



# INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR ABOUT COVID-19 AND CONTAINMENT ZONES: A STUDY IN ODISHA

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## ABSTRACT

*The COVID-19 outburst is a global pandemic with communal flow in several countries, containing the United States, with definite cases in all states. The progression of this pandemic will be molded by how governments endorse sensible strategies and publicize information by considering the public reactions towards different policies and information. In this paper, the authors examine the information-seeking behavior of public towards the COVID-19 infection cases and containment zones exclusively in the state of Odisha.*

**KEY WORDS:** COVID-19, Information, Infection, Pandemic, Awareness

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic outburst of COVID-19 has enforced a perilous status quo of public health among the world. Efforts have been made in the direction of safeguarding proper levels of awareness and response to fight the disease effectively and efficiently and to control the consequences related with the outbreak. Information is the key element of any society seemed to be most critical that must be prepared well to safeguard the society from the disease and also analyze the capability to handle the situation if any individual is infected or inveterate in COVID-19. Consequently, various governments have specified highest importance to that aspect through implementing several strategies in protection of community such as initiating wide-scale COVID-19 campaigns to spread awareness, rules for quarantine and delegating lockdown procedures comprising the

shutting of schools and workplaces. Conversely, in the light of these annoying circumstances of COVID-19 burst, the questions arise in this perspective is obvious that how the public is interested to find timely preparation of COVID-19 information, COVID-19 patient number, and behavior of individuals toward containment zone for protecting their family as well as combat the disease.

## 2. INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR TOWARDS COVID-19 IN ODISHA

Several countries have enforced far-reaching lockdown by putting massive effort to mitigate the COVID-19 outbreak. The usefulness of these mitigation actions is extremely reliant on cooperation and, coordination, and compliance of the whole society. The information seeking behavior of the



public toward the diseases is vital to find out their determination and willingness to assent behavioral change measures from health authorities. The main theme of this study is to govern the understanding, outlooks and practices toward COVID-19 among the individuals in the state of Odisha.

Information seeking behavior is an unambiguous notion of information behavior. It is specially emphasizes on searching, discovering, and repossessing information. Information seeking behavior research includes need of information, improving the information system and observing the behavior of the respondent or users. Information-seeking behavior (ISB) concept is usually defined in the research as an energetic or persistent behavior accepted by an individual to find facts and figures about the pandemic. The perception has been repeatedly deliberated in the milieu of lasting diseases like diabetes and cancer. On the other hand, narrow literature is found examining ISB of patients or healthy individuals for the period of a pandemic outbreak. Moreover, few studies have been steered to observe ISB of public during the COVID-19 outbreak. Therefore, this study enthusiastically explores this behavioral perspective of the public in relation to their information requirements, fonts of data, hurdles, and fulfillment with overall prevailing sources. This could be helpful to create health awareness and raising efforts in this pandemic situation to get rid of anxiety, panic, and depression in Odisha.

### **3. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON COVID-19 IN ODISHA**

Unlike the other disease in recent history, the flourishing spread of coronavirus has brought the world to its knees. In Odisha there is a chance to avoid the explosion of virus as the virus is not touched its potential effusively. Odisha government is taking various steps to confine all redundant human movement, but that has opened another window of wave of fake news and partial-truths as individuals are required to stay at home for the probable future.

In this dismal circumstance, creation of panic can be destructive too. To evade the consequence of incorrect information, awareness is must for every happening. The public must keep the resources to know the particular situation of the coronavirus in India and should avoid all the negative sagas that are associated with it. Some relevant sources of getting information on COVID-19 are government official statements, social media, newspaper, and Corona virus dashboard and awareness campaign.

Government official statements include government report, government clarification on present condition of coronavirus through conducting press meets, official members interview and opinion. Similarly, in case of social media, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, are playing vital role in spreading the relevant information on Covid-19. Newspapers and news channels both remain on the top in circulating relevant information on COVID-19 outbreak, infection numbers, containment zones, and government measures to restrict coronavirus and safety measures. In order to avoid wrong and dubious information, Government of India introduced COVID-19 dashboard, an online tracker to know the current coronavirus infection number, recovery number and deaths. Apart from that different awareness campaigns on Coronavirus like symptoms, safety measures, precautions, sanitization, hand-wash, etc. are done by the government.

### **4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To know the public interest towards COVID-19 cases in Odisha.
2. To find out the public behavior towards containment zones in Odisha.
3. To know the information seeking behavior of public towards COVID-19 in Odisha.

### **5. SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION**

In this study data collection is based on two sources. One is primary source which includes sampling and questionnaire and another is secondary source like government report, internet, journals, periodicals, newspaper, etc. Primary data include the preparation of questionnaire and distributing it in three cities in Odisha. Those cities are Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, and Berhampur. All Total 155 samples have been collected. From Cuttack 45. From Bhubaneswar 52 and from Berhampur 58 samples have been taken into consideration to analyze the information seeking behavior of the community towards COVID-19 cases and containment zones. Statistical tool is used to know the behavioral perspective of public and by this means finding their interest and behavior towards this pandemic scenario.

**6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION****A. Demographical behaviour of respondents about information seeking behaviour**

| City                  | Gender |       | Age   |       |       | Profession |       |       |       | Edu. Qualification |       |       |       |
|-----------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                       | M      | F     | YE    | ME    | OE    | GE         | PE    | BM    | HW    | UP                 | MT    | GT    | PS    |
| <b>Cuttack (45)</b>   | 73.33  | 26.67 | 15.56 | 55.55 | 28.89 | 22.22      | 37.78 | 28.89 | 13.33 | 11.11              | 28.89 | 40    | 20    |
| <b>BBSR (52)</b>      | 67.31  | 32.69 | 17.31 | 55.77 | 38.46 | 23.08      | 38.46 | 30.77 | 7.69  | 5.76               | 26.92 | 40.38 | 26.92 |
| <b>Berhampur (58)</b> | 67.24  | 32.76 | 11.76 | 44.83 | 37.93 | 15.52      | 24.14 | 53.45 | 6.89  | 10.34              | 36.21 | 41.38 | 12.07 |
| Total (155)           |        |       |       |       |       |            |       |       |       |                    |       |       |       |

(M.: Male, F: Female, GE: Govt. Employee, PE: Private Employees, MB, Business man, HW house Wife, YE: youth Age, ME: Middle Age, OE: Old Age, UP: Up to primary, MT: 10<sup>th</sup> pass, GT: graduate, PS: professionals' qualification.)

This present table shows demographical profile of the respondents of Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur cities of Odisha. On the analysis, it is observed that, majority of respondents are male in all study cities. And the highest percent of respondents belong to middle aged group. In case of profession of

respondent majority of respondents are business men at Berhampur city as like as most of the respondents are private employees at Cuttack and BBSR city. The majority 40 % of employees are graduates and below 30 %of employees are professional degree holder both in Cuttack and BBSR city.

**B. Frequency of visit For Sources Information Regarding Information Seeking Behaviour on Covid -19**

| City                  | Media (TV) (155) |                     |                    | Social media (FB, WA, etc) (155) |                     |                    | Other sources (F/N/R) (155) |                     |                    |           |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------|
|                       | Always           | 5-10 times in a day | 2-3 times in a day | Always                           | 5-10 times in a day | 2-3 times in a day | Always                      | 5-10 times in a day | 2-3 times in a day | Not asked |
| <b>Cuttack (45)</b>   | 40               | 44.44               | 15.56              | 60                               | 28.89               | 11.11              | 6.66                        | 15.56               | 31.11              | 46.67     |
| <b>BBSR (52)</b>      | 48.08            | 40.38               | 11.54              | 55.78                            | 30.76               | 13.46              | 3.85                        | 11.54               | 21.15              | 63.46     |
| <b>Berhampur (58)</b> | 37.93            | 48.28               | 13.79              | 51.72                            | 31.04               | 17.24              | 12.07                       | 15.52               | 29.31              | 43.10     |
| Total (155)           |                  |                     |                    |                                  |                     |                    |                             |                     |                    |           |

From this table It is observed that majority of respondents among Cuttack, BBSR, and Berhampur City visited Media (TV) always 5-10 times in a day for sources information regarding COVID-19 because, most of time they are staying at home i.e. Lock down period. But very few numbers of respondents are open TV channel 2-3 times in a week to know on covid-19 and public infection, similarly, 50-60 percents of respondents are visited Social media (FB, WhatsApp etc.) Always (time to tome)

day for instant news on Covid -19, public or local infection, contentment zones death etc. While, most of respondent are no like to prefer or believe any public discussion or opinion regarding infection, medicine treatment, death, etc

**C.Purpose of visit For Sources Information Regarding Information Seeking Behaviour on Covid -19**

| Responses   | Govt. publication and media | Percent | Public discussion and social media | Percent | Total |
|---|-----------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| Know about no of infection spared   | 134                         | 86.45   | 21                                 | 13.55   | 155   |
| Know about contentment zone   | 103                         | 66.45   | 52                                 | 33.55   | 155   |
| To know about Govt. Information and instruction   | 146                         | 94.19   | 9                                  | 5.81    | 155   |
| To know about public infection  | 86                          | 55.48   | 69                                 | 44.52   | 155   |
| To know about medicine and treatment  | 129                         | 83.23   | 26                                 | 16.77   | 155   |
| to find public death  | 75                          | 48.39   | 80                                 | 51.61   | 155   |
| To know about short down and luck down  | 137                         | 88.39   | 18                                 | 11.61   | 155   |
| Find about govt plan & policies on Covid  | 116                         | 74.84   | 39                                 | 25.16   | 155   |
| CHI-SQUARE ESTIMATE= 156.3753<br>Degrees of freedom= 7<br><br>Results = Highly Significance (P < 0.001) |                             |         |                                    |         |       |

It is observed that 86.45 percent out of 155 respondents among respondents visited the Govt. publication and media to know about infection spared, 66.45 percent respondents to know about contentment zone, 94.19 percent respondents visited the TV channel or media or government sites to know about Govt. Information. 55.48 percent visited media or government sites to know about public infection. 83.23 percent visited TV channel or media to know about medicine and treatment sources. 48.39 percent respondents visited TV channel or media to find public death. 88.39 percent visited to know about short down and luck down. While 74.84 percent are revisited for government plan & policies on Covid.

Similarly, It is also observed that out of 155 respondents, 13.55 percent of respondents are like to

visited the social media and public opinion to Know about infection spared, 33.55 percent respondents to Know about contentment zone, 5.81 percent respondents preferred the social media or public opinion for to know about Govt. Information. 44.52 percent visited social media or public opinion to know about public infection. 16.77 percent visited social media or public discussion to know about medicine and treatment sources. 51.61 percent respondents visited media or public discussion to find public death. 11.61 percent visited to know about short down and luck down. While 25.16 percent are visited for government plan & policies on Covid.

This fact is tested statistically by applying Chi-square Test and result come out to be highly significant. So, Chi-square test's result are conforming that respondents Responses towards



information seeking behaviour towards covid 19 and sources of information are depended each other.

## 7. FINDINGS

- Most of the respondents are male and middle-aged group in this study. Because male and middle-aged people are balancing their family and realise about social challenges and problems.
- Majority of the respondents are businessman and private employees with graduate to professional qualification. They are like to seeking information about covid 19 for their, business, job income and family maintenance etc. Because most of the private employees ate already lost their basic job due to first spread of covid-19. Like this govt also declared to not to open market regular or full day as per rule in covid-19 period.
- majority of respondents among Cuttack, BBSR, and Berhampur City visited Media (TV) always 5-10 times in a day for sources information regarding COVID-19 because, most of time they are staying at home i.e. lock down period.
- Most of the respondents are like to prefer Govt. publication and media as sources of information for Know about no of infection spared, Govt. Information and instruction, short down and luck down, medicine and treatment etc.
- Some of the respondents are like for Public discussion and social media as major sources of information know about contentment zone due to not publish details in media and government sites.
- Some of the respondents are like to Public discussion and social media as major sources of information to know about public infection and to find public or local death due to not publish details in media and govt sites.

## 8. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Man is constantly in need information for knowledge and wisdom. Information on COVID-19 is considered as the elements in the search for wisdom in a human process in the pandemic period. Information seeking is the process of finding the right information on contentment zoon, area of infection, state and district wise infection and govt. policies at right time. On the basis of forgoing discussion, the following conclusion are made regarding the information seeking behaviour of the public. The government officials are officially well and the public are enriching knowledge and information on COVID-19 by using media and

social media. The sample is well versed in using COVID-19 information through officials, media, social media, public discussion in getting their required information. The suggestion received from the respondents are as follows: explain and disclose the contentment zone, declare the area of spread, declare the no of infection sate and district wise, declare the local death, regarding health check-up awareness etc. The sample need current information for death, spread, contentment zone and medicine and treatment are the main purpose for information seeking behaviour. Media, Govt. publication, social media like: Face Book, WhatsApp, you tube, tutors and public discussion are the most privileged sources of communication about COVID-19. It is concluded that the implementation of COVID-19 management technique and introduction on innovative strategy for easy retrieval would create a favourable environment in regarding and maximising the reaching output on Covid-19. Its high time that the govt and officials are very careful towards COVID-19 patents identification and create awareness among the public about the infection spread, contentment zone, area of spread, no of infection sate and district wise, local death, health check-up for creating better healthy society. And Govt. should take the initiatives to procure and disclose COVID-19 data base and information for benefit of society. The significant role of Government is to provide sufficient and effective services to the public at the right time by reducing the COVID-19 infection. Let us walk towards the healthy and innovation based digitised India as well world with strategic COVID-19 management.

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