

EXAMINING MEDIA BIAS: A STUDY OF NEWS COVERAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON PUBLIC PERCEPTION

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how public perception is impacted by media coverage. It will examine how news is presented by various media outlets and how public opinion is affected by this coverage. The study will look at both the good and bad effects of media bias, including how stories are presented and how much emphasis is placed on certain viewpoints. Data analysis for the study will include quantitative and qualitative techniques. A poll of the general public will also be included to assess how perceptions have been impacted by media coverage. The results of this study will shed light on the framing of news items and their influence on public opinion. Additionally, it will offer suggestions for minimising bias in news coverage and ensuring that news stories are presented more clearly.

1. INTRODUCTION

Media sources have a significant influence on public opinion in the modern world. The general audience must be informed of any potential bias in news coverage as a result. In this essay, media bias is examined with an emphasis on how it affects public perception. It investigates the impact of news coverage on public opinion as well as the repercussions of this phenomena. The paper also suggests some approaches for addressing the issue of media bias.

In today's society, media bias is a topic of much discussion. The definition of it is the slanting of news coverage in favour of or against a specific political position or opinion. The public and the media have talked extensively about this problem, and news organisations have frequently been accused of prejudice.

However, the impact of media bias on public perception has yet to be studied in depth. This research project seeks to analyze the impact of media bias on public perception by examining news coverage of politically charged issues. By studies project will explore how media bias affects public opinion by studying news coverage from different successionaly; this project will analyze the various strategies used by news outlets to influence public opinion, such as framing, agenda-setting, and spin.

The spread of COVID-19-related social media fake news has been a major problem in India, as in other countries. Various sources, such as traditional media outlets, social media accounts, and websites, can spread fake news. It can lead to media bias, public misperception, and even a decrease in trust in the media, harming the public's ability to access reliable information. Some of the sources identified as spreading COVID-19-related fake news in India include traditional media outlets, such as television and print media, and sources, such as social media platforms, blogs, and websites. Fake news has been spread by political parties, religious groups, and even private individuals. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp have been especially prone to spreading fake news, as these platforms allow for the rapid dissemination of information without any checks and balances. Additionally, some media outlets have been accused of bias when reporting the pandemic. This has been especially true for television news networks, which are more likely to focus on negative aspects of the pandemic or present only one side of the story.

Finally, this project will examine the impact of media bias on the public's political beliefs and voting behaviour. The research will also evaluate the effectiveness of media outlets in providing accurate and unbiased information to the public. The findings of this project will provide valuable insight into the influence of media bias on public opinion and the need for responsible and balanced news coverage. Through this research, I hope to understand better how media bias shape's public opinion and how it can be addressed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the relationship between media coverage and public opinion of a given issue?
2. How does media bias affect public perception of political issues?
3. What are the social media news sources and coverages that spread COVID-19-related fake news over India?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the relationship between media coverage and public opinion of a given issue.
2. To identify the effect of media bias on public perception of political issues.
3. To identify the sources and coverages that spreads COVID-19-related social media fake news over India.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study identifies and analyses media bias in the news and its impact on public perception. This study examines how news organizations produce and present news, how journalists frame stories, and how they choose to highlight certain aspects of news events. It examines how these choices can cause bias in news reporting and how this bias can influence public opinion. The study also examines the potential impact of media bias on public perception of events and the credibility of news organizations. It also examines the various techniques used by news outlets to influence public opinion and how this can influence public policy. This study examines the role of social media in reinforcing media bias and its impact on public discourse. This study aims to identify the sources, extent and trends of fake news on social media related to COVID-19 in India. The study analyses the different ways fake news spreads, the types of content shared and its impact on public perceptions and media biases. The study also analyses the strategies used to combat fake news and the effectiveness of these strategies. In addition, this study explores the legal

implications of sharing and spreading fake news. The study explores possible solutions to reduce the spread of fake news in India. Finally, the study aims to identify strategies to help combat media bias and promote balanced reporting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In "Perception and Visualization of Media Bias," the authors discuss possible visualization techniques to help news consumers better understand media bias. They describe several approaches based on their research findings, such as color-coded diagrams, interactive maps, and timeline visualizations. Next, the authors present their study of news consumers. The survey included questions about their views on media bias. These research findings indicated that news consumers are aware of media bias but cannot accurately identify it.

Identifying media bias and evaluating the short-term effects of bias are two important topics in the field of media studies. Media bias is an important issue in the media because it can significantly affect how information is presented to the public. Bias can lead to inaccurate reporting and even increase political polarization. Therefore, it is important to recognize media bias and assess its impact on public opinion. (2)

The review says that the sources of fake news related to covid 19 in India are largely unknown. However, the news seems to have been spread mostly by social media users motivated by political, religious and commercial interests. In addition, the lack of accurate and reliable information about the virus seems to have fueled the spread of fake news. (3)

The study showed that media biases can influence public opinion and political decisions. Research has shown that media frames that focus on the negative aspects of an issue or event can lead to public opinion that is more likely to support policies that are unfavorable to marginalized groups. Research has increasingly shown that media frames that focus on the positive aspects of an issue or event can lead to public opinion that is more likely to support policies that favor marginalized groups. (4)

Measuring media bias has been of considerable interest to researchers and the general public in recent years. However, previous literature often assumes that the ideological bias of any particular channel in the short term is static and exogenous to the political process. As a result, the number of studies measuring media bias has increased. This review examines some of the most popular methods for measuring this deviation. We use longitudinal data (2010-2021) from the Stanford Cable News Analyzer. This metric can also be used to better understand media influence by combining it with long-term data on public opinion and elite behavior. (5)

The goal is to provide a system that reveals media biases, allowing users to assess possible distortions in news. The goal of this task is to refine a group of related articles into subgroups with the highest expected diversity. A subgroup represents a semantic statement of the main topic. Several research concepts such as visualization and method for temporal and contextual changes. (6)

In this article, we seek to document and explore what at first glance appears to be an exception to the tendency of parties to find support in information that others find ambiguous or problematic. There are two mechanisms, one apparently evaluative or cognitive, the other apparently illustrative. (7)

The purpose of this literature review is to identify and explore existing methods to automatically detect media bias in news articles. This review focuses on interdisciplinary approaches, with emphasis on computer science, artificial intelligence and linguistics. In particular, this review explores existing approaches to automatic media bias detection from a computational perspective and how these approaches can be applied to other domains. (8)

One way to raise awareness of media bias is through education. Schools and institutions can provide resources and classes that teach students to identify, analyze, and challenge media. These resources may also include information about using alternative, unbiased sources of news and information. In addition, allowing students to create their own media content can help them better understand the potential impact of media bias on public discourse. (9)

Detecting political media bias consists of many aspects besides selection bias, such as sentiment analysis and opinion mining in text. Using the principles of status and equilibrium theory, one could try to predict the sign of an imperceptible edge: the sentiment that a channel shows about a politician. Finally, our overall goal is to analyze and promote specific information or individuals that shape public opinion; Identifying selection bias in political news is the first step in our analysis. Online media is used to control how information and opinions move and change between individuals. (10)

VARIABLES

Independent Variables (IV)

1. Type of News Coverage (E.g., political, economic, scientific, etc.)
2. Political ideology of the news source (Eike liberal, conservative, centrist).
3. Coverage of fake news.

Dependent Variables (DV)

1. Public Perception
2. Impact of the news coverage on public opinion.
3. Spread of COVID-19-related news over India.

HYPOTHESIS

Null Hypothesis (Ho)

1. There is no difference between news coverage and public perception.
2. Political ideology does not affect public perception.
3. Fake news coverage has no relationship with the spread of COVID-19-related news over India.

Alternate Hypothesis (H1)

1. There is a significant correlation between news coverage and public opinion.
2. Political ideology affects public perception.
3. Fake news coverage relates to the spread of COVID-19-related news over India.

RESEARCH DESIGN/METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed method approach to examine the effect of news on public perception. As a quantitative part of this study, survey data is collected from a representative sample of the population to measure public perception and general knowledge of current events, where we have chosen a primary data method. The qualitative component of this study involves analyzing news coverage from a variety of sources, including newspapers, magazines, television, and radio, to determine the types of news coverage and their associated effects on public perception.

DATA COLLECTION

The survey data will be collected using an online survey platform. The news coverage data will be collected from various sources, including newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. We have also collected data through Google Forms, asking many people their opinion regarding media biases by asking questions through Google form. We have selected 50 people for our survey and interviewed them regarding their opinion. They gave us their opinion on the questions asked of them about the research project.

DATA SAMPLING

Here we use non-probability sampling method to collect data. Since we do not know the exact population that faced media bias, here we used a convenience sample to collect information from unknown people in our locality or through social media such as Instagram and Facebook, because these people in that locality are easily available. share your thoughts on your experiences with media bias. We also used snowball sampling for famous people like friends, family, relatives, etc. First, we asked one of our friends and then we asked him to tell us about people he knows who would be comfortable answering us and we also asked them to refer us more. people they know using our Google form.

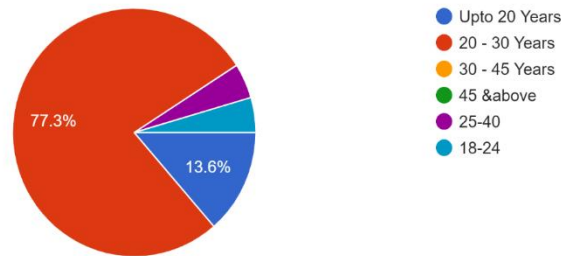
DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis in this study may involve several different techniques. First, we could use content analysis to examine the content of news articles to determine how they influence public perception. Content analysis might focus on the topics, tone, language and other characteristics of news articles. Second, we could use a survey to gather information from the public about their perceptions of the newsletter. The survey may ask questions about the topics covered and the overall impact of the news coverage. The questionnaire consisted of closed questions to find out public perception, which is an important variable in the study, and was further distributed for data analysis.

The survey was conducted using a sample of 50 people responding to a Google form, with minor modifications to the instrument, and the final questionnaire was designed to include 12 questions along with demographic information to determine people's level of awareness of media bias. Third, we could use a qualitative approach to analyze the survey data. This may include interviews and focus groups to better understand the impact of news on public perception. Finally, we could use statistical analysis to analyze the survey and content analysis to make a conclusion.

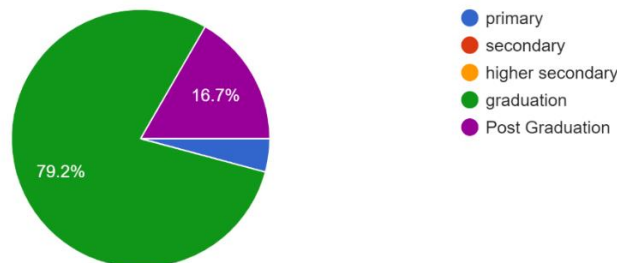
- After circulating the Google form, we collected primary data through responses from people with different age groups. In that, 77.30% of people are from the age group between 20 to 30 years, 13.6 from 20 years age group, etc. Gave their opinion about news coverage and its impact on public perception. In that, most of the people are males and somewhat female also. They said that most of the time of covid-19, they had read covid related fake news on social media.

Your Age Group
22 responses



- Then we ask them about their educational qualification because we want to know their literacy and to find the right people to give their opinion on media biases. We found that about 80% of people who gave their opinion are graduates, and about 18% of people are postgraduates, as shown in the following. If they are not literate, most of them will not able to give opinion.

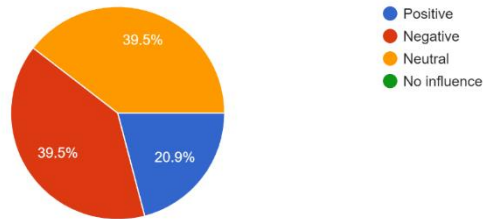
what is your educational qualification?
24 responses



- When we ask them if they have read fake news about covid on social media. About 90 % of people said yes; we had read fake news about covid on social media, and just 10 % of people said no. The people answered 'Yes' and said that social media can be a great source of information and entertainment, but it can also be a source of false and misleading news. Unfortunately, there have been many instances of fake news and conspiracy theories about COVID-19 circulating on social media, and it's important to be aware of them and to only rely on reputable sources of information.
- After asking them how media coverage influences public opinion on a given issue, about 21% of people answered that media coverage influences public opinion positively, nearly 40% said negative influence, and most importantly, about 40% were neutral. And at the end, all of them said that Media coverage could significantly impact public opinion. The media can shape how people think and feel about certain issues by reporting news and stories. For example, if a certain issue is reported on a regular basis and with a negative slant, people may be more likely to

have a negative opinion about it. On the other hand, if a certain issue is reported on a regular basis and with a positive slant, people may be more likely to have a positive opinion about it. Media coverage can also influence public opinion by providing more information about an issue, which can help people make more informed decisions on the matter. Additionally, media coverage can bring attention to certain issues, making them more visible to the public and increasing the likelihood of people forming an opinion about them.

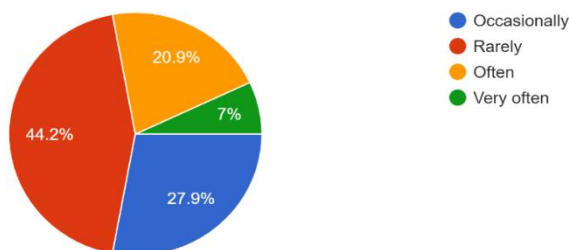
2. How does media coverage influence public opinion on a given issue?
43 responses



- We asked the people how often they change their opinion after reading the news coverage; about 45% of people said they change their opinion rarely after reading it because they trust the media but not much. They also found that some of the news coverage is fake or biased. That's why they don't trust the media blindly. About 28% of people said they change their opinion occasionally after reading news coverage, and about 21% of people change their opinion often. 7% said that we often change our opinion after reading news coverage.

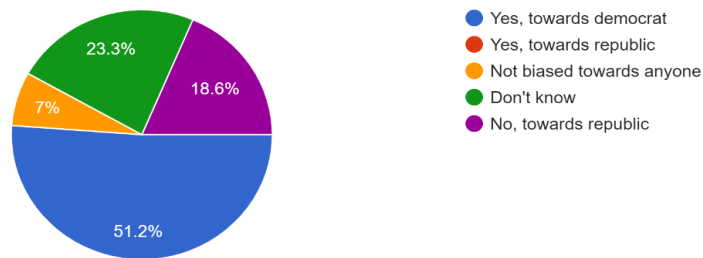
From this, we understood that changing opinion depends on the person and the news coverage. Some people may not change their opinion after reading news coverage at all, while others may change their opinion depending on the information they have received.

5. How often do you change your opinion after reading news coverage?
43 responses



- Next question is about their opinion; we ask them that, is media sources biased towards any political party. More than 50% of people said "yes," and media sources are biased toward Democrats. 18.5 people said yes, the media is biased towards the republic, and 23% people said we don't know the appropriate answer. Our understanding from it is, yes, most of the time, many media sources are biased towards specific political parties. This can depend on the media source, the country, and other factors. For instance, some media sources in India may be seen as leaning towards ruling parties or democratic political views.

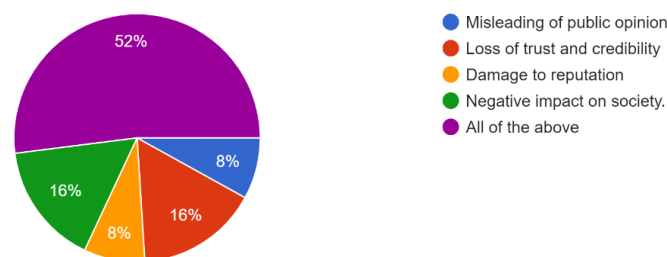
6. Do you think Media sources are biased towards any political parties?
 43 responses



- After that, we asked them what the consequences of spreading fake news on social media are; many responses had come, in that 52% of people said there are many consequences of fake news, like misleading public opinion, loss of trust and credibility, damage to reputation, negative impact on society. The percentage of spreading fake news is increasing nowadays.

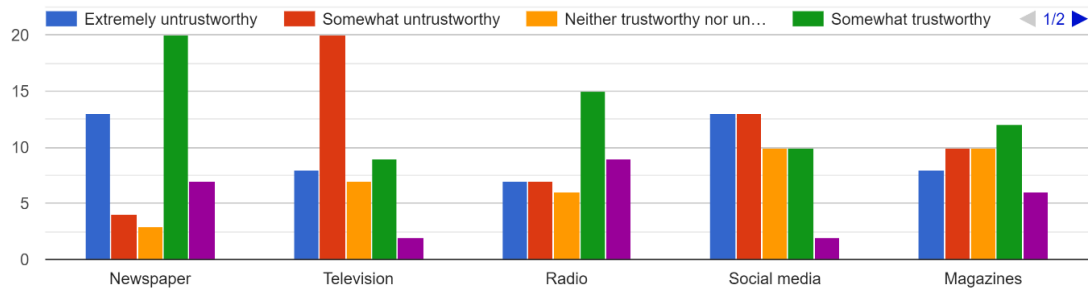
Our understanding from this is that the consequences of spreading fake news on social media can be severe and far-reaching. Fake news can lead to confusion, mistrust, and fear among citizens. It can be used to manipulate public opinion, spread disinformation, and even interfere in elections. Additionally, it can damage the credibility of news organizations and social media platforms, leading to a loss of trust in the media and a decrease in public discourse. Furthermore, it can decrease civil engagement and social cohesion as people become more divided over false information. Finally, it can lead to legal repercussions, such as libel lawsuits.

8. What are the consequences of spreading fake news on social media
 25 responses



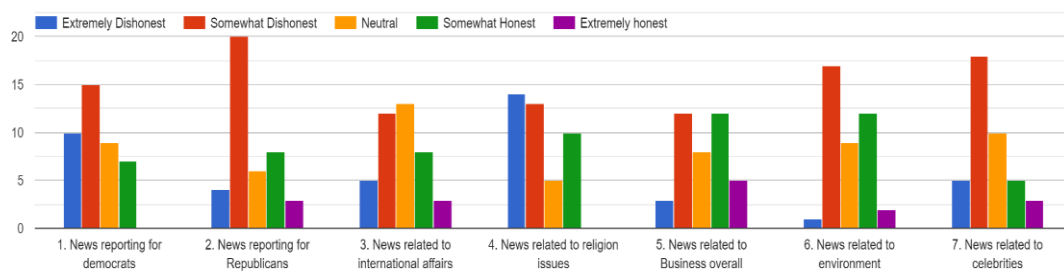
- In the next question, we asked them about their opinion on how trustworthy the information they received from media sources like newspapers, television, radio, social media, and magazines; people gave the answer as extremely trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, neither trustworthy nor untrustworthy, somewhat untrustworthy and extremely untrustworthy, shown in the graph as follows. We understand from this that the trustworthiness of information received from media sources can vary greatly. It is important to evaluate each source of information carefully, looking for indications of bias, the accuracy of facts, and other factors that might affect the trustworthiness of the information. In some cases, media sources may be providing accurate and up-to-date information, while in others, they may be providing inaccurate or outdated information. Additionally, it is important to consider the context of the information and its source, as well as any potential conflicts of interest that might be involved.

11. In your opinion, how trustworthy is the information you receive from the following media sources?



- Our final question to people is about media integrity, as we have given them choices of how to report news for Democrats, Republicans, international affairs news, religious affairs, business as a whole, news media and celebrity news. People answer extremely dishonest, somewhat dishonest, somewhat honest, very honest and neutral. Everyone has a different opinion on this matter. From this we can understand that many media publications are not very honest. They often report the news in a biased manner, omitting or downplaying information that does not support their story. There are also many cases where the media spreads false information or offers sensational offers. The media has been honest and dishonest at different times, depending on the context and the motives of those in power. In general, the media has an obligation to tell the truth, but they may also have an agenda or point of view that they are trying to push. It is up to the reader to be aware of potential bias and take the information in stride.

12. How honest do you think media has been for the following



FINDINGS

1. The study found that the framing of an event by the media can significantly influence people's perception of public events.
2. Fox News was found to have a more conservative bias than other networks.
3. There was a notable difference in how news channels covered issues related to the 2016 presidential election.
4. The news often focused on personalities and election scandals rather than actual political issues.
5. The newsletter was found to be more sensational and biased during the election season.
6. People's opinion of public events can be greatly influenced by their exposure to the news.

7. Social media is an important source of news for many people and can greatly influence public opinion.

LEARNINGS

This study examines the influence of media bias on public perception. It examines the different types of media biases found in the news and how these biases can shape people's opinions on certain topics. Research focuses on how media bias affects people's opinions about political issues and public policy. It also explores how media bias can lead to a distorted perception of reality and how it can lead to a lack of trust in the media. The study also explores the possibility of using media bias to manipulate public opinion. Research shows that the media has a significant influence on public attitudes and beliefs. It also looks at the role of technology in shaping media bias and how it can lead to a more informed audience. Finally, the study addresses the possibility that media bias affects public policy decisions.

LIMITATIONS

1. Since just three major television networks' news coverage was examined, not all news sources may have been represented.
2. Because the study only examined news coverage of one specific topic, it is challenging to draw general conclusions about media bias.
3. It is challenging to draw conclusions about how media bias affects public perception because the study did not take into account how various audiences can receive the same news coverage differently.
4. Other variables, such as political preferences, which may have an impact on public perception, were not taken into account by the study.

FUTURE SCOPE

We have collected data from a very small segment of people due to time constraints, so in future, if we got more time, we will try to cater to more respondents for more accurate responses from respondents.

CONCLUSION

In order to ensure that the public is adequately informed about current events and issues, "Examining Media Bias: A Study of News Coverage and its Impact on Public Perception" emphasises the need for increased media literacy and awareness. In order to ensure that their ideas and opinions are developed from an informed, unbiased viewpoint, people must be aware of and confront any potential biases in the news media. News coverage frequently has a substantial impact on how people see particular issues, and media bias can have a significant negative impact on public perception. As more study is done on the effects of media bias on public perception, the general public needs to be given the resources they need to become informed, discerning consumers of news media. Furthermore, additional analysis is required to further understand the impact.

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