of any independent existence and her journey throughout the film is explored in relation to the male character. Apart from this, the films play a very important role in our society and have a very large impact on people's minds but the films also don't give much importance to rural themes like agriculture. Specifically, if we talk about Hindi films, we could count the agriculture-based films on our fingers. Hindi films concentrate more on entertainment than to portray the social issues which hinders our country's growth.

The main focus is on women's triple role in society's development, which is invisible and the hardships that the farmers' face in real life. Films are considered the most potent tool of mass communication and they have the capacity to mould opinions, change the behaviours & age-old practices which hinder the growth of society, change perceptions and finally, films are capable enough to bring social issues to the limelight.

Significance of the Study

Films are one of the most powerful tools and influence people's lives to a large extent. They have the capacity to bring social issues to the limelight and help in bringing changes in people's understanding and behaviours. They help in the development of the country by changing the age- old practices, behaviours and norms (which hinders the growth of the country). Therefore, this study will answer various questions related to the portrayal of gender roles in agriculture based Hindi films and also focus on the agriculture sector and reality of farmers. It will also provide the different perspectives of people related to agriculture and how efficient Hindi films are in portraying the rural theme like agriculture.

Review of Literature

Portrayal of Women in Cinema

Research shows that cinema and society are connected with each other. The majority of the roles that women portray on screen are the male director's interpretation of what those roles should be. Male directors who cast women in predominantly male-written and -conceived parts are equally influenced by gender bias and preconceptions, and may not accurately represent the experiences, perceptions, and sensitivities of women (Nand Kumar, 2011). Women are primarily shown in two roles in Indian cinema, the first being the wife and the second being the mother (Gokulsingh & Dissnayake, 2004). "The Hindi movie supports the conventional patriarchal attitudes of society, which require of the woman, terrified of feminine sexuality, a subordination of her wants" (p. 3). Male Indian moviegoers enjoy patriarchal-themed productions, encouraging filmmakers to reuse themes that reinforce patriarchal prejudices (Rokeach 1968; Little John and Foss 2005). Discussions demonstrate that movies have a significant influence on people's opinions, particularly their gender orientation. The way women are portrayed in Indian cinema, particularly in terms of their servitude to males, reinforces gender stereotypes about women in Indian society ((Bagchi 1996 and Ram 2002). Indian movies typically focus on topics like family drama and dance numbers(Acharya 2004).

History of Indian cinema

The Indian film industry produces the majority of films worldwide. It is fundamental to Indian culture and psychology. The films have a significant impact on Indian society, and society, in turn, has an impact on the films. Every area of Indian family life is impacted by films due to their pervasiveness. Films have an impact on everything from clothing to languages to eating habits and religious beliefs. The criteria of the movie stars' popularity within the fan base can be used to measure the effect of the movies. The number of fans who follow the south Indian film industry's most prominent performers, who are revered as deities and have temples named after them, is at its highest. Indian film is renowned around the world for being highly entertaining. The amount of movies made is continuously rising. Since the introduction of sound in popular Indian cinema in 1931, this language has gained popularity in Hindi films. The development of Indian cinema from silent to sound, from black and white to colour.

Most popular themes of Indian cinema

The mythological or religious genres have dominated Indian cinema since its infancy in the 1920s. The struggle between the good and the evil is the essence of the mythical narrative. Filmmakers have always taken advantage of the psychological conflict between good and evil among audiences. Altruism was the value that predominated in the Indian mentality. The veracity of the large traditions was accepted by the community at the time, and the little traditions were not valued. The Ram Leela (a celebration and re-enactment of Ram's exploits and adventures) and the Ras Leela (episodes from Krishna's life) are considered to have had a profound influence on the storylines of Indian cinema. The Shrutu parampara (oral tradition) was crucial to the success of the mythological film. It still functions today. Indian tradition has long included this kind of reconfirmation. The God of Small Things author Arundhati Roy writes, "The Great stories are the ones you have heard and wish to hear again." Roy was referring to the Kathakali dancing style, but the same logic applies to movies. Not alone during the silent era could this trend be seen. Even during the talkies, it persisted. Some good examples include "Nallathanga" in Tamil, "Bhakta Prahalada" in Malayalam and other languages, "KEECHAKAVADHAM" in Tamil, etc. Themes and scenes from the Puranas, The Ramanaya, and The Mahabharata were cinematically portrayed in nearly 13 of all the Indian languages during the silent and talkie eras. Some folklore and legends were adapted into movie plots.

The 1950s witnessed a striking shift in the subjects of India, specifically in Bengali, Tamil, and Malayalam films. This was the time when a young nation, which had only been created in 1947, was beginning to take shape. The films similar to JEEVITA Social and domestic themes were presented in NAUKA (The Boat of Life); it was one of the earliest depictions of social humour and family life in Kerala. Indian movies are to be broadcast for longer than six months straight. More substantial socio-economic inequality as a theme and a sign of the future NAVALOKAM expressed the social revolution. Though among the Malayalam films from the early 1950s that dealt with societal issues, the 1954 film NEELAKKUYIL (Blue Koel) told the tale of an intense love breaking down caste barriers, it ultimately caves to social pressures and the main protagonists losing it due to social pressure of ostracism. During this time, significant events like Tamil's CHANDRALEKHA and the stunning motion picture depiction in the Satyajit Ray trilogy, which begins with PATHER PANCHALI. The Tamil film PARAASAKTI introduced Sivaji Ganesan. The representation of cooperation at the heights of fame was forceful and rebellious between powers of economic and religious oppression of the poor. Landlordism or feudalism was questioned by DO BIGHA ZAMIN. Socialism, Marxism, and patriotism were the dominant ideas in the Indian mind. The majority of the politicians and filmmakers were educated and the philosophies that predominated there had an impact in the west. Social issues dominated the following ten years. They were mostly inspired by the lives of typical families. Madras and Bombay studios were the ones that produced the most films. Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, and Telugu were among the languages that were produced. In terms of social films, Andaz and Mela stand out. Production of movies in all languages has decreased in recent years.

The 20th century, although the drop has been more significant since then. Compared to the other five languages in production, Malayalam in the 1970s and 1980s was continuously high. The topics of the Moghal Court dominated that era's historical genre. A few examples include ANARKALI and MUGHAL-E- AZAM. MOTHER INDIA does the best job of illustrating the socio-economic subject

and the feudal system. In the movie's climactic scene, a mother shoots her own son for kidnapping a village girl who happens to be the daughter of her bitter competitor. She does this to demonstrate the significance and value that the Indian socio-cultural system has placed on women. Raj Kapoor and his R.K. Studios deserve credit for producing a string of films like AWARA, SHRI 420, etc., that were not only excellent entertainment but also subtle yet profound critiques of the peculiarities in the social life of the 1950s and 1960s. Amitabh Bachchan dominated the Indian film industry in the 1970s by playing the rebellious, angry young man of the new age. Social issues dominated the following ten years. They were mostly inspired by the lives of typical families. Madras and Bombay studios were the ones that produced the most films. Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, and Telugu were among the languages that were produced. In terms of social films, Andaz and Mela stand out. Production of movies in all languages has decreased in recent years. Until the late 1960s, Dada Saheb Falke established the habit of hiring people to direct films who had learned the craft on the job. To educate movie industry experts, there were no institutions. Actors, directors and several other individuals involved in the film industry were trained at the Film and Television Institute (FTII), Pune, and the National School of Drama, New Delhi.

The decades of the 1960s and 1970s were when considerable consideration was given to a cinematic style and completely different topics than what they had been in the past. The new fashion has been dubbed "New Wave Cinema" by critics. The French "nouvelle vogue" of cinema, with which Bresson, Godard, and other experimental filmmakers were connected in the 1950s and 1960s, is not what is referred to as the "New Wave" in the history of Indian cinema. The terms are used relatively loosely in the Indian context to define the purposeful realist and non-commercial style of filmmaking that occasionally plays with form and substance. The realist book, IPTA theatre, and European cinema serve as its foundations (especially Russian, French and Italian). It shuns the escape-oriented Hollywood and Bombay film traditions and is more interested in the pressing social challenges facing Indian society than merely providing enjoyment. Alternative, parallel, and even "another" cinema are some labels used to describe this cinema. Families are a central element in almost all blockbuster films, and these themes often incorporate traditional values. The images of women in commercial films are of perfect women who are obedient, virginal, selfless, and in control (Das Gupta and Hegde 1988). On the contrary, women are portrayed as vamps having characters who are autonomous, sexually aggressive, westernised, unrepentant and wicked (Saidullah 1992 and Gargan 1993). Most Hindi films (Bollywood) made each year typically include themes of action- violence, romance, and family dramas with a lot of song and dance. Typically, it is pronounced "masala" (formula or commercial films) (Das Gupta 1996). Concern has been expressed by feminists about the stereotypical representation of women in Hindi commercial films (Das Gupta 1996). This is understandable when women are either portrayed as the heroes, a mainstream vamp, a successful homemaker, or a love interest in a commercial film, (Nand Kumar 2011).

Mass Media Theories

- **Magic bullet theory:** The "Magic Bullet Theory" states that a message should elicit an immediate response from the audience's thinking without any hesitancy. The media acts as a "needle" to inject the message into the audience's minds, changing their attitudes and behaviours towards the message. The "Hypodermic Needle Theory" media message can't be

ignored by the passive audience. This is exactly how film impact the audience minds and influence their opinions and views about the concept of gender, gender roles, rural communities, etc. and audience don't even realize it.

- **Agenda setting theory:** The manner in which news items and problems are presented has an impact on how the general audience perceives them. The manner that news reports are produced makes it such that when one news story receives more significance and attention than another, the audience will naturally believe that it is the most significant news and information being provided to them. According to how people think and how much effect a piece of news will have on the audience, the media decides which news should be presented first and which should come later. Agenda setting occurs through a cognitive process known as "accessibility". The development issues like farmers' suicides are not presented in a way that could shake the chairs of government or the policy makers to recognize the actual struggles of farmers.

Sample

Inclusion criteria for the films

The films were selected on the basis of the following criteria because the study was done on agriculture based Hindi films only.

1. Films which were in Hindi language.
2. Films which have represented agriculture as their main theme.
3. Films which have IMDb (Internet Movie Database) ratings 7.5 or plus.
4. Films which were able to portray the scenario of agriculture as a profession in India.

Exclusion criteria for the films

Those films were not selected for this study which had not represented agriculture as their main theme and in which the gender roles were not specified because this study aims to study the gender roles in agriculture based Hindi films only. The short films and documentaries were also excluded because they are less popular amongst the audience as compared to Bollywood Hindi films.

Film analysis tool

The film analysis tool was utilized to scrutinize various aspects of the films, including storyline, technical elements, and narrative structure. It focused on depicting gender roles, along with themes like poverty, patriarchy, and farmers' struggles. The tool aimed to evaluate the portrayal of agricultural activities and professions in Hindi cinema.

Finding and Discussion

Content analysis of film: Mother India

About the film

- **Title:** Mother India

- **Year:** 1957
- **Writer:** Wajahat Mirza, S. Ali Raza
- **Director:** Mehboob Khan
- **Producer:** Mehboob Khan
- **Language:** Hindi
- **Country:** India
- **Duration:** 172 minutes
- **Genre:** Drama

Narrative structure

Story: The story of the film revolves around a female protagonist named Radha, who lives with her family, including her husband Shamu, her mother-in-law, and her three sons. But one of her sons died during the flood in their village. She had to raise her 2 remaining sons, "Birju and Ramu" alone when her husband abandoned them and left the house; her mother-in-law also died immediately.

Radha is a strong and determined woman who fights with all the odds while facing numerous challenges. She had to face poverty, financial crises, natural disasters like floods, droughts etc. but she kept her determination alive and did all the hard work to raise her children. She is also harassed by the popular moneylender of the village "Sukhilala", who always asks her to waive the debt (that her mother-in-law had taken from him) for sexual favours in return. But she faces him with all her dignity. She gets all the admiration and praise from the village members for her struggles and her deeds. She was portrayed as a symbol "Mother India" in the film.

Setting: The film was set up in a rural setting, mirroring India's independence (1947). There were many scenes which were shot in agricultural fields, home and open spaces.

Characters: These are the main characters of the film

1. Radha: Nargis Dutt
2. Birju: Sunil Dutt
3. Ramu: Rajendra Kumar
4. Shamu: Raj Kumar
5. Sukhilala: Kanhaiyalal
6. Chandra: Azra
7. Sundar-chachi: Jillo
8. Champa: Kumkum

Technical aspects

Cinematographic language: This particular aspect of the film helped to create realistic scenes.

- **Lighting:** Natural light was mainly used throughout the film to highlight the rural setting and agricultural fields etc. While in some places artificial light was also used.
- **Color:** Vibrant and bright colors were used to create the views of rural village like setting,

especially in the fields and during the harvest season and to showcase the traditional village of India. Darker colors were used to showcase the fighting scenes and the scenes where there were tension in the surroundings due to conflicts between the villagers.

Mise En Scene: This was one of the main aspects behind the success of the film “Mother India”. All the elements of Mise en scene were able to create the realistic looks and views, which could easily attract the viewer attention and help her/him to relate with the storyline.

- **Costumes:** The costumes of the main protagonist of the film “Radha” were very simple that reflected her humbleness, strength & struggles. And all the other females were also wearing traditional sarees that are generally wear by women in village communities of India. While the men were also wearing traditional outfits “Dhoti-kurta” and the moneylender “Sukhilala” was wearing some jewellery too which was the symbol of his wealth & richness.
- **Props & décor:** The props and décor were very mindfully used in the film, the use of bullock carts as means of transport, the settings and the equipments of the house were reflecting the ancient Indian era.
- **Camera angles:** Diversity of camera angles were used to capture the different types of scenes and create different emotions.

Soundtrack: It was one of the best parts of the film, where Naushad composed very beautiful classical and folk music to create the real emotions in the film. It had included some of the most popular songs of the Hindi cinema, which are considered as the masterpieces of Indian song history. Such as “Duniya mein hum aayein hain”, “Nagari Nagri, Dware Dware”, etc. But lyrics of some songs were very gender-biased, for an example the lyrics of one of the most famous songs “Duniya mein hum aayein hain” has some lines which are encouraging the patriarchal norms.

*aurat hai who aurat jise duniya ki sharam hai
sar mein bas laaj hi naari ka dharam hai”*

“A real woman is one who is ashamed of the world Shyness is the religion of women in this society”

These lines are truly promoting patriarch, these are so-called expectations of the society from the women. She is expected to be shy, calm, meek etc. which hinders her personal growth and limits her freedom. Women are expected to remain quiet, polite and less talkative which suppress their opinions and beliefs. Women are also expected to feel ashamed in front of others in terms of her body, sexuality and her desires. They are taught to fulfill the desires and sexual pleasures of men/husbands.

Depiction of women, men, adults, children and elders in the films

Activities they do- Productive, reproductive and community:

- **Productive activities:** These were performed by men, women and children together.
Eg: farming and caring of livestock.
- **Reproductive activities:** These were mainly done by the women like nurturing

and caring of children and other family members.

- **Community activities:** These were performed by men, women and children together
- **Allocation of resources:** The male members of the family used to take decisions to assign and managing the resources.
- **Control and access of resources:** the control of resources were mainly with the male members of the family but it has been transferred to the woman in the absence of male head and male children reached the adulthood the control was transferred to them. While Men and women had access to resources throughout.
- **Their profession:** The professions of men were mainly farming, while women were depicted as housewives along with the farmers.
- **Their work-life balance:** There was no work-life balance.
- **Leisure activities:** people had no time for doing leisure activities.
- **Interpersonal relationships:** It was shown in the diverse ways in the film:
 - Relationship between Radha and her husband:** Radha is married to Shamu, she accepted all his flaws and remained loyal to him but Shamu left her alone and never came back.

Relationship between Radha and her children: Radha had a very beautiful bond with her children in the film, she did many sacrifices and struggles to raise them. Birju (one of her children) was very close to her mother, he did every possible thing to make her happy. Even after all this, Radha sacrificed her son (Birju) to save the Sukhilala's daughter, which showcased her extremely strong and powerful character.

Relationship between the villagers: The villagers were more diverted to the money lender, they had no attachment with the poor farmers.

Depiction of agriculture through main themes

Poverty: The vicious cycle of poverty was shown in the film and continued from one generation to the next. In the film, Shamu's mother took loan from the famous moneylender of the village "Sukhilala". But he cheated on her as she was illiterate, so Shamu and her wife had to pay the debt their whole life and it was continued to their next generation. Majority of the current rural loans are left over from the past and get bigger over time. Only the amount of the property that the inheritor received as compensation makes him responsible for paying back the loan. Despite this rule, rural residents nevertheless pay off the obligations owed to them by their ancestors because they lack a thorough understanding of the law due to their illiteracy. These people view it as their fundamental societal obligation to pay back the debts of their ancestors since they are tied by the traditions and ideals.

Caste System: In the film, people of all the castes used to live peacefully together in the village.

Bureaucracy: The illiterate poor farmers were trapped in the vicious cycle of bureaucracy.

Illiteracy: Illiteracy was one of the biggest issues in the farmer's hardships in the film. The illiterate villagers fell into the trap of the cunning moneylender "Sukhilala". And villagers never come out of the

vicious cycle of poverty. Sukhilalacheated with them and made wrong entries in his account to obtain extra money from them.

In real life also, villages mechanism for lending money is extremely faulty. The moneylenders' only goal is to take as much money from the farmers as possible. The moneylenders create mistakes in their accounting records, impose excessively high interest rates, and demand exorbitant prices for the items they sell to farmers while paying very little for their production. As the debt grows over time, the moneylenders become more concerned about recouping their money by taking the farmers' land and other valuable assets. Therefore, the moneylenders have the farmers in their grasp. And the illiterate farmers couldn't even raise their voice against the money lenders.

Debts on farmers: It was depicted very well in the film that how poor farmers fell in the debt traps of the money lender "Sukhilala" and continue to pay the debt throughout their lives and were never came out of it. Not just in the film, but in reality, also, Rural India, especially its agricultural class, remains trapped in an unbreakable debt cycle. The true difficulties of India's three million farmers, however, does not match the public perception of frightening debt collectors. Moneylenders have been present form ages, they have controlled rural Indian loan markets. Families have lost their homes and other valuables, farmers have been forced to give up their wives' jewellery or turn them into prostitutes to pay off debts, and when all else failed, they have wrapped the noose around their necks to put an end to their suffering. But since India's economic emphasis switched from agriculture to industry as a result of globalization, their business has flourished. Debts have increased as a result of the introduction of expensive crops and pesticides as well as the allure of big harvests. Moneylenders operate in agricultural areas under the guise of farm input dealers.

Hunger: There were many scenes in the film, in which hunger as one of issues in rural India was depicted very clearly: In one of the scenes, Radha's mother-in-law had to sell the utensils of the house to the moneylender to get food in return to feed her family. In one of the other scenes, Radha and her children were dying from hunger because of the flood in their field. Her youngest son died there and then. She had to struggle to find food for her remaining 2 sons to save their lives. These scenes not only depict the struggles of farmers' lives but also depict the sad reality of the developing countries like India, where farmers' grow the food for us but they themselves don't get two times of proper meal.

Patriarchy: Although the film Mother India is one of the gems of its time as it was a female-centric film and the main protagonist of the film was a female named "Radha". But there were many instances of patriarchy that were shown in the film. such as:

1. The villagers and Radha didn't take any action against "sukhilala" who used to ask for sexual favours from Radha, all the time.
2. Radha had to stay strong for her children and had to raise them alone, while her husband abandoned her and her children in the time of need.
3. Villagers taunt Shamu that he is of no use (because he lost her hands) and her wife is raising her because he can't do work and earn money, which shows that patriarchy not only affects women but males are also victims of the patriarchy.

Male preference: It was very well shown in the film, Shamu urged to Radha that he wanted four sons, he didn't mention about having a daughter. And all of their children were males eventually. More than 60 years have been passed, when this film was released. And the scenario of male preference in India hasn't changed much. Over 8% of Indian families say they would prefer to have at least one male kid in their lifetime, indicating that the preponderance of male children in Indian households continues even after 75 years of independence. One of the most thorough government studies of Indian families is the National Family Health Survey. The "son preference" has its origins mostly in the prehistoric belief that a son would uphold the family name and heritage and look after the parents as they grew older. On the other hand, daughters would abandon their married residences and contribute to the family's dowry load.

Violence: There were incidences of gender-based violence against women, in the film. In one of the scenes, Shamu beats Radha and she remained silent and in one of the other scenes Birju raised his hand on his brother's wife. And there were incidences of sexual violence also, when Sukhilala "the moneylender" always demands for sexual favours from Radha in return of waving the loan that her mother-in-law had taken from him. Radha's son Birju also involved in violent behavior against women.

Although Mother India is one of the epic films showing the spirit of woman fighting all the odds and staying strong throughout her life, she was portrayed as the best mother and a woman having all the qualities which all women should have according to the society. It was nominated for Oscars and has won many awards. But Radha "The protagonist" haven't raised her voice against the violence happened with her. And the scenario hasn't changed much even in the 21st century, the recent NCRB report shows that little has changed as women and girls face increasing violence. Of all the cases of crime against women, a majority of the cases (31.8%) fall under the category "cruelty by a husband or his relatives." The private space of the family, which should ideally provide the highest level of safety for women, has failed to do so. Given that the vast majority of crimes go unnoticed the NCRB data represents simply the tip of the iceberg. According to a research that combined data from the NCRB on crimes reported to the police with information from the National Family Health Survey on the real experiences of crime victims, as much as 99.1% of instances of sexual violence, including marital rape and assault, go unreported. Despite legislation (Section 498A, IPC) protecting women from domestic abuse, women do not report because they are afraid of harm, victim shaming, and loss of family honour. Women internalising their gender roles is another factor. When they feel they have neglected their home responsibilities, women frequently normalise domestic violence.

Suicide: It was not a case in the film, but instead of committing suicide, Shamu "Radha's husband" left the home and never came back.

Community relations: The film depicts the strong bond between the moneylender and Sukhilala, although he cheated on them but they had no option. They didn't take the side of male protagonist "Birju" when he was in trouble and went against him because of Sukhilala.

Cultural barriers: There were many cultural barriers, that were shown in the film:

- **Patriarchy:** The film showcased the strong and deep-rooted patriarchy.
- **Marriage:** Villagers marriage were bound by the caste, they don't get married in different castes.

Content analysis of film: Peeple Live

About the film

- **Title:** Peepli live
- **Year:** 2010
- **Writer:** Anusha Rizvi
- **Director:** Anusha Rizvi
- **Producer:** Aamir Khan, Kiran Rao
- **Language:** Hindi
- **Country:** India
- **Duration:** 104 minutes
- **Genre:** Comedy/Drama

Narrative structure

Story: This story is based on a rural farmer named "Natha", who lives with his family consists of his mother, a big brother (Budhia), his wife (Dhaniya) and his 3 children. He couldn't get the loan from the bank for farming so he decided to commit suicide so that his family can get 1 lakh rupees after his death (as mentioned in one of the government scheme). Media covers his story very passionately. In the end, one of the development journalists died in a blast but people confused him as Natha. Everyone thought that Natha is dead in the blast. And because of the unnatural death his family didn't get the money from the government, while Natha flew away from the village and started working on the construction sites.

Setting: The film was set in a village like setting with narrow lanes, mud houses with broken assets etc.

Characters: The main characters were:

1. Natha played by Omkar Das Manikpuri
2. Budhia played by Raghubir Yadav
3. Dhaniya played by Shalini Vatsa
4. Natha's mother played by Farukh Jaffer
5. Nandita Malik played by Malaika Shenoy
6. Rakesh played by Nawazuddin Siddiqui

Technical aspects

Cinematographic language:

- **Lighting:** Both natural and artificial lights were used
- **Color:** Bright colors and dark colors were used to showcase the up and down of Natha's life.

Mise En Scene

- **Props and decor:** The village livestock, old accessories, truck etc. were used to showcase the rural setting and the house were decorated like rural villages of India.

- **Costumes:** Cultural clothing was shown to depict the rural theme. Women were wearing sarees while men were wearing Dhoti and kurtas.
- **Camera angles:** diversity of camera angles was used.

Soundtrack: Cultural and Local music was used, were the background to give a feeling of rural villages.

Depiction of women, men, adults, children and elders in the films

Activities they do- Productive, reproductive and community

1. **Productive:** These were mainly done by the men
2. **Reproductive:** These were done by women.
3. **Community:** These were mainly done by men and children.

Allocation of resources: The headship of these were with the men.

Control and access of resources: men had control and access over the resources which are used for farming and agriculture. While women had control and access of the household resources.

Their profession: women were shown as housewives but some were shown as media persons. While men were shown as farmers, politicians and journalists.

Their work-life balance: There was no work-life balance as such.

Leisure activities: No such activities were shown in case of women while men were shown in groups doing smoking and talking.

Interpersonal relationships: The family members had not good interpersonal relationships with each other.

Depiction of agriculture through main themes

Poverty: It was depicted through the poor farmers and especially the Natha's family.

Caste System: no such scenes were depicted.

Bureaucracy: The farmers were trapped in the vicious cycle of bureaucracy. The government representatives are shown to be uncaring and uninterested in the predicament of the farmers. Instead of addressing his urgent concerns, the government representatives just ask one of the farmers, Natha, to fill out paperwork and follow bureaucratic procedures. It is revealed that the government's compensation programme for farmers who commit suicide is rife with red tape and corruption. It is challenging for the farmers to apply for and get the compensation to which they are entitled since the officials need many papers and the forms contain multiple sections.

Debts on farmers: The cycle of debt-trap that Indian farmers in rural areas frequently experience is portrayed in the film. Farmers are compelled to take out high-interest loans from moneylenders because of their bad crops and low revenue. The farmers find it challenging to pay off their loans, which keep growing with each passing year due to the high interest rates.

Illiteracy: It was one of the main reasons of farmers' plight.

Hunger: The farmers had to struggle a lot to arrange two times meals for their family.

Patriarchy: women were showing as housewives while men were the head of households.

Male preference: No such scenes were depicted in the film.

Violence: Violence against poor farmers like Natha by the high-class people and political parties were shown in the film.

Suicide: The movie depicts the misery and desperation that lead farmers to commit suicide. One of the farmers in the film, Natha, is deeply in debt and is considering committing suicide since he is unable to find a way out of his predicament. The film also shows how insensitive the media and the government are to the problem of farmer suicides. When Natha's suicide plan is made public, the government and the media treat it like a dramatic news story rather than a problem that has to be addressed right away. The film focuses on the reasons why farmers commit extreme acts, like suicide. Farmers are demonstrated to consider suicide for a variety of reasons, including the reduction in agricultural revenue, growing debts, difficulty accessing loans and support, and the absence of social security institutions.

Community relations: The farmers are portrayed in the movie as a tight-knit group that sticks together no matter what. The difficulties faced by the farmers are shown as a group issue for which everyone works together to find a solution. The film also emphasises the significance of community-led efforts and the demand for government assistance in addressing the problems faced by rural areas.

Cultural barriers: One of the cultural barriers portrayed in the movie is gender inequality. In the movie, the female characters are shown as patriarchy's victims who have little control over their own lives. While the female journalist who is covering Natha's tale is depicted as a lone woman in a male-dominated field, Natha's wife, Dania, is portrayed as a loving wife who is unable to make her own judgements.

Content analysis of film: Kadvi Hawa

About the film:

- **Title:** Kadvi hawa
- **Year:** 2017
- **Writer:** Nitin Dixit
- **Director:** Nila Madhab Panda
- **Producer:** Manish Mundra, Ranvir Shorey, Tillotama Shome
- **Language:** Hindi
- **Country:** India
- **Duration:** 99 minutes
- **Genre:** Drama

Narrative structure

Story: Heddu, a farmer who resides with his family in a region of the village that is prone to drought, serves as the film's protagonist. He owes a local moneylender money, but because of agricultural failures brought on by shifting weather patterns, he finds it difficult to pay back his loans. The second main character in the film is GunuBabu, a blind elderly debt collector for a bank. GunuBabu is dreaded by the people due to his reputation as a cruel individual. However, as the narrative progresses, it becomes evident that GunuBabu is also a victim of climate change, having lost his sight as a result of extended exposure to the severe weather. The struggle of these two people to accept the hard facts of climate change and its effects on their life is shown in the film. Additionally, it draws attention to the problem of rural debt as well as moneylenders' abuse of farmers.

Setting: The village is portrayed as a typical rural area in India, with dirt roads, small shops, and farmers struggling to make ends meet. The village is surrounded by fields where the farmers grow crops such as wheat, maize, and sugarcane.

Characters: The main characters of the film are:

1. Heddu - played by Sanjay Mishra
2. GunuBabu - played by Ranvir Shorey
3. Mukund – played by Bhupesh Singh
4. Mahua – played by Tillotama Shome

Technical aspects:

Cinematographic language

- **Lighting:** The movie makes considerable use of natural lighting, especially in outdoor sequences, to provide a believable and captivating mood. To highlight the gravity of the predicament the protagonists are in, the harsh sunshine and desolate surroundings of the drought-prone area are utilised.
- **Color:** Bright colours were mostly used to portray the impacts of climate change and the harsh reality of the farmers.

Mise En Scene

Costumes: Simple and realism-based character attire and cosmetics depict the characters' squalor and hardships in life. Worn-out clothing on Heddu, as well as GunuBabu's facial scars and black spectacles.

Props and décor: The movie conveys its thoughts and motifs through a variety of objects and props. For instance, Heddu's debt documents and the bank's ledger serve as symbols of the characters' financial troubles, while the repeated picture of dead trees signifies the destruction brought on by climate change.

Camera angles: Wide range of camera angles were used.

Soundtrack: The soundtrack of "KadviHawa" is composed by Santosh Jagdale and it features a mix of folk and classical music that adds to the film's mood and emotional impact.

Depiction of women, men, adults, children, and elders in the films:

Activities they do- Productive, reproductive and community

- i. **Productive:** done mainly by males
- ii. **Reproductive:** done by women and female children of the house.
- iii. **Community:** Both men and women were indulged in this.

Allocation of resources: handled mainly by men

Control and access of resources: it was mainly with the men or the high-class people of the village.

Their profession: women were portrayed as housewives while males were showcased as farmers, teachers and bank officers.

Their work-life balance: Not really depicted in the film.

Leisure activities: It was shown that men had some time for this but women were always indulging in household chores.

Interpersonal relationships: The farmer's son Heddu had used to hide about the debt but his father was really worried about him and did everything possible. Heddu had a very sweet relationship with his grand daughter "Kuhu".

Depiction of agriculture through main themes

Poverty: In a severe and realistic way, "KadviHawa" illustrates poverty, reflecting the hard reality that many people in rural India must contend with. Here are some instances of how the movie depicts poverty: lack of essential services: The movie depicts the protagonists' struggles to get necessities including food, water, and shelter. The area's lack of resources and infrastructure is evident by the run-down homes, parched fields, and dry wells.

Caste System: In the movie, Sanjay Mishra plays a rich landowner who is of a different caste than the subsistence farmers who work on his property. It is made clear that the landowner has a lot of control over the farmers, who are frequently at his mercy and have to put forth a lot of effort to pay back their loans.

Bureaucracy: In "Kadvi Hawa," bureaucracy is shown as a pervasive issue that exacerbates the hardships of the underprivileged and marginalised groups. The bank employee: The bank officer is portrayed as a bureaucratic character who is unconcerned with the situation of the farmers and is solely focused on loan repayment. Even though he is aware of the farmer's challenging circumstances, he refuses to provide Heddu any clemency or relief from the obligation.

Debts on farmers: The movie's protagonists are depicted as being stuck in a circle of debt, with Gunu Babu having trouble repaying his loans and Heddu owing money to the bank. The movie emphasises how lack of self-respect and financial hardships may result in a loss of dignity.

Illiteracy: The movie illustrates how a person's access to opportunity and education may be restricted by poverty. While Gunu Babu's kid is unable to follow his goals of becoming a doctor because of financial restrictions, Hedu's son is compelled to leave school in order to assist his father.

Hunger: Hedu's family is seen in the movie's opening scene having a meagre supper of chapati and salt, emphasising their lack of resources and condition of destitution.

Patriarchy: females are shown as housewives and taking care of the family members while males were shown as heads of the households.

Male preference: No such scenes were depicted.

Violence: Bank officer was shown as violent against the poor and blind farmer.

Suicide: The sequence shows the fallout from a farmer's suicide and how it affects his family and the neighbourhood. The movie depicts the bleak reality of farmers who are driven to the point of insanity by socioeconomic causes including the consequences of climate change, financial hardships, and others.

Community relations: The movie demonstrates how the villagers depend on one another for assistance and band together in times of need. However, it also illustrates the tensions and disputes that may develop as a result of the lack of resources, such as water, and the battle to survive.

Cultural barriers: The movie Kadvi Hawa doesn't directly address cultural obstacles, but it does show the economic and social difficulties that rural people in India confront, notably those that are caste-, class-, and gender-related.

Summary and Conclusion

Films are one of the most powerful tools and influence people's lives to a large extent. They have the capacity to bring social issues to the limelight and help in bringing changes in people's understanding and behaviours. They help in the development of the country by changing the age-old practices, behaviours and norms (which hinders the growth of the country). Therefore, this study answers questions related to the portrayal of gender roles in agriculture based Hindi films and also focus on the agriculture sector and reality of farmers. The study findings suggest that there are very less films in Hindi cinema which are truly based on agriculture theme even when it is the major profession in India. Most Hindi films made each year typically include themes of action-violence, romance, and family dramas with a lot of song and dance. Typically, it is pronounced "masala" (formula or commercial films) (Das Gupta 1996). Also, there are myriad of gender stereotypes that exist in the films, women are always shown as housewives, caring mothers, supporting wives and with weak, shy, fragile characters while men are shown as breadwinners, decision-makers, strong and financial pillars of the family. These kinds of things promote patriarchal norms and promote gender inequality in the society. The Hindi movie supports the conventional patriarchal attitudes of society, which require of the woman, terrified of feminine sexuality, a subordination of her wants. Male Indian moviegoers enjoy patriarchal-themed productions, encouraging filmmakers to reuse themes that reinforce patriarchal

prejudices (Rokeach 1968; Little John and Foss 2005). Gibbs (1989) highlights the idea of the female role as a helper. This could involve harvesting assistance, taking care of the livestock, or various other duties. Gibbs also emphasizes the vital role played by farm women. Also, the role of women in agriculture is depicted as almost invisible even in most of the agriculture-based films. These films also further marginalized the women and promoted the idea in the society that farming is a male-dominated profession, when 50% of the world farmers are women. This suggests that films also do not recognize the triple role played by women in the society and not value the work done by them.

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Digital Discourse: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of Social Media Trends and Theories

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Abstract

This systematic review explores the field of social media focusing on the theories, methods, and trends that form our knowledge of the way humans use digital platforms. This paper hints that the most popular theory used in social media research is Uses and Gratifications. It is also observed that the most dominant methods used are the Content Analysis and Survey method. While quantitative methods were heavily used, interviews add qualitative depth to the studies. The interdisciplinary nature of social media research stems from the inclusion of theories from psychology, disaster management and defence studies. Lack of theoretical framework in environmental and psychological studies was also observed. Themes like body image, addiction, and political campaigns reflect societal relevance of such academic work. In conclusion, this systematic review of 30 papers portrays the dynamic and adaptable nature of social media studies as it seeks to resolve the complexities of our virtual world.

Keywords: Social media; Digital media research; Research Trends; SLR; Systematic Literature Review

Introduction

In this dynamic virtual world, social media platforms have gained momentum in shaping the manner individuals connect, reciprocate emotions, and interact with each other. The evolution of these platforms gives upward thrust to literature exploring the complex interaction between users of such platforms. This systematic review embarks on a comprehensive exploration of this literature, with aim to discuss three essential dimensions: theoretical frameworks, methodologies employed in social media studies, and the identification of latest trends that explains the contemporary world these prosumers. As the digital surroundings continue to expand, understanding the foundational theories, examining methodological, and identifying emerging trends becomes paramount. By synthesizing insights from diverse areas, this research endeavors to offer a holistic perspective at the of social media research, offering useful implications for students, practitioners, and policymakers engaged in navigating the multifaceted realm of on-line communication.

Kerlinger and Lee (2000) provide a clear definition of a theory by stating that it is essentially a structured framework made up of interconnected concepts, precise definitions, and statements. The primary purpose of a theory is to offer a systematic perspective on various phenomena by outlining relationships among different factors, known as variables. In simpler terms, a theory helps us understand and predict real-world events or occurrences by explaining how these variables are linked and how they influence each other. Essentially, it's like a roadmap that guides researchers in foreseeing outcomes based on specific factors, allowing for a better grasp of the subject under study.

A theoretical framework serves as a conceptual structure that establishes theories and concepts from experts in a specific field, forming a foundation for data analysis and result interpretation in research. It is not a summary of personal opinions but a synthesis of ideas from influential figures in the field, guiding the researcher in understanding and addressing their research question. According to Swanson (2013), the theoretical framework is essential for supporting the

theory of a research study, offering a lens through which data is examined, analyzed, and findings are interpreted. It includes insights from leaders in the field, providing academic viewpoint and skills to analyze data in research proposals or theses. (Kivunja, p 43) Philosophical foundation also helps in developing proper theoretical framework. (Jiayin Qi et al.)

A conceptual framework is comprehensive execution of your entire research. It encompasses your ideas about selecting the research topic, defining the problem, formulating research questions, reviewing relevant literature, applying theories, choosing methodology, outlining methods, procedures, and instruments. It also includes planning for data analysis, interpretation of findings, and the formulation of recommendations and conclusions (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017).

Essentially, the conceptual framework represents the logical road map of one's entire research project. Describing it as a logical conceptualization emphasizes that it is reflective and operational component important to the entire research process. (Kivunja) Defining the concept of theory remains divisive (Ridder, 2017). For this study, the term theory is defined as "a statement of concepts and their interrelationships that show how and why a phenomenon occurs" (Corley & Gioia, 2011, p. 12). Some seminal works highlight three fundamental features: (a) inclusion of elements identifying key components of the phenomenon, (b) provision of explanations for the relationships between elements, and (c) acknowledgment of temporal and contextual influences affecting theory generalizability (Ridder, 2017). The utility of a theory lies in its ability to explain, make sense of, and provide order to complex situations (Griffin, 2012). Researchers' philosophical orientations, such as positivism or constructivism, shape how they engage with theory—some test theories quantitatively, while others, like qualitative researchers, employ grounded theory (Griffin, 2012).

In the domain of online social media research, the strategic utilization of theories assume critical importance. The dynamics of online platforms demand the construction of original theories. The dynamic nature of online platforms, characterized by global connectivity and multidirectional communication, provides researchers with a distinctive opportunity to advance theories. Assessing the current landscape of social media research, previous studies (Abeza et al., 2015; Filo et al., 2015) highlight the necessity for a more integrated application of theory. While a systematic review of recent literature is encouraged, the current discussion emphasizes the pressing need to enhance theory utilization in online social media research.

Theoretical Framework

Traditional Social Media Theories:

- **Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT):** Developed by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch, UGT explores how individuals actively choose media to fulfill specific needs and gratifications. Applied in social media research, it helps understand why users engage with various platforms and the gratifications they seek, such as information, entertainment, or social connection.
- **Two-Step Flow Theory:** Introduced by Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, this theory posits that media influence operates through opinion leaders who first receive information and then influence others. In social media, opinion leaders, or influencers, play a crucial role in shaping opinions and disseminating information.
- **Diffusion of Innovations Theory:** Propounded by Everett Rogers, this theory examines how new ideas, products, or practices spread through a social system over time. In social media, it helps analyze the adoption and diffusion of innovations, understanding how certain content or trends gain popularity and become widely accepted.

- **Media Dependency Theory:** Developed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur, this theory suggests that individuals rely on media to meet their needs and goals, creating dependencies. In the context of social media, users depend on platforms for information, entertainment, and social interaction, shaping their perceptions and behaviors.
- **Social Identity Theory:** Henri Tajfel's Social Identity Theory explores how individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups, affecting their behavior and perceptions. In social media, users align with online communities, forming virtual identities and influencing interactions based on shared interests or affiliations.

New Social Media Theories:

- **Networked Individualism:** Proposed by Barry Wellman, this theory describes the shift from traditional social groups to networked societies where individuals connect through various online networks. In social media, users exhibit networked individualism by maintaining diverse online connections, influencing their social interactions and information exchange.
- **Social Information Processing Theory (SIP):** Developed by Joseph Walther, SIP focuses on how individuals develop relationships online when lacking nonverbal cues. In social media, users adapt to virtual communication, building relationships based on textual cues and shared information.
- **Affordance Theory:** Coined by James J. Gibson and later applied to technology by Donald Norman, this theory suggests that the design of a technology platform influences its use. In social media, affordance theory helps analyze how platform features shape user behavior and interactions.
- **Cultural Convergence Theory:** Proposed by Henry Jenkins, this theory explores the merging of popular culture and participatory fan cultures facilitated by digital media. In social media, cultural convergence is evident through user-generated content, memes, and participatory fan communities.
- **Algorithmic Culture:** Introduced by Ted Striphas, this theory examines the impact of algorithms on shaping cultural production and consumption. In social media, algorithms dictate content visibility, influencing user experiences and shaping the information individuals are exposed to.

Integration of Traditional and New Theories in Social Media Research:

Contemporary social media studies often involve a mixture of traditional and new theories to comprehensively recognize the complicated dynamics of on-line interactions. The Uses and Gratifications Theory remains applicable in assessing why users turn to social media. The Two-Step Flow Theory finds utility in influencer advertising where positive customers act as intermediaries influencing the broader target audience.

The Diffusion of Innovations Theory helps explain viral content and traits throughout social media platforms, dropping light on the elements influencing adoption costs. Concurrently, the Media Dependency Theory remains important in expertise how customers depend on social media for facts, enjoyment, and social interaction, shaping their online dependencies.

Social media's role in shaping character and organization identities aligns with the ideas of Social Identity Theory. Users form virtual communities, growing a sense of belonging and influencing their online behaviors. On the opposite hand, the idea of Networked Individualism captures the cutting-edge shift from conventional social structures to a extra decentralized, interconnected on-line society.

The Social Information Processing Theory is important in examining how people form and keep relationships in the absence of physical cues, that is especially applicable in the context of social media interactions. Simultaneously, Affordance Theory contributes to understanding how platform design impacts consumer conduct and engagement on social media.

Cultural Convergence Theory performs a function in studying the intersection of famous and participatory cultures inside social media areas. Finally, the concept of Algorithmic Culture is pivotal in unraveling the influence of algorithms on content visibility and user reviews within the ever-increasing digital panorama.

In practice, social media researchers employ these theories to explore topics starting from person behavior and content diffusion to the effect of algorithms on data publicity. The integration of both conventional and new theories ensures a nuanced and holistic understanding of the problematic dynamics shaping the virtual social sphere.

Research Questions

1. What social media theories have been prominently utilized in recent research, particularly those published after the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What methodologies are commonly employed in studies investigating social media theories in the post-COVID-19 era?
3. What recent trends are observed in social media research, with a focus on studies conducted after the COVID-19 pandemic?

Research Methodology

To make comprehensive enquiries for selecting appropriate studies for this review paper, a scientific literature evaluation was carried out with the usage of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) method (Moher et al., 2015). The PRISMA method helped in arriving at a checklist to synthesize educational literature in an accurate and reliable way.

Categorization of social media theories was made through a meticulous article search. Discrepancies springing up at some stage in the assessment manner have been efficaciously resolved because of the clean definitions of phrases and the usage of collectively special constructs in the systematic evaluation method. Following the formulation of evaluate questions, the established order of inclusion/exclusion criteria, dedication of search terms, observe selection, evaluation of risk of bias, statistics extraction, and identity of data evaluation approaches had been cautiously undertaken. This systematic and established technique was employed to ensure a rigorous and dependable synthesis of statistics, aligning with the overarching objective of this studies enterprise.

Search Terms

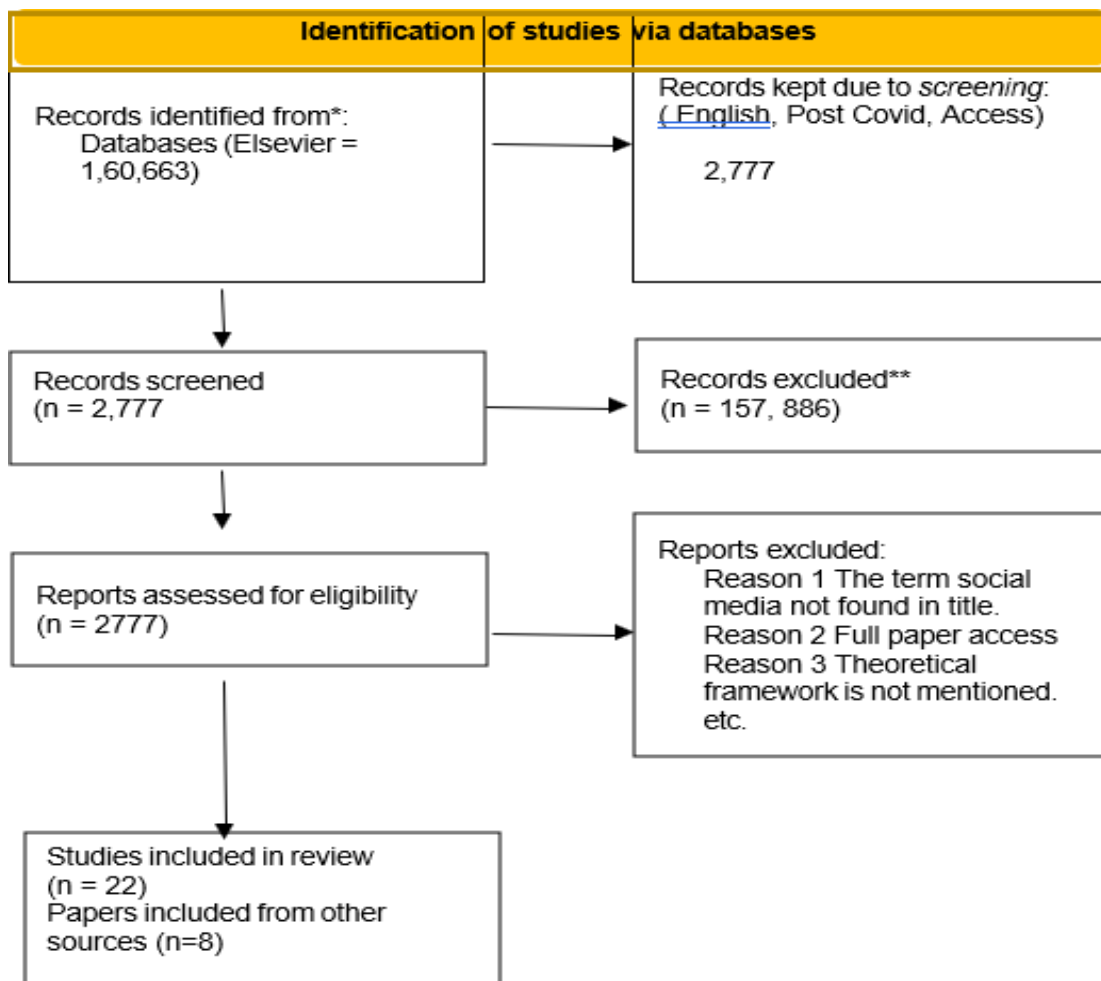
For the complete exploration of social media theories in my assessment paper, researcher employed centered search phrases in the SCOPUS database, focusing in general on "SOCIAL MEDIA" and "SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS." These phrases had been decided on to ensure inclusivity in capturing a wide spectrum of literature related to social media theories. SCOPUS, a good and multidisciplinary database, allowed for an intensive examination of scholarly articles, convention proceedings, and other relevant assets. The planned preference of search terms aimed to encompass numerous views and theoretical frameworks associated with social media, facilitating a nuanced understanding of the concern count. This systematic approach in making use of particular search

phrases inside the SCOPUS database contributes to the robustness and comprehensiveness of my evaluate paper, allowing the identification and synthesis of key theories shaping discourse in the realm of social media research.

Inclusion Criteria

- Language: Articles ought to be written in English to ensure accessibility and comprehension.
- Publication Date: Only works posted after 2023 are considered, ensuring relevance to latest tendencies inside the subject of social media.
- Title Inclusion: Selected articles need to explicitly encompass the term "social media" in their titles, emphasizing an instantaneous relevance to the research attention.
- Abstract Relevance: The inclusion of articles is contingent upon the relevance of their abstracts, ensuring alignment with the scope and goals of the studies.
- Full Text Availability: Only articles with full-text accessibility might be taken into consideration, ensuring the supply of complete statistics for thorough analysis.
- Theoretical Framework: Selected articles must explicitly mention the theoretical framework employed, providing a basis for the synthesis and assessment of social media theories within the research undertaking. This criterion pursuits to make certain a focused and major exploration of theoretical views within the selected literature.

Prisma Chart



Data Collection Table

S. NO.	Title	Journal	Objective	Theory	Method	Finding
1.	Do symbols and device matter? The effects of symbol choice of fake news flags and device on human interaction with fake news on social media platforms	Computers in Human behavior	Extent to which fake news flag interacts with fake news post.	Dual process theory	Experimental method	Extremely effective but also depends on the type of device used.
2.	The dark side of social media platforms: A situation-organism- behaviour-consequence approach	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	impact of usage on mental health physical wellbeing	SOBC Framework	Survey Method	Can be addictive and hamper interpersonal communication
3.	Predicting the use of visually oriented social media: The role of psychological well-being, body image concerns and sought appearance gratifications	Computers in Human Behavior	identifying parameters of self-gratification analysing impact of public acceptance on behaviour	UGT	Survey Method	Self-image is increasingly becoming dependent on the public sharing and perception of the viewers
4.	Effectiveness of B2B social media marketing: The effect of message source and message content on social media engagement	Industrial Marketing Management	parameters of effectiveness in B2B marketing	Social Media engagement theory	Content Analysis and Experimental Method	Trades largely benefit from digital marketing and social media
5.	Benefits and risks of LGBT social media use for sexual and gender minority individuals: An investigation of psychosocial mechanisms of LGBT social media use and well-being	Computers in Human Behavior	finding out the extent to which the LGBT community relates to communities on digital media	UGT	Survey	for this community social media add science a tool of acceptance and self-expression due to anonymity of identity
6.	May I have your Attention, please? An eye tracking study on emotional social media comments	Computers in Human Behavior	using psychological tools to analyse attention grabbing elements on social media pages	SOBC Framework	Survey	reduced attention spans add patience because of seeking immediate gratification
7.	Environmental factors to maximize social media engagement: A comprehensive framework	Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	analysing the factors beyond internal self that enhance the use of such platforms	Social Cognitive Theory	Content Analysis	marketing efforts are excessively leading to social media usage
8.	Social media- induced fear of missing out (FOMO) and social	Journal of Business Research	studying the psychological wellbeing of users	Selective Attention Theory	Experimental eye tracking design	increasing attention to the self and excessive craving for public

	media fatigue: The role of narcissism, comparison and disclosure					acceptance by the users
9.	Unpacking the relationship between technological conflicts, dissatisfaction, and social media discontinuance intention: An integrated theoretical perspective	Acta Psychology	exploring the perception off to conflict behaviour and technological know how	Expectancy disconfirmation Theory	Survey Method	usage of dark web identified sources can pose risks to psychological and social wellbeing
10.	How has social media been affecting problem- solving in organizations undergoing Lean Production implementation? A multi-case study - ScienceDirect	Journal of Industrial Information on Integration n	uncovering the organisational benefits of using social media by employees and management	Information manipulation Theory	Case Study	organizational commitment and job satisfaction can be increased using social media platforms judiciously
11.	Informational vs. emotional B2B firm-generated- content on social media engagement: Computerized visual and textual content analysis - ScienceDirect	Industrial Marketing Management	finding out the trends and benefits of digital engagement in business enhancement	Elaboration Likelihood Model	Content Analysis	Social media is used for information seeking behaviour by new users and first-time explorer
12.	How does digital entrepreneurship education promote entrepreneurial intention? The role of social media and entrepreneurial intuition	Social Sciences & Humanities Open	analysing the benefits of educational videos on youth who seek self employment	Social Cognitive Theory	Survey	new age startups and ambitious you benefit from educational programs own employment
13.	A computer- assisted textual analysis of 10,191 rape news headlines shared on social media	Social Sciences & Humanities Open	finding out the premium hope sensitive news on social media	Framing Theory	Content Analysis	sensitive news one social media is shared via click baits
14.	Understanding the role of social media usage and health self-efficacy in the processing of COVID-19 rumors: A SOR perspective - ScienceDirect	Data and Information Management	understanding self efficacy self acceptance self perception and self depiction	SOR Framework	Survey	fake news and rumours r believed as true. Found to have serious health implications
15.	Social media engagement in the maritime industry during the pandemic	Technological Forecasting and Social	focus on specific technology oriented industries as cases	UGT	Content Analysis	technical industries benefitted by digital usage during the pandemic

		Change				
16.	Government Digital Transformation: Understanding the Role of Government social media - ScienceDirect	Government Information Quarterly	focus on e governance initiatives public perceptions utility and efficacy	Cultivation Theory	Survey	e governance initiatives are helping the government connect to the public in positive manner
17	Actual purchases on Instagram Live Shopping: The influence of live shopping engagement and information technology affordance	Asia Pacific Management Review	impact of influencer marketing use of new trends	Information Tech affordance Theory	Survey and Interview	influencers and live shopping are gaming fans with increase in followers and users
18	eWOM via the TikTok application and its influence on the purchase intention of some intimate products	Asia Pacific Management Review	studying aspirational values of TikTok video makers	Elaboration likelihood model	Survey	social media influencers exercise huge influence on the audience and their purchase behaviour
19.	Social media wellbeing: Perceived wellbeing amidst social media use in Norway	Social Sciences & Humanities Open	physical health and mental health study	UGT	In depth Interview	on need for training on social media ecology
20.	The relationship between social media use, social media types, and job performance amongst faculty in Kenya private universities - ScienceDirect	Heliyon	organizational parameters like job performance and job satisfaction	Social Capital Theory	Survey	job performance was not found to have any correlation with social media usage
21.	Does social media affect performance in e-commerce business? The role of customer management	Journal of open innovation	analysing the benefits of social media for businesses	Resource based view Theory	Content Analysis	customer acquisition and retention increase with social media efforts
22.	How is the effect of social media on the intention to outdoor recreations? A study using personal social connections as a moderator.	Heliyon	physical wellbeing mental health and social behaviour - impact of social media usage	Motivation Theory	Value Expectation Theory	activities suffer a degrees due to involvement in mobile phones oriented social media
23.	The '#tag Generation': social media and Youth Participation in the 2019 General Election in Nigeria	African Development	How youth participate in general election?	Content Analysis and Interview	UGT	Youth was active and framed agenda too.
24.	Dealing with the COVID- 19 crisis: Theoretical application of social media analytics in government crisis	Public relation Review	how to use social media strategically in government public relations through machine learning.	Content Analysis	SMCC Model and Attribution Model	Attribution of crisis on Federal government.

	management					
25.	Social media celebrities and new world order. What drives purchasing behavior among social media	Journal of retailing	Does social media celebrities make people buy things?	Content analysis	Celebrity influence Model	There is significant connection.
26.	Frontiers social media Technologies Used for Education: An Empirical Study on TAM Model During the COVID-19 Pandemic	Front Education	How social media is used for education?	Survey	Technology acceptance Model	Use of SPSS to find a connection
27.	Is Social Media a New Type of Social Support? Social Media Use in Spain during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Mixed Methods Study	International Journal of Environmental Research	How people used social media during pandemic?	Survey and Interview	UGT	WhatsApp is used the most.
28.	Fake news and COVID-19: modelling the predictors of fake news sharing among social media users - ScienceDirect	Telematics Information	Why people search for fake news?	Survey Method	UGT	Altruism is the main cause.
29.	Project MUSE - Social Media Framing in the Global Health Crisis: Pro-Democracy Versus Pro-Regime Opinion Leaders During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Hong Kong	The China review	How pro-democracy leaders framed pandemic	Content Analysis	Framing Theory	Leaders blamed administration for the lack of support.
30.	What makes user-generated content more helpful on social media platforms? Insights from creator interactivity perspective	Information Processing & Management	To study moderation by user generated content. (UGC)	UGT	Content Analysis	Moderators add so many functions to make UGC interactive.

Data Analysis

RQ 1 : Theories Used in Social Media Research

THEORY	FREQUENCY
Uses and Gratifications	8
Elaboration Likelihood Model	4

SOBC	2
Social Cognitive Theory	2
Framing	1
Dual Process Theory	1
Social Media Engagement Theory	1
Selective Attention	1
Expectancy Disconfirmation	1
Information Manipulation	1
SOR	1
Cultivation	1
Information Technology Affordance	1
Social Capital Theory	1
Resource Based View Theory	1
Motivation Theory	1
SMCC	1
Attribution Model	1
Celebrity Influence Model	1

In examining the landscape of social media research, a noteworthy pattern emerged in the utilization of theoretical frameworks. The Uses and Gratifications Theory stood out prominently, featuring in 25.3% of the analyzed papers. This theory, pioneered by Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch, continues to play a pivotal role in understanding the motivations behind individuals' engagement with social media platforms. Following closely, the Elaboration Likelihood Model demonstrated significance, appearing in 12.9% of the papers. Developed by Richard E. Petty and John Cacioppo, this model is instrumental in comprehending the varying degrees of cognitive processing that individuals employ when exposed to persuasive messages in the context of social media. Additionally, the Social Identity Theory of Computer-Mediated Communication (SOBC) and the Social Cognitive Theory each accounted for 2.31% of the papers, emphasizing their relevance in explaining online behavior and interaction. Notably, the remaining 15 papers demonstrated a diverse range of theories chosen based on the specific needs and focus areas of the individual studies, showcasing the flexibility and adaptability of theoretical frameworks within the dynamic field of social media research.

RQ:2 Methodologies Used in Social Media Research

METHODOLOGY	FREQUENCY
Survey	13
Content Analysis	12
Case Study	1
Experimental Method	3
Interview	4

In the comprehensive analysis of methodologies employed in the examined social media research papers, a clear trend emerged, highlighting the diverse approaches embraced by researchers. The survey method emerged as the predominant choice, with 39% of the papers opting for this approach. Surveys, known for their ability to collect large-scale quantitative data, demonstrated their popularity in capturing broad insights into social media phenomena. Following closely, the content analysis method was employed by 36% of the papers, reflecting the significance of systematically analyzing

textual or visual content for deriving meaningful patterns and conclusions in the realm of social media. Notably, case study and experimental methods saw relatively lower usage, indicating a lesser preference for in-depth qualitative investigations or controlled experiments in this field.

Interestingly, the interview method was utilized by 12% of the papers, often in conjunction with other methods. This integration suggests a recognition of the complementary strengths of qualitative data gathering through interviews alongside the quantitative validity provided by other methods. The prominence of quantitative methodologies mentions the emphasis on statistical analysis and numerical insights in deciphering the complex dynamics of social media. This nuanced exploration of methodologies not only showcases the methodological diversity within social media research but also reflects the field's responsiveness to the multifaceted nature of the phenomena under investigation.

RQ: 3 Recent Trends in Social Media Research

Recent tendencies in social media research screen a regular prominence of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) within the theoretical framework panorama. Researchers widely adopt UGT, pioneered by means of Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch, as a foundational lens to apprehend why individuals interact with social media structures and the gratifications they are seeking for. The robustness of UGT in explaining user motivations attests to its enduring relevance in the hastily evolving digital panorama.

Methodologically, survey and content material analysis processes have emerged as dominant tools in social media research. Surveys, with their capability to accumulate massive-scale quantitative information, and content material analysis, permitting systematic examination of textual and visible content, are instrumental in extracting significant insights from the giant and dynamic world of social media. Furthermore, various fields inclusive of psychology, catastrophe control, media studies, and terrorism research actively engage with social media, indicating its interdisciplinary significance. However, a substantial hole exists inside the incorporation of theoretical frameworks in environmental studies and some psychology papers, suggesting an area for potential growth. Themes consisting of frame image, dependency, and political campaigns dominate the studies panorama, reflecting the evolving concerns and societal effect of social media on person and collective conduct.

Interpretation of Results

The exploration of social media research unfolds a compelling narrative, unveiling interesting patterns in the adoption of theoretical frameworks. The complexities of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) at 25% underscores its enduring importance, elucidating the motivations propelling people into the geographical regions of social media. Pioneered by means of Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, UGT continues to function as a foundational lens, unraveling the intricacies of person engagement. The Elaboration Likelihood Model, featured in 12% of papers, crafted by using Petty and Cacioppo, provides perception into cognitive processing, enriching our understanding of persuasive messages inside the social media context. Meanwhile, the Social Identity Theory of Computer-Mediated Communication (SOBC) and the Social Cognitive Theory, each at 2.31%, make contributions nuanced views to the exploration of on-line behavior. The remaining 15 papers show off the dynamism of social media studies, adopting numerous theories tailored to unique observe wishes.

Methodologically, the landscape unfolds with survey and content material evaluation techniques claiming prominence. Surveys, decided on by 39% of researchers, exemplify their utility in taking pictures huge quantitative insights. Content analysis, hired by way of 36%, systematically dissects textual and visible content, extracting meaningful styles in the dynamic social media sphere.

Interestingly, the lesser-used case examines and experimental strategies hint at a main desire for quantitative strategies. Interviews, at 12%, turn out to be a precious complement, presenting qualitative depth alongside quantitative rigor. The preeminence of quantitative methodologies alerts a commitment to statistical precision, reflecting the sector's adaptability in navigating the multifaceted nature of social media phenomena.

Recent tendencies elucidate the chronic dominance of UGT in theoretical frameworks, reaffirming its relevance in know-how the ever-evolving social media landscape. The methodological choice for surveys and content material evaluation mirrors the sector's reliance on large-scale quantitative records for comprehensive insights. The interdisciplinary engagement of fields like psychology, disaster control, media research, and terrorism studies with social media underscores its pervasive affect. However, the discernible gap in theoretical frameworks within environmental research and psychology papers indicates unexplored avenues for destiny increase. Thematic exploration into body image, dependency, and political campaigns reflects the evolving societal concerns formed with the aid of the pervasive effect of social media on character and collective behaviors. In essence, the synthesis of theories, methodologies, and recent developments underscores the dynamic and adaptive nature of social media studies because it endeavors to get to the bottom of the complicated tapestry of our digital interconnectedness.

Conclusion

To summarize, reviewing the social media research studies, we see that much research use a concept called Uses and Gratifications Theory, which enables understand why humans use social media. The survey approach, in which human beings' solution questions, and content analysis, wherein researchers examine what's stated or shown, are the popular ways to gather statistics. People especially use numbers and statistics to apprehend social media, but interviews also play a role for a deeper understanding. Social media studies aren't handiest about technology but additionally includes psychology, failures, media, and terrorism. Still, there may be room to explore extra about the environment and sure elements of psychology. Themes like framed photos, addiction, and political campaigns are common topics, showing how social media affects our lives. Overall, social media research is always changing and adapting, seeking to parent out the complicated ways we use and are stimulated with the aid of structures like Facebook, Instagram, and others.

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StealthPassage: Encrypted Text Concealed with Hashing

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Abstract

An innovative method of protecting confidential data is to hide it using encryption and decryption. In order to make the secret message disappear to the unaided eye, this encryption method embeds it into the visible text. When it comes to protecting data from unwanted access, the emergence of digital communication has made novel approaches necessary. One such approach is concealed text encryption. In order to better understand of concealed text encryption, this study examines the fundamental algorithms and approaches as well as their principles and methodologies. This text encryption makes certain that the encrypted communication is not revealed to uninvited parties by utilizing cryptography, the art of hiding information within other data. The content of the encrypted file will disappear, which means no one can predict the information hiding behind the whitespace background, and it is very complex to decrypt the encrypted file. This method provides stronger security for our information than other methods of cryptography.

Keyword: Encryption, Decryption, Hashing Algorithm

Introduction

In this technology evolution, we all need to secure the confidential data. An organization or a person wants to store a secret information. They will then choose "Cryptography." Cryptography focuses on techniques include Encryption and Decryption. These techniques are employed to safeguard communications and digital assets as well as to secure talks. We can encrypt the text file into another type of encrypted text file (Cipher text), hiding text into images or videos or audios etc., Protecting in formations from the attackers is the crucial one and at the same time it is complex one. By using some technology and algorithm we can protect our information from the criminal attacks. In this paper a different methodology is used to encrypt the text file. It is very useful to the organization or a single person to secure their data and information. For example, our military conversations are very confidential, so there is a need for encryption and decryption. By using this concealed text encryption and decryption, we can have a secure conversation. Even the encrypted text will not be visible to anyone. Just as other confidential communications need this strategy for secure transactions.

If the text or image something is visible to others then it's a possible to understand the idea of encryption. Unless if it is not clear or no visible to all then there is a less

chance of predicting whether it is a encrypted file or not. No one can't decrypt the file without the encrypted method knowledge. It is more advanced method to hide the original data. Even no one cannot see anything in the encrypted file. After the encryption we can decrypt the file to the original text file. We can set the password for the encryption and decryption for the authentication purpose. In this paper hashing technology is used for the encryption and decryption techniques. Specifically, SHA-256 is used.

Modern Vs Traditional Cryptography

Modern cryptography is a major breakthrough over traditional cryptography, which provided weaker security, less inefficient techniques, and better key management systems to meet the demands of the digital age. Traditional cryptography lay the foundation for cryptographic techniques.

Traditional cryptography

Prior to the development of computers and digital technologies, conventional cryptographic refers to cryptographic techniques created and applied. From ancient civilizations, these techniques have been used for ages. Manual or mechanical procedures are at the heart of traditional cryptography systems. The rail fence cipher, substitution ciphers (like the Caesar cipher), and polyalphabetic ciphers (similar to the Viennese cipher) are a few examples of these. The algorithm or key's secret was frequently depended upon by these methods.

Secrecy was the means by which confidentiality was achieved in traditional cryptographic systems. Usually, cracking these systems needed advanced cryptanalysis abilities or familiarity with the particular method employed. But because of their simplicity, a lot of traditional systems are open to cryptographic or brute-force assaults. Problems with key management, particularly with safely sharing and keeping keys, were a common occurrence in traditional cryptography.

Modern Cryptography

The development of computing devices and digital technologies led to the creation of modern cryptography. For key management, encryption, and decryption, it mostly depends on sophisticated mathematical techniques and processing capacity. Asymmetric cryptography, or public key cryptography, is one of the main characteristics of contemporary encryption. For encryption and decryption, it makes use of sets of public and private keys. Many of the key distribution issues in conventional cryptography are addressed by this method. Advanced encryption standards like AES (Advanced Encryption Standard), public key cryptography techniques like RSA and ECC (Elliptic Curve Cryptography), and hashing techniques like SHA (Secure Hash Algorithm) are used in modern cryptography. With the use of digital certificates, key exchange protocols, and cryptographic key derivation algorithms, modern cryptography provides more reliable key management procedures.

Methodology

Hashing Algorithm

1. Hashing

In cryptography, a mathematical function is called a cryptographic hash function. Hash functions are commonly designed to accept variable-length inputs and produce fixed-length outputs. Hash functions that may pass messages while maintaining security are combined in a cryptographic hash function. Algebraically, hash functions "map" or "transform" a given data set into a fixed-length bit string that is called the "hash value." A variety of complexity and difficulty levels are included in hash functions, which are employed in cryptography. Password security, communication security, and cryptocurrency all use hash functions. Cryptographic hash functions add safety measures to

common hash functions, making it more challenging to decode message contents or recipient and sender identity.

Formula:

$$h(k)=k \text{ mod } m$$

- k is a single integer key.
- h(k) is a small integer bucket value.
- m is the size of hash table.

2. Hash table and hash function

A hash table is a data structure that maps keys to array indexes using a hash function, making key-value pair storing and retrieval efficient. The hash function uses a key as input to generate a hash code, which is subsequently used to find the index in the array where the relevant item will be kept.

A hash function's fundamental concept is to translate a given key into a numerical value that indicates the key's location in the array. To reduce collisions caused by multiple keys mapping to the same index, this numerical value should ideally be distinct for every key. Collisions are unavoidable, nevertheless, because of the array's limited size in relation to the possibly infinite number of keys.

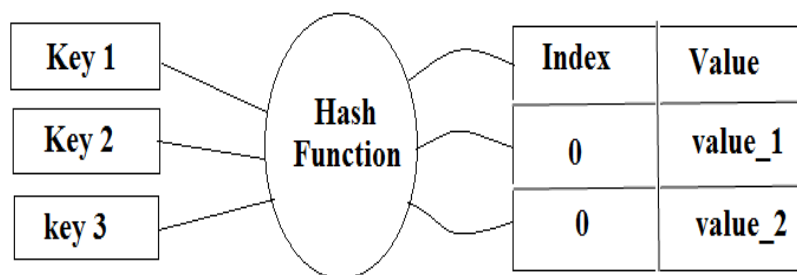


Figure 1: Hash table and hash function

SHA-2

A collection of cryptographic hash functions developed by the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) is referred to as "Secure Hash Algorithm," or SHA for short. SHA-0, SHA-1, SHA-2, and SHA-3 are the versions of the SHA family. Each one produces a fixed-size hash value (digest) based on the input data. These hash algorithms are mostly used to generate a hash, or unique identifier, for a piece of data, such as a message, file, or password. Data integrity checks, password storage, and digital signatures all commonly use this identity.

Encryption

A cryptographic hash function called Secure Hash Algorithm 256-bit, or SHA-256, produces hashes with a length of 256 bits, or 32 bytes. It is important to understand the difference between an encryption scheme and SHA-256 as a hashing technique. A fixed-size output, or digest, is produced from arbitrary-sized input data using hashing algorithms like SHA-256. Hashing differs from encryption in that it is not meant to be a one-way process.

- **Message Padding:** In accordance with the SHA-256 method, the input message must be padded to guarantee that its length is equivalent to $448 \bmod 512$. By padding, you may make certain the input message is more than the block size.
- **Appending Length:** The padded message has an attached binary representation of the original message's length. By doing this, you can make sure that the hash function considers the message's whole length.
- **Initialization:** The hashing algorithm of SHA-256 loads a specified set of initial hash values, referred to as the "state," into it prior to processing the message.
- **Processing Blocks:** There are 512-bit blocks created from the padded message. The compression function performs a number of actions on each block in order to update the hash value.
- **Compression Function:** The message block and the current hash value are processed by the compression function within each block to generate a new hash value. Multiple rounds of operations, such as bitwise operations, modular addition, and logical functions, are involved in this process.
- **Final Hash Value:** The hash value that is obtained after processing every block is the input message's cryptographic hash.

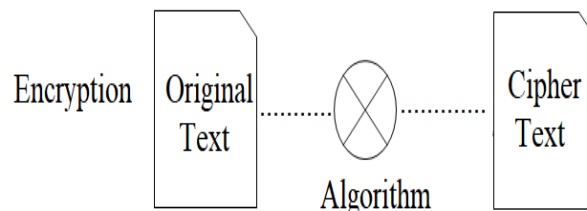


Figure 2 : Encryption Technique

Decryption

Since SHA-256 is a one-way cryptographic hash function, decryption and reverse engineering are not possible with it. It is not possible to recover the original input from the hash value once it has been hashed using SHA-256. The most popular method involves utilizing a dictionary or brute-force attack, in which many inputs are hashed using SHA-256 and their hash values are compared to the target hash value. Until a matched hash is identified, this procedure keeps going.

- **Getting the Ciphertext:** Securing communication channels or storing the encrypted data allow for the acquisition of the ciphertext.
- **Choosing or Getting the Decryption Key:** In symmetric-key cryptography, the recipient chooses the decryption key, whereas in asymmetric-key cryptography, the key is supplied with the ciphertext. This depends on the encryption algorithm involved.
- **Using the Decryption Key to Apply the Algorithm:** The recipient decrypts the ciphertext by applying the algorithm over it. Reversing the effects of the encryption algorithm employed during encryption is the specific purpose of this algorithm.
- **Generate Potential Inputs:** Begin by coming up with potential inputs, such phrases or passwords, then use the SHA-256 method to hash each input.
- **Comparing hashes:** it is the third step in decoding; compare the hash values of the inputs that were created with the desired hash value.

- **Repeat:** Until you discover a match or run out of search space, keep creating and hashing inputs.
- **Optimization:** Employ strategies for speeding up the process and raising the likelihood of finding a match, such as employing rainbow tables or dictionaries of frequently used passwords.

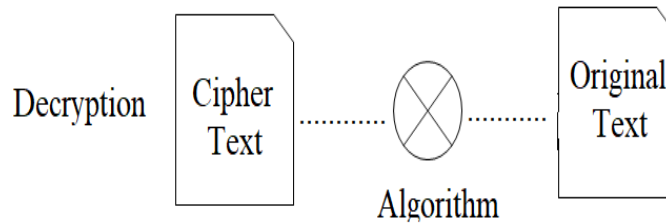


Figure 3: Decryption Technique Table

Explanation of keys used in encryption and decryption process.

Keys	Description
Space key	These Keys are use to encrypt the entire file. For each word it will be replaced in the encryption process and reverse process for decryption
Tab key	
Enter key	

Authentication

One essential security measure is login password authentication, which is used to confirm a user's identity when they try to access a system, service, or application. A password is a combination of characters used as a secret credential for system, service, or application access. System lockout mechanisms are frequently used to stop brute-force attacks. The user's account may be momentarily disabled or locked to prevent unwanted access after a predetermined number of unsuccessful login attempts. Systems may implement password rules to guarantee that passwords satisfy specific complexity standards, like a minimum length, the use of special characters, numerals, and a mix of capital and lowercase letters.

In this paper, we create a system for an organization or a single person's private safe. The password is only known to the one person who is going to monitor the system. They can maintain the same password for both encryption and decryption, or they can use different passwords for both encryption and decryption operations to secure the information.

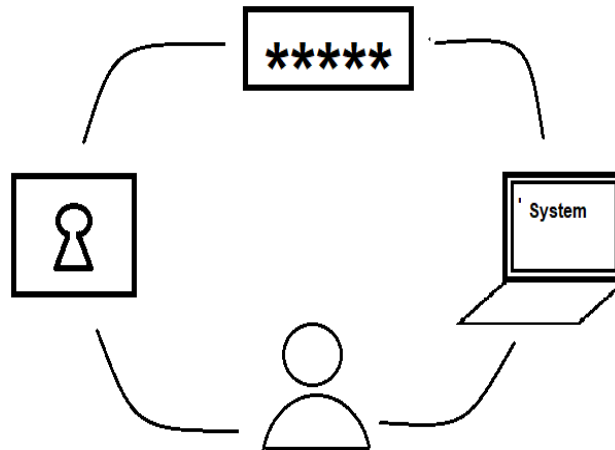


Figure 4: Authentication for security

Additional Features

While the fundamental idea behind invisible text cryptography is consistent across several implementations, certain approaches may provide more features or methods than others. The following are some other characteristics that certain methods of invisible text cryptography may include:

1. **Robustness:** Using strategies that make the hidden message resistant to different kinds of manipulations or attacks is one goal. To do this, the message may need to be embedded such that it is unaffected by stretching, cropping or other changes made to the carrier media.
2. **Security:** Some strategies may place a higher priority on security by using steganography coupled with robust encryption algorithms. This makes sure that even in the unlikely event that the concealed message is found, it will stay hidden and unavailable without the right decryption key.
3. **Multi-layered Encryption:** In more sophisticated implementations, the secret message could be encrypted several times using various keys or methods, enhancing communication security.
4. **Authentication and Integrity Checking:** Verifying the validity and integrity of the secret message is one way to be sure that it hasn't been altered while dissemination or storage. This is known as authenticity and integrity checking.

Result

We can encrypt our private information with this method in just a minute. Nobody is able to figure out how we encoded and decoded the encrypted data. Whitespace Steganography involves hiding information within the spaces, tabs, and line breaks of a text document. By strategically placing these characters, a hidden message can be encoded. Other than an image, cipher text, audio, or video, we can get an invisible file full of white spaces. It is very difficult to understand the concept hiding behind this space. And it's very hard to find the number of words embedded within the text file.

The final result will satisfy the user and give security to the user's information. The number of spaces allocated to each and every character depends on the administrator, and no one can find the value, so it is more difficult to decrypt the encrypted file. Only by using the number of space values

can we decrypt the file. But the number of spaces is allocated during the coding process. This is a more secure and trustworthy system for our confidential and private files. An organization will get good performance and security by using this system.

Future Enhancement

Only one system or device within the organization has the ability to both encrypt and decode data. Allow the sharing of encoded files between two or more people or organizations. Furthermore, the size of the encoded document's file depends on the key, which varies depending on each character in the private document. Thus, in the next upgrade, the key size should be utilized efficiently.

By encrypting the text in the document, the length may increase. We use any number of spaces for every word. So the length may increase more than the original document's length. In further development, we will work to reduce the size of the file after encrypting. In this tab, as well as the number of times the enter key is used, it will append the length of the document. After decrypting the document, the original contents are replaced, and the original length is restored.

Conclusion

Finally, a technique called or This Stealth Passage, provides a variety of methods for hiding information in what appears to be innocent data. Secure communication, digital watermarking, and covert data transmission are just a few uses for this encryption and decryption technique. Even though some methods have their uses, there is a chance that they are going to be abused or utilized for illegal actions like surreptitious communication. As such, it is imperative that the application of this text cryptography be handled sensibly and ethically, following the law and accepted moral principles.

Additionally, the stability of the algorithm, the intricacy of the encoding technique, and the capacity to recognize and understand concealed messages are some of the variables that describes how successful this whitespace encryption and decryption is. The possibilities of steganography techniques and approaches for identifying them are always evolving as technology progresses.

Overall, research on Stealth Passage: Encrypted text Concealed with hashing is still very interesting and has applications in many other domains, including as digital forensics, cyber security, and information hiding. To fully realize its potential advantages and handle any security risks, this subject requires ongoing study and development.

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Decoding Democracy: The Imperative of News Media Literacy in Contemporary Digital Landscapes

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Abstract

Democracy faces a crucial challenge in balancing citizen engagement with the need for reliable information as information is a building block for the opinion formation process. This article explores the complexities of democracy, highlighting the importance of elected representatives and an informed populace within a trustworthy information ecosystem. The digital age has an information overload along with the threat of the hoaxes, conspiracy theories, false news, and confirmation bias, which has prompted questions over the reliability of information from various sources. Although news is essential for maintaining citizens' education, the study makes it important to identify the news sources, especially in the digital age that includes Facebook, Instagram, and other news websites. The primary concerns discussed are how news media literacy affects citizens' ability to make decisions, how news media literacy contributes to a healthy and dynamic democratic society, and how news media literacy and democracy are related. By delving into these questions, the study presents news media literacy as a new and essential field—particularly considering the digital age. In addition to addressing fake news, it clarifies how the media environment is changing and how business models are adapting, all while adhering to fundamental principles of media literacy. The paper investigates the need for the news media literacy in post-truth era and ways to curate news consumption in the digital world. One of the main points made is that people should look beyond superficial assessments of the news and investigate the organizations, structures, customs, and practices that exist within the news media landscape. It is believed that developing analytical abilities is essential to gathering reliable data and preserving the country's democratic foundation. To identify the underlying structures and institutions in the news media environment, the research emphasizes how important it is for people to have news media literacy abilities. It is believed that critical analysis skills are necessary for both maintaining a democratic process that is sustainable and for obtaining information in an authentic way. In its conclusion, the paper urges policy interventions that contemplate the measures required to guarantee that journalism satisfies its social responsibilities in the context of a vibrant democracy.

Keywords: News Media Literacy, Policy Framework, Civic Engagement, India, Political Participation, Democracy, Media Literacy

Introduction

“Media literacy is critical to the survival and perpetuation of a healthy democracy.”

– Janice Ellis

Public opinion plays a pivotal role in shaping the democratic landscape of a nation. Literature infused with democratic principles accentuates the empowerment of the people and underscores the government's reliance on the citizenry. A fundamental tenet of democracy is the rational and moral foundation of faith. The relationship between journalism and public opinion is of utmost importance in modern democracies. Public opinion theoretical frameworks and models highlight the media's critical role in educating the public, encouraging citizen interaction, and shaping and mobilizing popular opinions.

The word "post-truth" means a political world where people mostly discuss things based on feelings. This culture is not connected to details about rules or regulations, and facts don't change the claims made over and over again. In the media world, the time of big lies or false news is marked by spreading bad data through social and other online sources. This leads to a weakening impact on what is true in shaping people's views. Old media companies are struggling to keep trust, believe in them and stay original as the environment changes. This prompts crucial inquiries into the potential bias inherent in public opinion and its potential detriment to the democratic fabric of the nation. The perilous consequences of misinformation and hate speech have prompted a reevaluation of democracy, citizen participation, and public opinion. The profit-driven nature of the commercialised media has drawn criticism due to its perceived failure to foster engaged and informed citizens within the context of democracy.

Addressing the deficiencies of such a media system necessitates the cultivation of media-literate citizens. Empowering individuals to be discerning consumers of commercial affairs and adeptly comprehend the workings of the media system is paramount. According to McChesney (2002), media literacy seeks to empower citizens to be both active participants in the democratic process and critical thinkers.

News: A Duality or Dilemma Between Reality and Representation

The role of news in a democratic society is central to informing citizens about current events and political affairs, thereby shaping their engagement in self-governing societies. In this context, the veracity and completeness of information disseminated through news media become crucial. There has been a widespread debate and dichotomy inherent in the perception of news as either a reflection of reality or a constructed representation of events.

Ashley (2020) has asserted that "News is Socially Constructed, News is not the actual events of daily life but rather a representation of those events." The agenda-setting theory, as posited by Donald L. Shaw and Maxwell McCombs (1972), illuminates the editorial role in selecting and presenting news, thereby influencing the political reality perceived by the audience. Using the mass

media to get information, like what happens with the agenda-setting theory shows how important it is to check what news we are given and who makes these decisions. This influences political choices too. But psychologists have suggested to watch out for understanding the world and its reality through news or media. It could be wrong.

There could be risks when automatically consuming news. This might mean that wrong information can spread, which can cause problems. As an additional framework, the framing theory was proposed. It explains how news stories are made to change people's opinions. Kurt Lewis's Gatekeeper theory focuses on how editors or those in charge of choosing what gets shared have their own likes and can decide what we see.

Considering the current environment characterised by an abundance of information, particularly in the realm of digital media, it is critical that news consumers possess high levels of media literacy. News in modern times is tailored to cater to niche audiences and disseminated through diverse channels. Scholars have advocated for enhanced news media literacy among consumers of the news.

Social Media Platforms and the Proliferation of Misinformation

Technological advancements have greatly increased the possibilities for user interaction on social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, X, Facebook. These platforms are being widely used, and because of their disruptive and democratic qualities, it is necessary to critically analyse how simple it is for false information to proliferate. Ireton and Posetti (2018) emphasised that news disseminated via social media platforms proliferate the echo chamber and filter bubble phenomena, which are fuelled by algorithmic processes and harm a country's democracy.

According to Silverman (2018), social media sites exacerbate hate speech, polarisation, and trolling, especially during election seasons. Information disorder is a result of the problems digital media confront, including convergent journalism, urgent deadlines, low levels of trust, and low earnings. Users' ability to discern between true information, fiction, advertising, and entertainment is weakened by the blending lines that separate journalism from fake news. The spread of fake news is a serious challenge to India, the largest democracy in the world and home to the second-largest population. The nation's lower literacy rates make a vibrant democracy's struggles even more difficult.

According to data from the Statista research department from 2019, 45% of Indians are exposed to news that has been completely made up for political or commercial purposes, and 39% come across poor journalism that includes factual errors, deceptive headlines, and clickbait. These results highlight how critical it is to address the widespread problem of false information on social media, especially in the context of democratic countries like India.

News Media Literacy: Understanding the Origins and Developments

The discernment of reliable information from misinformation has garnered considerable attention in contemporary discourse. While recent times have witnessed a surge in the prominence of literacy

and news concepts, it is noteworthy that the ancient Greeks advocated for the evaluation of information through critical thinking. During the 1970s and 80s, particularly in Europe, scholars and academics embraced media education as an essential component of citizenship including the evolving and well recognised idea of global and digital citizenship.

The crux of media education has been the critical analysis of media texts for some decades now. But, a different area has been created in the 21st century known as News Media Literacy. In simple terms, this area is more than what we usually call media literacy. That's the skill to look at, study and judge messages in media and also create them ourselves.

Defining and deciding the variables of the News Media Literacy and its goals are still being discussed and deliberated upon. In the past, being literate meant knowing how to read and write. But now in today's fast-moving world of 24*7 media, literacy has become a more complex idea. It goes from knowing a lot about topics like financial literacy, health management or legal literacy.

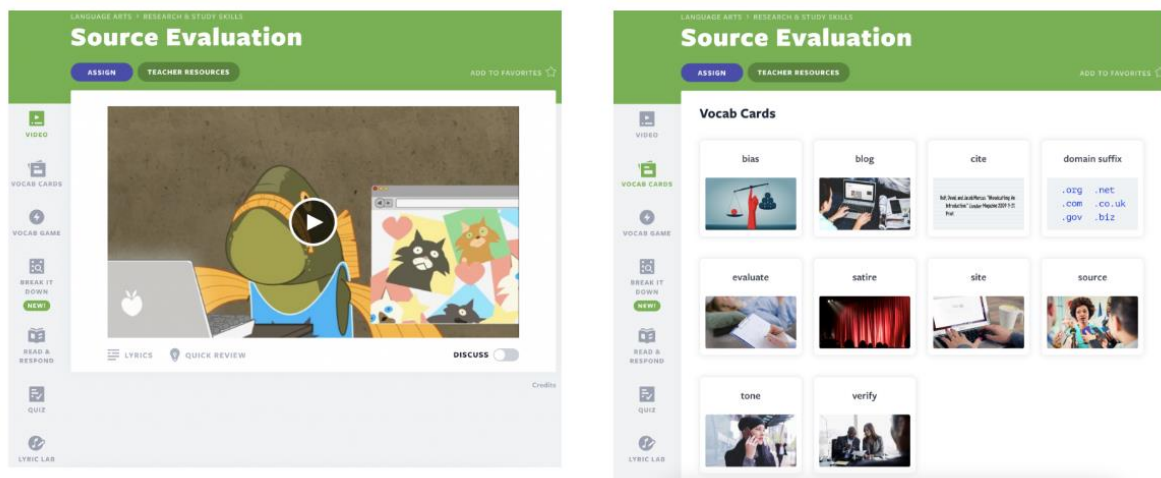
News Literacy means understanding what news messages are. On the other hand, a wider view includes many facets regarding how and where news is made. These include situations like politics, political economy, business considerations and also culture and society.

A common way to teach how to check information and sources is the CRAAP test. It was made by Sarah Blakeslee at California State University. This tool is very useful for students and people in checking the trustworthiness of sources of information.

The check of information quality uses something called the 'CRAAP' test. This is supported by a group in America named the American Library Association. This test checks content using standards connected to money, importance, power, correctness and goal. This way helps to look closely at content in a planned style, but it doesn't take into account the bigger factors and ideas that people already believe before they read the news.

The book "Blur: "How to Know What is True in the Age of Information Overload" gives a new look at understanding news media. The writers say that understanding news means reading it with care and skepticism. They also propose that middle and high schools should add news media understanding and civic knowledge in their lessons. In order to improve news literacy, the authors advance six questions as part of a “Skeptical Way of Knowing”:

- What am I encountering?
- Is this information complete or not?
- Who or what are my sources, and by what means do I believe them?
- What evidence is given and how was it confirmed?
- Can there be other explanations for this?
- Am I gaining knowledge?



Source: <https://blog.flocabulary.com/news-media-literacy/>

This way lets us check the news' content in more detail than just using 'CRAAP' test rules. So, it helps to encourage individuals to become critical thinkers especially teenagers in school set-up.

The six questions help foster an enlightened citizenry by serving as a tool for scrutinizing the provenance of information. They serve the function of identifying gaps and inaccuracies in information and at the same time provide an instructional framework for improving information literacy.

Daniel Russell, a research scientist at Google, posits a hypothesis suggesting that contemporary students have the capacity to access a volume of content through the internet that is exponentially greater, estimated at a million times more, than what earlier generations could access in a conventional university library. Consequently, Russell contends that readers in the present era necessitate a significantly more dynamic and sophisticated repertoire of reading skills for the consumption and analysis of both traditional and online media. Some of the key strategies advocated to initiate and spread middle and high school students for creating a sensitisation towards news media literacy are:

- Creating an understanding for key terms that includes credibility, reliability, prejudice, bias
- Finding and creating a database of age-appropriate media content for creating the awareness and explanation
- Cross verification of the media content being utilised
- Addressing the issue of clickbait in online news and other media content
- Teaching strategies and tactics for website evaluation for credibility and fake news or misinformation
- Imparting smart search strategies and cross verification of the content available online
- Encouraging lateral reading

Stony Brook University has developed a News Literacy curriculum that intends to inculcate critical thinking skills in students so that they can be able to determine the reliability and credibility of

information sources. The general objective is to contribute towards the establishment of a vibrant civil society with an informed population. This places emphasis on the need for individuals to be educated enough not to fall victims of misleading information, which can derail growth-pathways within nations.

It is essential that this approach emphasizes the development of critical thinking skills, such as recognizing journalism versus alternative sources, distinguishing between news and opinion, assertion versus verification, and evidence over inference. The curriculum promotes assessment and deconstruction of news reports so as to enable students distinguish between news content and audience biases.

However, Renee Hobbs (2010) offers a critique of the news literacy curriculum, asserting that it aligns with traditional journalism paradigms and is linked to propaganda. Hobbs contends that the curriculum overlooks the intricate economic and practical challenges faced by journalists in fulfilling their societal responsibility of facilitating an informed citizenry. This perspective underscores the complexity inherent in delivering news in a manner that aligns with the social obligation of fostering informed citizens.

News Media Literacy and critical functions in a democratic set-up

The life of a democracy depends on its people getting good information and news. People need to spot fake news, study the wider social and historical background around it. They also must get involved as in a big way when they see things on TV or read them online that affect society. Ashley (2020) explains this view and suggests important points to boost people's involvement with news in a way that supports democracy. He proposes the idea of teaching people how to understand what they read, known as news literacy.

1. Curate Your News Consumption

- a. Engage with news regularly.
- b. Find gatekeepers who control the information you see or hear.
- c. Choose carefully where you get your news from.
- d. Control the amount of news you take in and don't get overwhelmed with too much information.

2. Foster a Critical Mind

- a. Enhance critical thinking skills.
- b. Face new information with a willingness to listen to views that go against what you already believe.
- c. Use information that is proven by research.

3. Build a Knowledge Structure

- a. Learn about how the news media system works and is built.
- b. Learn how history and culture affect the news media.
- c. Learn to understand the mental boundaries that come with human seeing and thinking.

d. Look into the disagreements between democratic values and money-based influences.

4. Social Imagination

- a. Ask why society is set up the way it is.
- b. Look at how social groups affect personal experiences.
- c. Check if socially made realities are true and correct.

5. Critical Awareness

- a. Tell others about what you have learned and explain how important it is.
- b. Help those who want to improve their knowledge more.
- c. Responsibly make and share information.

6. Civic Life Participation

- a. Know what's going on and take part in the democratic process, like voting.
- b. Take part in local activities and efforts of the community.
- c. Reject cynicism and apathy.
- d. Practice empathy and actively participate.
- e. Push for social systems that uphold values of democracy.

Getting involved in the news, politics and community life is very important for citizens in a democracy. Civic life is all about involvement and active participation in community activities on both local, state and national levels. This includes everything in our social world that helps shape our society together. It may involve basic act of voting to taking part in school, political and community activities and deliberations. Making people aware of important news is very important for helping citizens understand and comprehend things better in a democratic country.

News media literacy is very important for building a democratic and public service-oriented media system that caters the different sections of society. False news is like a virus that spreads and affects people who may not be aware or cautious enough. These individuals then make decisions without knowing, which may cause harm to the society and having long-term implications. News Media Literacy acts as a shield against fake news. It serves as a defence mechanism for citizens who can easily be fooled by wrong information.

Understanding news media literacy and talking about its goals and methods is still being discussed. The usual idea of knowing how to read and write has changed in today's world with 24*7 media. It now means more than just reading and writing skills. It covers knowing how to do things well in different areas like health, financial literacy and cultural sensitivity. Each one is focused on a certain area of skill.

Media Literacy: Deliberations over Policy Framework

Jack Balkin, an expert on law, gives a helpful summary that shows how the internet changed rules for talking. In many places around the world, a lot of rules have been made to deal with issues that

come from social media sites. Importantly, a new German law known as NetDG makes social media sites pay if they carry illegal content. Singapore has made rules that force websites to post corrections for incorrect facts. This is because they want to stop fake news from spreading. Many countries are making efforts to address issues with fake news and online information.

The book "The Misinformation Age: How False Belief Spreads" by Cailin O'Connor and James Weatherall advocates for regulatory measures targeting the deliberate creators and disseminators of fake news. In alignment with this perspective, Germany has implemented similar laws to regulate the proliferation of hate speech and misinformation. India, too, has been actively engaged in regulatory efforts, evidenced by notable revisions in the Information Technology Act of 2000.

“Without a Media and Information Literacy policy and strategy, disparities are likely to increase between those who have and those who do not have access to information and media and enjoy or not freedom of expression. Additional disparities will emerge between those who are able and unable to and, analyze and critically evaluate and apply information and media content for decision-making”

-UNESCO report (2013)

Media Education Strategy for Effective Governance, Democratic Stability, and National Development:

- **Facilitation of Informed Decision-Making:** Giving people chances to make smart decisions by teaching them about media thoroughly.
- **Promotion of Active Civil Society Engagement:** Promoting active involvement in community life with education about media.
- **Enhancement of Accountability and Transparency:** Setting up ways to be held responsible and making sure people understand through teaching about media education.
- **Encouragement of Social Inclusion and Participation Opportunities:** Boosting social involvement and giving chances for different participation through media learning programs.
- **Promotion of Equality, Peace, and Justice:** Teaching about fairness, peace and law through media literacy programmes.
- **Cultivation of Tolerance:** Building a culture that accepts differences by using media teaching methods.
- **Empowerment of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality:** Helping women and supporting fairness between genders by using special education in media programmes.
- **Advancement Towards Sustainable Development**

Conclusion

In India, learning about media and understanding information can help society get better, make the government work better, fight against poverty and low education, and create smart citizens. This learning can be very important in making different parts of people powerful, like farmers, women,

and citizens. It also helps to make democracy work well. Even though it could be helpful, the inclusion of media skills in school and after-school teaching plans in India has not been fully used yet. The National Council of Education Research and Training has started things by adding media as a topic in chosen schools. Another important project is the Gandhi Media Literacy Program, started by Gandhi Darshan Samiti in 2003. This program was launched to celebrate 100 years of Indian opinion. This program wants to teach the basics of media. It also helps people understand messages from media better, separate truth from lies, improve thinking skills and learn values from Gandhi. In places like Tamil Nadu and other parts of India, small efforts are helping people learn about media and information literacy. However, we need bigger programs that teach media and news literacy skills to many more people. This means making special lessons for kids in cities and countryside areas and younger folks, to deal with the changing way people use and share media.

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Role of Mass Media in promoting Health Literacy

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Abstract

Centre for Disease Control, Healthy people 2030, defines Health literacy as ‘the degree to which individuals have the ability to find understand and use basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions for themselves and others. The American Medical Association (AMA) defines it as ‘a constellation of skills including basic reading and numerical tasks required to function in the healthcare environment.’ Businesses, educators, community leaders, government agencies, health insurers, healthcare providers, the media, and many other organizations and individuals all have a part to play in improving health literacy in our society.

Development Communication is a complex evolutionary branch that looks at development through communication an empowerment tool to facilitate the participation of people in activities that lead to economic and social transformation. There have been many approached to development communication starting with the “dominant paradigm” as proposed by Rogers in 1960. The modernisation theory looked at traditional culture as an impediment to development. Further scholars like Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm who were involved in third world development posited that as the traditional society was non-participant as people were more isolated as communities with minimal interactions. He emphasised the role of mass media and identified that it had the potential to transform people attitudes and usher in modernisation. Mass media was looked up as ideal vehicles for transferring new ideas and models from developed nations to the third world. They were looked up as “magic multipliers” and key factors in the speed of development by Schramm. The diffusion of innovations theory identified by Rogers looks at the innovation, communication, channels of communication and the social system within which and for which the process occurs, through five stages – awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption. Over time the theory has been replaced with social marketing theory which provides a model for strategic, scientific, determination of messages and media strategies to disseminate ideas to promote a social cause. Family planning, gender rights, adult literacy, HIV/AIDS prevention, responsible sexual relationships have all been some of the responsible campaigns carried out with the support of media.

Media is crucial to the advancement of communication because it disseminates information, offers a forum for debate of problems, and imparts concepts and abilities. achieve a better life and establish a foundation of agreement for the stability of the nation.

India concentrated on development communication in the 1940s with radio broadcast in different languages through various programmes, like-Programs for Rural Audience, Educational Programs and Family Welfare Programs. Television entered the foray shortly through different programs like Educational Television (ETV), Countrywide Classroom (CWC), Teleconferencing. Successful missions like SITE, Kheda Communication project have brought out social change and development.

With the development of newer technologies that support interactivity Government programs optimise on this strength.

Health literacy concerns the knowledge and role of media in health literacy is increasingly recognised, there is no consensus about the definition of health literacy and possible limits for measurement and comparison. Hence the authors' aim of the study is to review definitions, models on health literacy and role of media in health literacy to develop an integrated definition and conceptual model capturing the significance of media's role in promoting health literacy.

Method Proposed: A secondary research based on literature review is intended to be performed to identify definitions and conceptual frameworks of media's role in health literacy. A compilation of various research-based information on media's role in health communication including the definitions and conceptual frameworks is planned to be carried out to identify the central dimensions of health literacy and develop an integrated model.

Objectives & Implications: The secondary research review method intended by the researchers may serve to study the dimensions referring to the knowledge, motivation and competencies of accessing information on health via various media, study the people's understanding about health concerns, media coverage dealing with the appraisal and application of health-related information within the healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion setting, respectively. Through this paper the researchers aim to study the competencies related to accessing, understanding, appraising and applying health information in the domains of healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion, respectively, especially role of media (greater emphasis on social media) in contributing to health literacy and Covid19 Pandemic being the significant evidential situation.

Possible Outcome: Based on an analysis of review of existing definitions and conceptualizations of health literacy and role of mass media, it serves to outline the basis for developing mass media-based health literacy enhancing interventions. This further provides a conceptual validation for capturing the different dimensions of health literacy, disease prevention and health promotion settings.

Keywords: Development Communication, Mass media, Health literacy

Introduction

Health Literacy

The **Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** officially defines health literacy as the ability to “obtain, communicate, process and understand basic health information and services.” Reading skills gives one the ability to understand and use the written information while health literacy gives the skills to understand and make good decisions on health.

According to the American Medical Association (AMA), health literacy is defined as ‘a constellation of skills including basic reading and numerical tasks required to function in the healthcare environment.’ Health literacy as a term became popular in 1970s and is of immense relevance in public health and health care. Health literate means placing one's own health and that of one's family

and community into context, understanding which factors are influencing it, and knowing how to address them. Kickbusch & Maag (2008) look at health literacy as a term concerned with the capacities of people to meet the complex demands of health in a modern society. Macqueen D et al. (2007) posit that an individual with an adequate level of health literacy can take responsibility for one's own health as well as one's family health and community health. Businesses, educators, community leaders, government agencies, health insurers, healthcare providers, the media, and many other organizations and individuals all have a part to play in improving health literacy in our society.

From looking at health literacy as the ability to handle words and numbers in a medical context, the recent years has adopted approach to understand health literacy as involving the simultaneous use of a more complex and interconnected set of abilities, such as reading and acting upon written health information, communicating needs to health professionals, and understanding health instructions. (Peerson and Sanders, 2009). Through a systematic review Liu et al. (2020) point out that Health literacy was commonly conceptualised as a set of knowledge, a set of skills or a hierarchy of functions (functional-interactive-critical). After a detailed analysis of 34 studies, they classify the construct of health literacy covers three broad elements: (1) knowledge of health, healthcare, and health systems; (2) processing and using information in various formats in relation to health and healthcare; and (3) ability to maintain health through self-management and working in partnerships with health providers.

Nutbeam (2008) suggests a model for health literacy with the following three domains: (i) functional (i.e. transmission of factual information on health risks and services), (ii) critical (i.e. provision of information on social determinants of health and opportunities for communal action to direct change) and (iii) interactive (i.e. opportunities to direct change on a personal level). These domains focus on ways in which information is used to promote and maintain good health.

Past studies have shown that health literacy helps individuals engage more in treatment decision-making and cooperate better with healthcare centers.(Khosravi & Ahmadzadeh, 2016; Mahmoudi, 2016). Further, people with poor health literacy may not understand the nature of the treatment and medical advice given to them. Various factors can affect the level of health literacy one of which seems to be media literacy. Tehrani (2016) in his study points out that different organizations recommend media literacy as one of the effective strategies for promoting health.

Afshar et al. (2022) prove that the media literacy is an important determinant factor for health literacy and hence, the development and increase of media literacy can increase health literacy. Health literacy is already seen as a crucial tool for the prevention of noncommunicable diseases. Therefore, community health policies can be used to increase health literacy and media literacy of citizens because people with adequate health literacy may behave better in health crises and epidemics. This was the need of the hour to wade through during the recent COVID pandemic times. Health literacy is important in determining true information, especially in the context of infodemics (Abel, 2020 and Chong, 2020).

Mass Media and Development Communication

Media is a vehicle or means of communication that disseminates information from the source to the target public. Any media intended for a larger audience is called Mass Media. From pictorial representations at an early age, massive production of newspapers, and fancy videos on television to high-tech media combining the Internet and computers, there are variations in the type of mass media. Being the prime source of information, entertainment, **marketing, advertising media**, they play a very important role in today's context. Mass Media can be defined as a technology which is intended to communicate or reach a mass audience. Mass media is the primary means of communication for the general public to communicate with each other as well on a grander level. The most popular types of mass media include Newspapers, Radio, Television, Internet, Magazines.

The technique of employing messages to generate meaning in a mediated system is known as mass communication. It is between a source and many unseen receivers—there is always some sort of transmission system (mediator) between the sender and the receiver. In today's environment, it can be broadly classified as traditional or mainstream mass media, which includes newspapers, radio, and television, and new media, which includes social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and so on) and various news media that reach out to people through e-apps observe Anand.S. and A. Kumar (2016). "Mass communication is the process of sending a message, thought, or attitude to a large number of diverse audiences through some media at the same time." (Homes, 2005).

Development Communication is a complex evolutionary branch that looks at development through communication an empowerment tool to facilitate the participation of people in activities that lead to economic and social transformation. There have been many approaches to development communication starting with the "dominant paradigm" as proposed by Rogers in 1960. The modernisation theory looked at traditional culture as an impediment to development. Further scholars like Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm who were involved in third world development posited that as the traditional society was non-participant as people were more isolated as communities with minimal interactions. He emphasised the role of mass media and identified that it had the potential to transform people attitudes and usher in modernisation. Mass media was looked up as ideal vehicles for transferring new ideas and models from developed nations to the third world. They were looked up as "magic multipliers" and key factors in the speed of development by Schramm. The diffusion of innovations theory identified by Rogers looks at the innovation, communication, channels of communication and the social system within which and for which the process occurs, through five stages – awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. Over time the theory has been replaced with social marketing theory which provides a model for strategic, scientific, determination of messages and media strategies to disseminate ideas to promote a social cause. Family planning, gender rights, adult literacy, HIV/AIDS prevention, responsible sexual relationships have all been some of the responsible campaigns carried out with the support of media.

Media is crucial to the advancement of communication because it disseminates information, offers a forum for debate of problems, and imparts concepts and abilities. achieve a better life and establish a foundation of agreement for the stability of the nation. According to UNESCO (1978) a multi-

dimensional communication flow strategy is effective in reaching out the development initiatives to the targeted public, using interpersonal channels with the support of mass media. (Khalid, 2012).

Media literacy & Health literacy

Mass media are expected to perform the following functions:

- **Informing the Public:** Mass media such as television, radio, and newspapers can be used to disseminate important health information to the public, including disease prevention strategies, new medical treatments, and emerging health threats.
- **Educating the Public:** Mass media can be used to raise awareness among the public regarding health hazards and the importance of healthy behaviors such as exercise, healthy eating, and vaccination.
- **Advocating for Public Health Policies:** Mass media can be used to advocate for public health policies such as smoking bans, seatbelt laws, and restrictions on junk food advertising to children.
- **Providing a Platform for Public Discourse:** Mass media can provide a forum for public discussion about health issues, allowing individuals and communities to share their experiences and opinions.
- **Mobilizing Communities:** Mass media can be used to mobilize communities to act to improve public health, such as participating in health screenings or organizing community clean-up events.
- **Providing Support for Individuals:** Mass media can offer support to individuals with health conditions by providing information about treatment options, support groups, and resources.
- **Addressing Health Disparities:** Mass media can help to address health disparities by providing information and resources to underserved populations, including those with limited access to healthcare.
- **Generating Public Interest:** Mass media can generate public interest in health issues, which can lead to increased funding for research, improved healthcare services, and better health outcomes for individuals and communities.

Does Mass Media Influence Public Policy?

Mass media can also influence public policy by increasing public awareness regarding public health concerns, including the harmful effects of tobacco use, and by advocating for policies that can improve public health. Media campaigns that emphasize the importance of vaccinations, for example, can lead to changes in public policy that increase vaccination rates. Through mass media, public health professionals can also reach out to underserved populations and communities with limited access to health information. For example, television and radio campaigns can reach rural communities with information about healthcare services and disease prevention measures. In addition, mass media can be used to address health disparities and promote health equity. Media campaigns can provide information about diseases that disproportionately affect marginalized communities and promote access to healthcare services for these populations.

Limitations of Mass Media in Public Health

Despite the many benefits of mass media in public health, there are also some challenges, such as:

- **Sensationalism:** Sometimes, mass media focuses on sensational or eye-catching news, rather than providing accurate and relevant information on public health issues.
- **Misinformation:** Mass media can inadvertently spread misinformation or false information related to public health issues, which can be dangerous for the public.
- **Language and Cultural Barriers:** In some communities, the use of mass media may not be as effective due to language and cultural barriers. This can result in limited comprehension of public health messages and interventions.
- **Limited Reach:** Not everyone has access to mass media, and there are still areas with limited internet connectivity and access to traditional media such as newspapers and television.
- **Political Influence:** Mass media can be influenced by political agendas and bias, which can impact the accuracy and effectiveness of public health messages.
- **Limited Attention Span:** In today's fast-paced world, people have limited attention spans and may not pay attention to public health messages that require time and effort to understand.
- **Lack of Trust:** Mass media may not always be trusted by the public, which can lead to skepticism and disbelief in public health messages.

Previous research has shown a positive correlation between media literacy and health literacy; the higher the health literacy, the higher the media literacy. The views of research done by of (Akbarinejad et al.,2017) (Mahmoudi et al.2016) and (Yvonne Chen, 2014) conducted in Iran, and the US showed a direct positive correlation between health literacy and media literacy. This has been reiterated by Afshar et al. (2020).

Levin-Zamir et al. (2011) propose the concept of Media Health Literacy (MHL) that is based on the premise that the individual has the capability to control the determinants influencing his or her health through thought and action. The concept assumes that, unlike health content and information intentionally generated by the health system, mass media content is often implicit and can have a profound impact. Their study was among adolescents in Israel and their use of media. MHL is an effective mental health determinant or can progress both the health of individuals and communities. Adopting an interventional experimental design approach, Dharti et al. (2021) prove that Mass media intervention was effective for improved mental health literacy among rural women, and show a significant association of effectiveness of mass media intervention on mental health literacy in age, education, family income. The investigators stress on the importance of health literacy as the public will understand and use health information and services. They show significant association of effectiveness of mass media intervention on mental health literacy in age, education, family income.

An online cross-sectional study (Inour et al., 2022) infer that in the context of COVID-19 in Japan, mass media was the most frequently used source of information, followed by digital media, face-to-face communication, and social media. Social media use was significantly higher among individuals aged 20-29 years than among other age groups.

According to Mohammad Hossein Saei, Sardar Valadi, Kianoosh Karimi, and Mohammad Khammarnia et al., (2021) who studied the role of mass media communication in public health: The impact of Islamic Republic of Iran broadcasting health channel on health literacy and health behaviors, infer that by informing and educating, the Media play a main role in increasing the health literacy of the community. Broadcasting health channels (BHCs) are established to improve health literacy and public health worldwide. A cross-sectional, comparative study was performed on 500 participants throughout 6 urban areas in Tehran, the capital of Iran in 2019. About 250 of the samples were included in viewing the health channel group. A standard questionnaire was used to measure the levels of public health in the 2 groups. Data were analyzed and compared using SPSS software version 25. According to the results, health literacy was higher in the group that used the health channel rather than the other group. Also, with regard to physical and psychological health levels, a significant difference was observed between audiences and non-audiences ($p=0.013$, $p=0.001$, respectively). The study concluded by declaring that the IRIB HC has positive effects on increasing the level of health literacy, Physical and psychological health, and consequently improving public health. Therefore, these channels have a great role in the implementation of health polices to improve health status.

Significance of Social Media in promoting health literacy

Anwar A, Malik M, Raees V, et al. (2020) in his article on the Role of Mass Media and Public Health Communications in the COVID-19 Pandemic, in the Cureus 12(9): e10453 has quoted that Mass media became the major source of information about the novel coronavirus, led to the emergence of the biggest global health crises seen to date. In his review, he analyzed the role of mass media and public health communications from December 31, 2019 to July 15, 2020, and make scientific inferences. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted multiple social, cultural, and economic issues arising from the media's arguable role. The racial prejudices linked to the origin of the virus prevented collaborations among scientists to find a solution. Media coverage of coronavirus news during geographical lockdowns, extended quarantines, and financial and social hardships induced fear and caused psychological stress. Domestic and elderly abuse upsurged. The unscientific cures and unverified medicines endorsed by the politicians and fake doctors proved harmful. The media played a worldwide role in coronavirus disease tracking and updates through live updates dashboard. The media allowed for timely interventions by the Center For Disease Control And Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), enabling a rapid and widespread reach of public health communications. An upward trend for the promotion of health and hygiene practices worldwide by adaption of safe health practices such as increased hand washing, use of face coverings, and social distancing was propagated by media. Media reinforced illness-preventing guidelines daily, and people were encouraged to use telehealth to meet their healthcare needs. Mass media has an imperative role in today's world and it can provide a unified platform for all public health communications, comprehensive healthcare education guidelines, and robust social distancing strategies while still maintaining social connections. It can enable equal access to healthcare, end discrimination, and social stigmatization. The role of media and public health communications must be understood and explored further as they will be an essential tool for combating COVID-19 and future outbreaks.

The study offers to cover the emotional and psychosocial aspects of social media including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and Reddit, along with their Chinese equivalents WeChat, Weibo, Tencent, Tik Tok, and Toutiao. The study reveals that People have become accustomed to posting every aspect of their lives on social media. This includes their achievements, worries, and travels on a daily and hourly basis. Since the lockdown, there has been an 87% increase in social media usage by the people. People started gathering information posted on the groups and unknown pages and believing them. Religious pages also started attracting people amid crises by spreading unscientific information regarding the prevention and treatment of the virus. The implausible claim of the virus affecting the geriatric population made the young vulnerable. This ultimately resulted in a large number of young affected by the virus. This unscientific and unproven fact spread like wildfire in the media and made the elderly go through many psychological and physical terrors. Moreover, disruption in professional lives and sticking to social media in all this free time, highlighted the problems like racism and wealth inequality. Many cases of domestic violence were also reported.

In contrast to this, the positive impact of social media was also covered in the study. The continuous mention of ads like ‘Stay home, stay safe,’ ‘Face covers mandatory in public,’ ‘COVID-19: less is more, avoid gatherings’, ‘give extra space with each other and on the road,’ and ‘wash your hands, stay healthy, avoid COVID-19’ was essential to consolidate the role of them in preventing the disease spread. Further Online mental health services including telemedicine, working to combat mental diseases, and psychiatrists and psychologists on the internet provide free consultations go to prove that Social media is contributing to mental health education for the public. Many SARS-COV-2 tracking tools, including Worldometer, provided live statistics and updated news regarding coronavirus. WHO has unveiled its Arc Geographic Information System (ArcGIS) Operations dashboard for COVID-19 which helped to map the worldwide spread of misinformation and confusion. Media helped researchers and scientists to predict and take necessary measures at appropriate times.

In a study on the Role of the Media in Health-Related Awareness Campaigns on Perception of COVID-19: A Pre-post Study in the General Population of Pakistan, published in the *Frontiers* by Atta Ur Rehman, Rubeena Zakar, Muhammad Zakria Zakar, Ume Hani, Kamil J. Wrona, Florian Fischer et al., (2021) aimed to study if the Medical preparedness and community education are the most valuable preventive tools for combatting the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was based on the Knowledge Gap Hypothesis. The hypothesis proposed that knowledge is disseminated in the society on the basis of socio-economic indicators. The philosophical stance of the knowledge gap hypothesis described that people with better financial status may assimilate media information more rapidly than lower financial status. The socio-demographics association with awareness was analyzed in this study. The objectives of the study were to assess the role of media health-awareness campaigns on the general population's perception and knowledge of COVID-19 in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. A quantitative study using a pre-post design among 384 respondents was conducted. A structured questionnaire was administered to the participants twice: The first response (t1) from participants was filled in during the 1st week in February 2020 before any confirmed cases were reported in the country, and the second response (t2) was completed 1 month after the first case detection in Pakistan (March 2020). Media health awareness campaigns were launched just after the detection of the first case in Pakistan.

Exposure to the media and knowledge relating to COVID-19 increased over time. People use different types of media—either exclusively or in combination—to acquire information. Different types of media correlated at a low or moderate level for each instance of data collection. However, there was a very high correlation for each type of media when comparing t1 and t2. The daily users of social media increased from 46.1 to 54.7% from t1 to t2. The proportion of weekly users of social/digital media stayed almost the same. Electronic media (news portals) were the most widely used among participants (62.5% at t1 and 71.7% at t2). The use of newspapers and magazines decreased significantly, as 64.3% of respondents were not using them in March compared to 45.1% in February. Socio-demographic characteristics were not significantly associated with knowledge (gains). Knowledge related to COVID-19 awareness (general, symptoms, and preventive measures), as well as total awareness, increased significantly over time. Awareness regarding the symptoms of COVID-19 indicated a noteworthy increase in knowledge among participants. However, more frequent use of electronic media is associated with greater knowledge gains from t1 to t2.

TABLE 2 | Frequency of media use before (t_1) and after (t_2) the first reported case of COVID-19 ($n = 384$).

Type of media	Media use at t_1 n (%)			Media use at t_2 n (%)		
	Daily	Weekly	Not follow	Daily	Weekly	Not follow
Social media (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp)	177 (46.1)	99 (25.8)	108 (28.1)	210 (54.7)	95 (24.7)	79 (20.6)
Electronic media (e.g., television)	240 (62.5)	72 (18.8)	72 (18.8)	273 (71.7)	59 (15.4)	52 (13.5)
Print media (e.g., newspaper, magazine)	150 (39.1)	61 (15.9)	173 (45.1)	97 (25.3)	40 (10.4)	247 (64.3)

The findings of this study provide evidence that awareness and knowledge related to COVID-19 symptoms and preventive measures increased significantly over time. The increased frequency of following the media indicates that health awareness campaigns are important for enhancing the knowledge of the general public regarding COVID-19. Differences in knowledge related to educational level, gender, residence, income, and age of the respondents were investigated. The statistical outcomes revealed that all variables were non-significant in respect to age and income of the sampled population. Furthermore, the diffusion of innovation theory also proposes that acceptance takes time and that individual's pass through various phases in the adoption procedure and may acclimatize to the concept during the later phases. Therefore, future investigations may discover improved health awareness among participants related to further items, whereas only limited progress was seen in the study, such as that related to the complications of COVID-19.

Qinling Yan, Sanyi Tang, Sandra Gabriele, Jianhong Wu et al., (2016) developed a quantitative approach to evaluate the potential of News reporting to modify a community's knowledge of emerging infectious diseases and affect peoples' attitudes and behavior. Statistically significant correlations between the number of new hospital notifications, during the 2009 A/H1N1 influenza epidemic in the Shaanxi province of China, and the number of daily news items added to eight major websites were found from Pearson correlation and cross-correlation analyses. They also proposed a novel model to examine the implication for transmission dynamics of these correlations. The model incorporated the media impact function into the intensity of infection, and enhanced the traditional epidemic SEIR model with the addition of media dynamics. They used a nonlinear least squares estimation to identify

the best-fit parameter values in the model from the observed data. They also carried out the uncertainty and sensitivity analyses to determine key parameters during early phase of the disease outbreak for the final outcome of the outbreak with media impact. The findings confirm the importance of responses by individuals to the media reports, with behavior changes having important consequence for the emerging infectious disease control. Therefore, for mitigating emerging infectious diseases, media reports should be focused on how to guide people's behavioral changes, which are critical for limiting the spread of disease.

Kristine S, Broucke SV, Fullam J, Doyle G, Pelikan J, Slonska Z. et al. (2012) undertook to publish an article in BMC Public Health, a part of Springer Nature with a systematic review and integration of definitions and models on Health literacy and public health. The review resulted in 17 definitions of health literacy and 12 conceptual models. Based on the content analysis, an integrative conceptual model was developed containing 12 dimensions referring to the knowledge, motivation and competencies of accessing, understanding, appraising and applying health-related information within the healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion setting, respectively. Based upon this review, a model was proposed integrating medical and public health views of health literacy. The model can serve as a basis for developing health literacy enhancing interventions and provide a conceptual basis for the development and validation of measurement tools, capturing the different dimensions of health literacy within the healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion settings. Health literacy was linked to literacy and entails people's knowledge, motivation and competences to access, understand, appraise, and apply health information in order to make judgments and take decisions in everyday life concerning healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion to maintain or improve quality of life during the life course. The core of the model shows the competencies related to the process of accessing, understanding, appraising and applying health-related information. According to the 'all inclusive' definition this process requires four types of competencies: (1) Access refers to the ability to seek, find and obtain health information; (2) Understand refers to the ability to comprehend the health information that is accessed; (3) Appraise describes the ability to interpret, filter, judge and evaluate the health information that has been accessed; and (4) Apply refers to the ability to communicate and use the information to make a decision to maintain and improve health. Each of these competences represents a crucial dimension of health literacy, requires specific cognitive qualities and depends on the quality of the information provided: obtaining and accessing health information depends on understanding, timing and trustworthiness; understanding the information depends on expectations, perceived utility, individualization of outcomes, and interpretation of causalities; processing and appraisal of the information depends on the complexity, jargon and partial understandings of the information; and effective communication depends on comprehension. The competences also incorporate the qualities of functional, interactive and critical health literacy as proposed by Nutbeam.

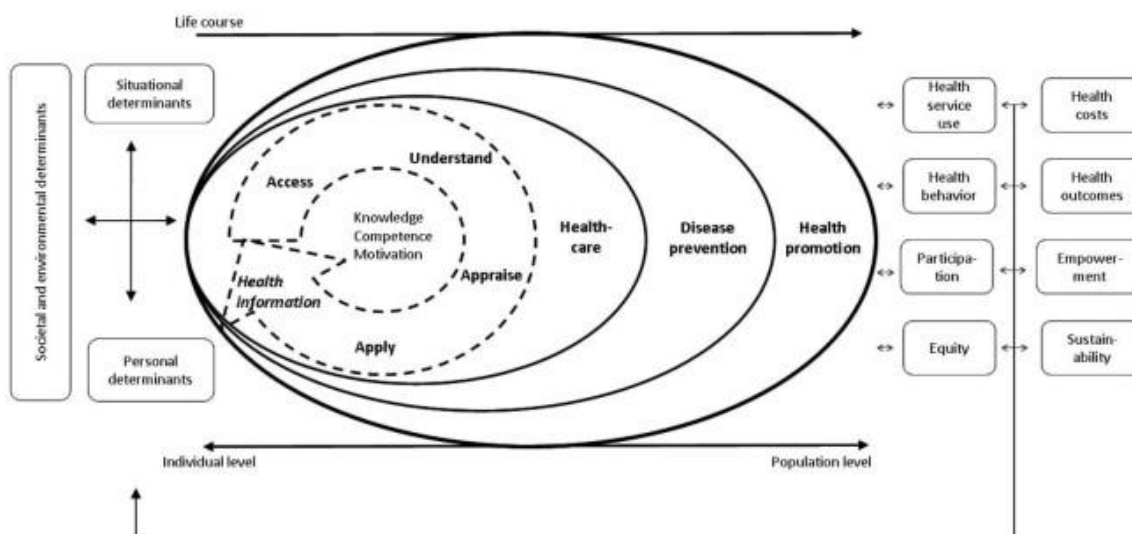


Fig 1: An integrated conceptual model of health literacy by Kristine S, Broucke SV, Fullam J, Doyle G, Pelikan J, Slonska Z. et al. (2012)

Some of the key realisations from the literature was that the media acts as a modification agent can affect the behavior of individuals to enable improved well-being by acclimatizing them to the precautionary measures that halt the spread of the virus. Prevention is the essence of public health. The numbers of social and electronic media users increased significantly during the coronavirus pandemic. The government, in collaboration with the media, has to address the challenge of information inequalities. There is a need for guidance to recognize the importance of the media for disseminating information related to the coronavirus. Health journalism requires sound knowledge related to infectious diseases. Lack of knowledge makes it challenging for journalists to describe this public health pandemic.

	Access/obtain information relevant to health	Understand information relevant to health	Process/appraise information relevant to health	Apply/use information relevant to health
Health care	Ability to access information on medical or clinical issues	Ability to understand medical information and derive meaning	Ability to interpret and evaluate medical information	Ability to make informed decisions on medical issues
Disease prevention	Ability to access information on risk factors for health	Ability to understand information on risk factors and derive meaning	Ability to interpret and evaluate information on risk factors for health	Ability to make informed decisions on risk factors for health
Health promotion	Ability to update oneself on determinants of health in the social and physical environment	Ability to understand information on determinants of health in the social and physical environment and derive meaning	Ability to interpret and evaluate information on health determinants in the social and physical environment	Ability to make informed decisions on health determinants in the social and physical environment

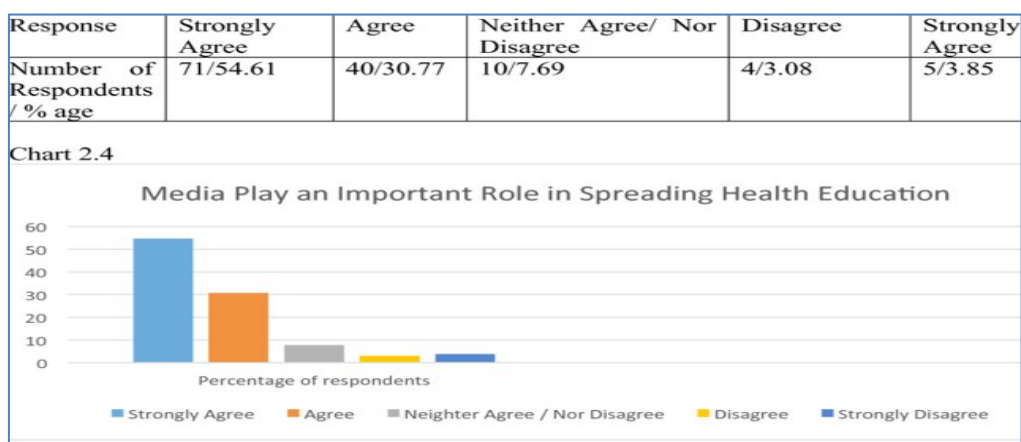
Fig 2: The matrix with four dimensions of health literacy applied to three health domains

Business today on March 30, 2020 on a survey reported that 75 per cent of Indians were spending more time on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp compared to the week before. Before the lockdown, social media usage was on average 150 minutes per day. However, in the first week of lockdown, the figures jumped to 280 minutes per day, showed a survey. The survey added that 75 per cent people were spending more time on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp compared to the week before. In social media, people were largely consuming news and communicating with their friends and families as

coronavirus grappled the country. Besides, television, internet browsing and streaming platform have also seen a rise in viewership, according to the survey. Internet browsing saw a 72 per cent spike during the first week of lockdown.

Abdul Rahim Munshi, Darshana Dave, Sneha Anna Sabu (2020), in their paper Social Media Consumption habits during Covid-19 lockdown in the International Journal of Business and Management Invention (IJBMI) aim to study the social media consumption habits of respondents; the study also aims to compare social media consumption before and during COVID-19 lockdown. Descriptive research design was used with a sample size of 226 respondents selected on the basis of non-probability convenience sampling. Wilcoxon test was used to compare social media consumption before and during the COVID-19 lockdown. The results indicated that consumption of all social media platforms had increased during the lockdown.

Sushil M, Sharma K, Yogesh D, Gupta K, Kumar Y. (2017), in an article titled ‘Mass media for health education: a study in the State of Rajasthan’, says that Mass media play crucial role in disseminating health information and increasing awareness about health education. Media not only spread awareness, but also inform and educate people over a period of time. This ultimately helps in the change of attitude & behavior of audience for achieving better health. In other words, media is instrumental in bringing behavioural changes in knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes about health and healthy behaviours. Being an important social organization mass media has wide reach and access that can influence the public by improving their health education level.



Analysis of data reflects that 43.85% respondents (biggest group) strongly agreed that TV is the most effective media for health communication; while only 03.08% respondents (smallest group) strongly disagreed about it. On the other hand 32.31% and 4.61% respondents agreed and disagreed respectively. Interestingly 16.15 % respondents were undecided as they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324910020_Mass_Media_for_Health_Education_A_Study_in_the_State_of_Rajasthan

In another study titled TV as an effective medium of mass communication for public health (A study in the state of Rajasthan) (2018), author Yogesh Kumar says that Studies show that mass media, especially TV, is an effective medium for spreading awareness about different public health issues,

among general public. Due to its potential role in the influencing and shaping human health behaviour, & public health; mass communication has attracted a lot of attentions from health care professionals, policy makers, academics, social scientists, and other stakeholders.

People Are Spending 20% More Time in Apps During the COVID-19 Lockdowns reports Andrew Hutchinson, Content and Social Media Manager. According to the latest report from App Annie, daily time spent in apps on Android devices increased 20% year-over-year in Q1 2020, while consumer spending in both iOS and Android apps was also up 15% and 5% respectively, setting a new record for in-app spending for a single quarter at \$23.4 billion worldwide. Time spent in apps in Italy grew 30% in March from Q4 2019, while France, Germany, and the US have all had 15%, 10% and 10% growth respectively. All social apps have reported increased usage and engagement - and again, given that we're all locked in our homes, and looking for a means to stay connected with the outside world, that comes as little surprise. In terms of app-specific performance, TikTok continues to hold its spot at the top of the downloads chart. The increased focus on video connection tools has already lead to launch of various upgraded video features from Facebook and Instagram.

According to a report released by Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) India and Nielsen as sourced from ET Brand Equity as on 30 March 2020 and quoted by Simms J.(2021) on the impact of COVID-19 on television and digital media behaviour across India, the average time spent per viewer also saw a growth of 2%, from 3 hours and 46 minutes to 3 hours and 51 minutes a day, News apps saw 8% more users per week with an increase of 17% in time spent. The report also revealed that users are spending 1.4 hours a day more on their smartphone devices with the biggest jump coming from users in the 35-44-year age group. Due to the level of uncertainty around what is happening, people have also increased their time spent on chatting (+23%) and social networking (+25%) apps. Almost all social networking apps - Facebook, Instagram and TikTok - have seen significant increases while conversely, shopping apps, travel apps and food apps have seen a significant drop in both users and time spent.

Consolidating the outcomes of the review of literature about the role played by the Media during Covid-19,

Positive Role played by Mass Media

It ensured that awareness messages on Covid-19, important government guidelines and free consultations with doctors reached everyone in the country.

It strongly fought against the menace of fake news and misinformation on a real time basis.

The media has significantly delivered on their mandate of public service by setting the trend through prompt coverage, ground reports and organising programmes on public health.

Mass media or traditional media is considered to be more credible than social media due to availability of original source of information, processing of information through journalistic standards and responsibility for accuracy of news (Wada, 2018), as in the study by Tandoc (2019), it was found that

the participants rated news from mass media to be more credible than those shared by their friends on the social media platform (Facebook). During the current COVID-19 pandemic a lot of studies were done addressing the spread of misinformation, infodemics and fake news and its impact on individual's mental health and well-being by social media (e.g., Brennen et al., 2020; Gao et al., 2020; Pennycook et al., 2020), but the area assessing the impact of mass media on the same during the current pandemic remains unexplored by large.

Mass media has played an important role in disseminating news about the current pandemic and curbing curiosity since the outbreak. There has been a substantial increase in news consumption in India (Banka, 2020; Jha, 2020) and the world during the present COVID-19 pandemic (O'Grady, 2020). In the past, during the Ebola outbreak instead of focusing attention on medical facts and actual viral outbreak, sensationalized coverage using less relevant content by news media outlets whipped up hysteria and fear in the USA (Kilgo et al., 2019; Towers et al., 2015). Similarly, during COVID-19, news has focused more on death and grave consequences leading to public panic and negative emotions while giving less attention to information as to how to control the spread and promote healthy practices (Basch et al., 2020). As with increased viewership and readership of COVID-19 related news content and psychological experiences (including effective coping with adversity) from previous epidemics and other natural and manmade disasters (Pfefferbaum et al., 2014), it becomes essential to empirically assess the risk factor of mass media exposure on various psychological outcomes during the current pandemic as well.

An analysis of 141,208 headlines of global English news sources regarding the coverage of coronavirus disease revealed that a major portion (51.66%) of total news headlines were related to negative sentiments, while a small portion (30.46%) of the news headlines were of positive sentiments and the remaining 17.87% fell into the category of neutral news (Aslam et al., 2020). Other studies too have shown the rise of negative emotions by COVID-19 related mass media contents and the effect of these negative news may generate anxiety, fear, anger, homesickness, sadness etc. in a maximum number of individuals (e.g., Aslam et al., 2020; Hamidein et al., 2020). The article 'A neglected reality of mass media during COVID-19: Effect of pandemic news on individual's positive and negative emotion and psychological resilience' by Shakshi Priya Giri & Abhishek Kumar Maurya says that media continuously must make people aware of the current developments and also warn them of possible consequences for their negligence, but not in a privative way to inculcate the feeling of pessimism, fear, danger, or chaos. Rather they must thoughtfully and carefully carry out preparation and presentation of news as subtle changes can affect the audience's psyche in substantial ways. Otherwise, it may generate various negative emotions which may have a detrimental effect on people's mental health and may also put an adverse effect on an individual's ability to be resilient in these conditions. As being the responsible and susceptible media, they can focus more on positive developments and help in instilling people with the belief that everything will be fine soon. In this way, the reach and effect of mass media can be best harnessed.

Negative Role played by Mass Media

Social media has played a crucial role in spreading awareness and knowledge about public health, however, it has also been misused for spreading fake news, hatred and creating racism during epidemics.

Even before the detection of the first case of Covid-19 in India, the epidemic of social media panic hit India, which led to stock out of masks and sanitizers from the market.

The fake claims about transmission of virus through air and its survival on different surfaces created a panic.

An unwarranted use of N95 masks by common people during travelling and daily activities resulted in the shortage for frontline healthcare workers who actually needed those.

Due to existing multiple media houses in India, messages containing fake claims about use of herbal and immunity-booster medicines, religious and spiritual ways for prevention and treatment were widely circulated which added to the confusion.

The panic was escalated by fake news such as the possibility of extending the lockdown , which resulted in individuals fleeing from quarantine or isolation facilities and unnecessary travel prior to lockdown or even during lockdown for returning to their hometown.

Many such studies on media coverage of Covid19 Pandemic recommended the following

WHO emphasized the role of media to curb the false information and provide accurate information to people so they are well informed to act appropriately

Effective utilisation of third-party fact-checkers to limit the dissemination of the concocted knowledge

Only information that pertains to WHO or CDC guidelines should be allowed to be posted on social groups or aired on televisions

Each media source should have a way of connecting people to credible sources by having special tabs or pop-ups

Media should act as a bridge for people in need to reach health officials and the local government for their problems

Banning advertisements for medical equipment and drugs which have not been proven to have a definite role

The pivotal roles that the media can play in the current pandemic is promoting physical and psychological health measures and ensuring resilience in people belonging to different age groups and socioeconomic conditions.

Social isolation could be propagated and exacerbated by the conflicting role of the media, by videos for relaxation exercises to keep bodies and minds healthy and fit, Education services provided to children of each age group, Social media groups to keep positive energy running among people and ensure adherence to public health measures.

Media has the potential to unite people and end discrimination by spreading awareness, breaking the barriers of racial and socioeconomic discrimination that prevailed and providing an excellent resource for verifiable information.

"Infodemic" stems from two words, "information" and "epidemic", and refers to a rapid and far-reaching spread of both accurate and inaccurate information about a disease, using mass media, including print media (brochures, pamphlets, newspapers), television, internet, and social media.

There is a need to develop user-friendly and indigenous communication strategies to improve the knowledge of COVID-19 among masses. Active collaboration between the government and media stakeholders is vital to safeguard the population during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

Based on an analysis of review of existing definitions and conceptualizations of health literacy and role of mass media, it serves to outline the most comprehensive dimensions of health literacy and shows the proximal and distal factors of mass media & its responsibilities in promoting health literacy. Through this paper the researchers aim to study the competencies related to accessing, understanding, appraising and applying health information in the domains of healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion, respectively, especially role of media (greater emphasis on social media) in contributing to health literacy and Covid19 Pandemic being the significant evidential situation.

By integrating existing media scenario with its functions & responsibilities to support the practice of healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion, the researchers have arrived at the possible positive role and negative roles that media has played during Covid 19 Pandemic.

The researchers through this elaborate study of secondary resources suggest a need for pilot studies about utilizing the media during pandemics and epidemics by healthcare stakeholders for the development of rapid and timely information communication strategies. Infodemics related to infectious diseases should be addressed through effective policymaking and implementation, as an outcome of research. There is a need for inclusion of accurate information on infectious disease reporting based on rational health communication so that infodemics can be avoided in future outbreaks. Governments, NGOs, health officers etc should address challenges to overcome health communication barriers among different social classes by conducting good localised research studies from time to time.

Media must serve as the fourth pillar of democracy, providing impartial information that is critical for a democracy and its development. To educate people on topics of paramount importance to society, the media is vital. The media is vested with an important responsibility and a vital role in ensuring justice and the benefits of the government policies reaching the weaker sections of the society,

breaking the barriers of economic imbalances, caste or financial discrepancies. In order to propagate and disseminate different government policies and initiatives, the media is relevant. In spreading awareness of Swachh Bharat and Cowin, Arogyasethu, promoting vaccine and medicines to treat Covid19 etc the media has proved to play an important role.

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