

PP028

Analysis of theoretical and strategic underpinnings of Facebook content used for COVID prevention in Sri Lanka

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Introduction

With the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, health communication content educating the public were launched at a mass scale. Ministry of Health Sri Lanka took the lead role in communicating the new normal and lifestyle changes.

Objectives

To describe the theoretical and strategic underpinnings of selected COVID-19 related video content

Methods

A team of two researchers, with experience in communication and Public Health, analyzed selected videos (excluding documentaries and animations) on Facebook. Videos produced from 2020 to 2023, shared on an official government institution page were purposively selected for content analysis. User engagement, the overall theme and the adaptation to Social marketing mix, Laswell's Communication model and Health Belief Model were used to deductively analyze the videos. Each component was scored between zero to three.

Results

Among the 24 videos, length varied from 30 seconds to 22 minutes. They addressed various topics such as vaccination, hand washing, physical distancing. A prominent sentiment conveyed was social responsibility. Views ranged from 1400-5,600,000. Scores for health communication strategies ranged from 18(full score) to 9 while scores for the use of health communication theory ranged from zero to 13(out of 18). Cue to action was very clear in most videos and the strategic approach included the use of partnerships and promotions to communicate the messages.

Conclusions

Sound theoretical underpinnings and health communication strategies have been observed in COVID prevention content with moderate engagement levels. Their reception by the viewer and persuasion needs to be further explored to fully understand the success of the material studied.

Key words: *Health Communication, Content analysis, Facebook, Covid-19*