Impact of Social Media on Panic during Covid-19 Pandemic:

A study on the University Students in Dhaka

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DATE OF SUBMISSION
August 18, 2020

<div align="center">**Letter of Approval**</div>

August 18, 2020

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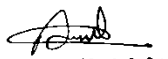**Subject: Application for project report submission approval**

Dear Sir,

I have conducted a project entitled **'Impact of Social Media on Panic during Covid-19 Pandemic: A study on the University Students in Dhaka'** as a course requirement in my graduation.

I have tried my level best to work sincerely to cover all aspects regarding the matter which I have been assigned.

I believe that this project has enriched both my knowledge and experience. I hope you will assess my report considering the limitations of the study. I shall be highly grateful if you kindly accept my project. Your kind approval is solicited.

Sincerely yours,

18.08.2020

Pranto Acharjee

ID: 163-24-569

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Acknowledgements

'Project' is an academic process which helps the students to relate their theoretical knowledge to research fields. As an Honours student of Journalism and Mass Communication, I think myself fortunate enough to undergo the process of fulfilling the requirements of my course curricula as per the provision of the Daffodil International University.

I am thankful to Mr. Md. Rashedul Islam, Lecturer, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication for his kind guidance as the supervisor of my project. Without his kind assistance it could not be possible for me to complete the project report. I am thankful to every member of Department of Journalism and Mass Communication of Daffodil International University for their cooperation to make the research seeing the daylights.

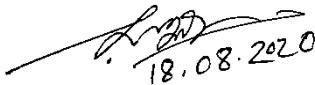A special thanks goes to the participants who participated in the study.
I am especially thankful to my family and my friends who supported my dreams and never let I gave up and kept going forward. I am very grateful to everyone who has made an input on this project and supported me through all the ups and downs - sharing their thoughts and knowledge.

Certification

This is to certify that Mr. Pranto Acharjee, ID: 163-24-569 has done his Honour's project entitled, **'Impact of Social Media on Panic during Covid-19 Pandemic: A study on the University Students in Dhaka'** under my supervision and guidance.

The study has been undertaken as a part of the requirements of Bachelor of Social Science (Honours) Degree in Journalism and Mass Communication.

The project is expected to contribute to the field of Journalism and Mass Communication as well as in further study about impact of Social Media.

18.08.2020

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Md. Rashedul Islam
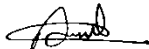Lecturer,
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Declaration of Authorship

I certify that the work presented here is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original and the result of my own investigations, except as acknowledged, and has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for a degree at this or any other University.

Sincerely,

18.08.2020

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Abstract

Like the other countries of the world, Bangladesh is also suffering during the pandemic situation. In this era of technology, almost all the people use Social Media and it becomes a tool to get the information about Covid-19. The study is designed to identify the Impact of Social Media on Panic during the Pandemic of Covid-19. To conduct the study the online survey method was adopted and the sample was university students in Dhaka for the smooth conduction of the study. In the study, it is found that people watch and read news and information related to Covid-19 on Social Media and become aware. On the other hand people also get panicked due a lots of information regarding health risk. But there are lots of misinformation regarding Covid-19 that mislead the users. The findings shows filter is needed as everybody post information and news about Covid-19 without checking while some of the users verify the information before believing.

Key words: Social Media, Covid-19, Panic, Coronavirus, Impact of Social Media

Table o Content

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Introduction: The massive spread of Covid-19 forced most of the people around the world to stay at home as the World Health Organization declared it as pandemic. Millions of people died only because of the coronavirus. People didn't go out because of the fear of viruses. Almost every country in the world is affected by the pandemic of Coronavirus. As a result every country announced their own lockdown and kept their educational institution and other offices closed.

Full world is now under lock down. Everyone stays in their home to keep them away from life risk. This virus spreads man to man that's why the only way to be safe is to be at home. Everything is stopped, life begins to freeze for the virus. Every working person is going through a financial crisis. Almost every country faced the economic fall down. Bangladesh also faces those problems like others. On 8th March 2020, the first coronavirus patient was detected in Bangladesh and it spread very rapidly all over the country. Soon after the government of Bangladesh announced mass leave and restricted the outside activities to control the spread of the virus.

During the Pandemic period, social media plays a very important role. The people get some relaxation by using social media. People enjoy songs, YouTube, Facebook, Google, movie, news and many internet activities. Many people can do their important work through social media. People can order and buy their important shopping on social media. The important thing is people can know about this virus and what they can do for safety and much more information by using the social media platform. Social media has played the most important role in the pandemic situation. For communication the social media is one of the best options and easy way.

Social media plays a very important role in Bangladesh in the situation. Social Media has become a great source of getting information regarding Covid-19. It also helps the people in their daily tasks. The press conference and video connecting is the best way to discuss many important works without the gathering through Social Media. The update of coronavirus reaches everyday everywhere through social media and people get the benefit. On the other side there are some bad sides of social media. The rumour can also spread very fast by posting on the social media. General people were affected by the rumour and they faced the problem. In earlier times there were lots of rumour about the coronavirus. People share the news without justification and understanding and this type of activity can create panic among the users. It

sometimes helps the users to be aware of the spread of Covid-19. But misinformation on social media can harm a lot during the panic of Covid-19.

1.2 Objective of the study: The main objective of this study is to identify the impact of social media on the panic during Covid-19 pandemic. The specific objectives of this study are

1. To understand how social media helps the users to be aware of the pandemic situation due to Covid:-19
2. To identify is there any role of social media to spread panic through misleading information
3. To know do people believe all the information about Covid-19 posted on social media or they cross check
4. To understand how the audience depended on social media to get news or information of Covid -19.

1.3 Research question: The mail research question of the study is to know what the impact of the media on the panic is during Covid-19 pandemic on the university students in Dhaka. The specific questions are

- RQ 1: How the social media help people to be aware of the pandemic situation due to Covid:-19
- RQ2: How does the social media create panic during Covid-19 pandemic
- RQ3: How the audience receive the information or news on Social Media about Covid-19

Chapter II

Literature Review

The WHO announced that they are right now battling not as it were a worldwide plague but moreover a social media infodemic, with a few media claiming that the coronavirus is the primary genuine social media infodemic since it has quickened data and deception around the world and is fueling freeze and fear among individuals (Hao K, Basu T, 2020). The COVID-19 widespread speaks to a considerable challenge to worldwide human well-being. Not at all like other challenges (e.g., worldwide warming), the effect of the COVID-19 widespread depends on the activities of personal citizens and, thus, the quality of the data to which individuals are uncovered. Shockingly, be that as it may, deception approximately COVID-19 has multiplied, counting on social media (Frenkel, Alba, & Zhong, 2020; Russonello, 2020).

ABC News detailed a survey claiming that within the age of social media, uneasiness almost the coronavirus spreads speedier than the infection itself, coming about in open freeze around the world (Muwahed J, 2020).

Brewer on BBC News sets that viewing a part of data and news related to COVID-19 has influenced the open and made freeze, causing individuals to live with uneasiness (Brewer K. 2020)

Similarly, Rothschild and Fischer (2020) claimed that social media is spreading fear and freeze among social media clients. At the same time, within the dialog on social media, Cellan-Jones (2020) expressed that individuals depend on social media to pick up data and actualities almost COVID-19, as a few nations utilize some filters, that is why social media gives a few data but not all the facts.

WHO claimed that social media companies were fueling deception on COVID-19 around the world, a few social media companies attempted to evacuate wrong data from their platforms (Frenkel et al, 2020).

These days everybody is a master since everybody tries to have a voice and send a message about the COVID-19 (El-Terk, 2020). Similarly, Garrett (2020) clarified that we gave control to social media to make fear around COVID-19, as we all distribute panic-inducing data and it circulates.

Merchant and Lurie (2020) mentioned that due to the improvement of social media, numerous strategies of communicating and spreading data and news are accessible to the open. These are quick and viable and can spread genuine data as well as deception.

There has been an around the world increment within the spread of fake news and deception almost COVID-19, with deception such as the lab hypothesis on the beginning of the infection supposedly "beginning" on social media action (Mian and Khan, 2020).

Chapter III
Methodology of the Study

In this chapter the methodology of the study will be discussed. Quantitative research method was used in this study. Under the quantitative method an online survey was conducted to get the opinion of the students as all are staying home due to lockdown for Covid-19 and it is not possible to visit person to person to get their opinion.

Quantitative research – survey

Survey is a widely used research tool to get the date from a large number of populations. It also helps the researcher to analyse data with different variables (Wimmer & Dominick, 2011).The purpose of quantitative research is the selection of a significant number of people who portray a

Population section (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), with the main objective to be

Capable of generalizing and focusing about a larger population (de Vaus, 2002). This survey was designed to gather information on the impact of social media on panic during the Covid-19 pendaminc students in Dhaka.

Survey administration

The survey was designed to get information from the students in Dhaka city. But it is not possible to accommodate all the students under this project. That is why, the stratified random sampling method has been chosen for this study. An online survey from using the google form was disseminated to the students through different social media platforms and gathered 100 responses to complete the study.   The survey also maintained the ratio of the male and female as about 66:34.
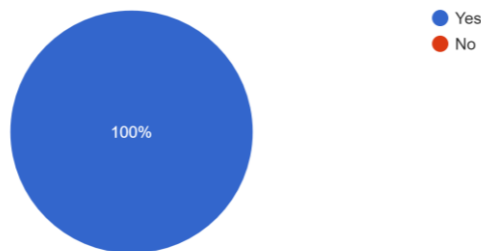
Chapter IV
Result of the Study

In this chapter the result of the study will be discussed based on the findings from the survey. Using a different chart and table the result of the study will be shown and explained.
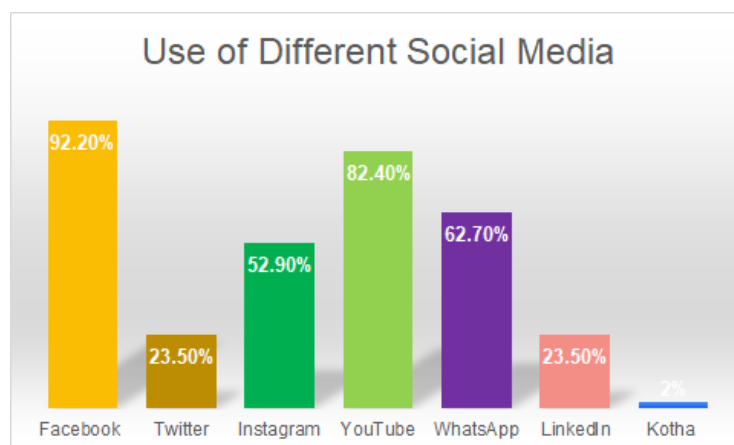
Survey Result

Overall, 100 students took part in the study who are living in Dhaka.

Usages of social Media
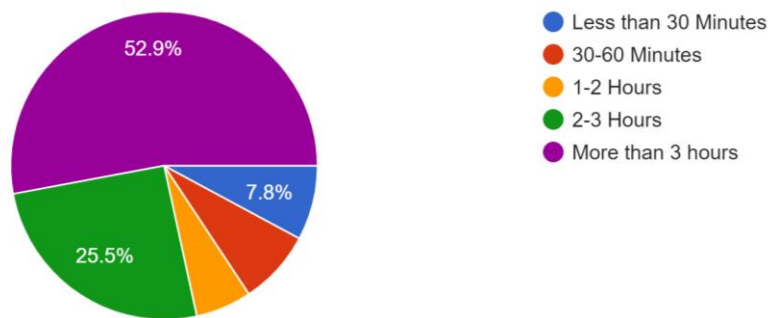

Chart 1: The percentage of using social media

The chart above shows that all the respondents use social media during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Chart2: The percentage of using different social media

The chart above shows that the highest 92.2 percent of people use Facebook while 82.4 percent use YouTube as social media.23.5 percent people use the Twitter, Instagram user is 52.9 percent, Whatsapp user is 62.7 percent, linkedin users is 23.5 percent and the user of kotha is only 2 percent. The total percent cross hundred as multiple answers were allowed for this question.

Duration of using Social Media

Chart 3: The percentage of duration of using social media

From the chart above it is clear that 52.9 percent people use social media more than 3 hours daily while .25.5 percent of people use it within 2-3 hours. Only 7 percent of people spend 1-2 hours on social media while 8.5 percent of people spend 30 to 60 minutes on social media. And the rest 7.8 percent spend time on social media in less than 30 minutes.
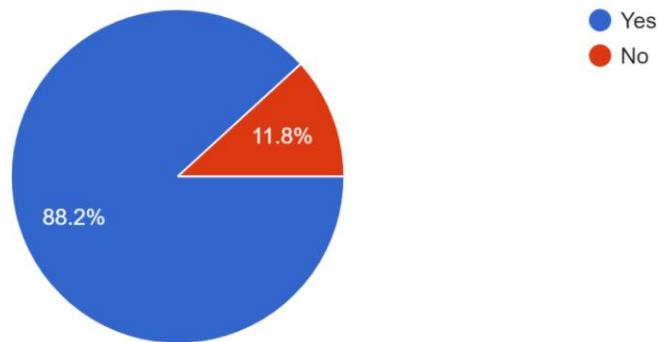
Watching or reading news on social media
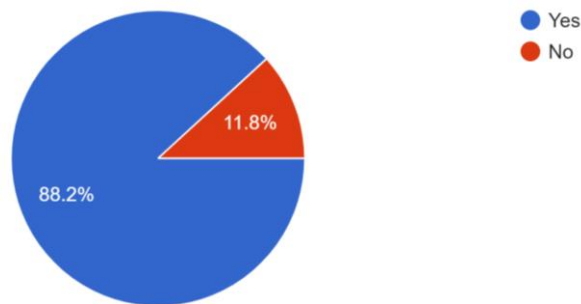
Chart 4: The percentage of watching or reading news on social media

The chart shows that a huge number of users read or watch news in social media. The percentage is 88.2 percent and only 11.8 percent of people did not watch or read news in social media.

Watching or reading news of covid-19 on social media

Chart 5: The percentage of watching or reading news of Covid-19 on social media

The chart Shows that 88.2 percent of social media users watch or read the coronavirus news on social media. The rest of 11.8 percent people have no interest in watching or reading covid-19 news on social media.
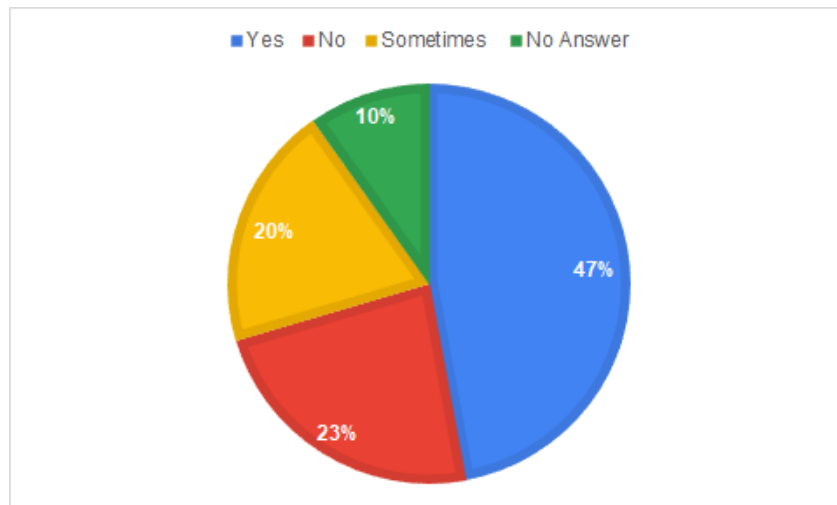
Opinion on more news of Covid on Social Media can spread awareness among the people
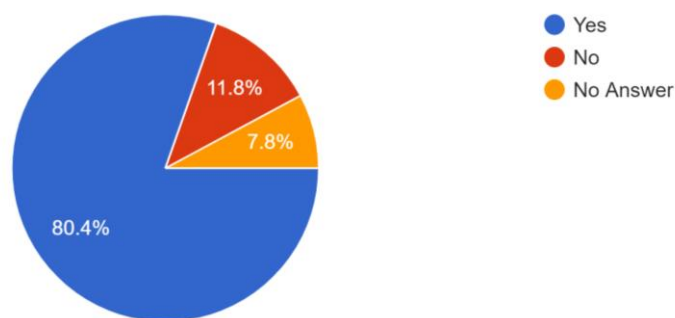
Chart 6: The percentage of opinion on more news of Covid on Social Media can spread awareness among the people

The chart shows that 80.4 percent of people thought that publishing more news related covid-19 on social media has spread awareness among the people while 11.8 percent of people don't think that. And 7.8% people are not interested in answering this.

Opinion on more news of Covid on Social Media can spread fear and panic among the people

Chart 7: The percentage of Opinion on more news of Covid on Social Media can spread fear and panic among the people

The chart shows that 47 percent of people thought that publishing more news about covid-19 has spread fear and panic among the people while 20 percent respondents thought it creates panic sometime. 23 percent of people do not agree and the rest of 9.8 percent of people were not interested to answer this question.

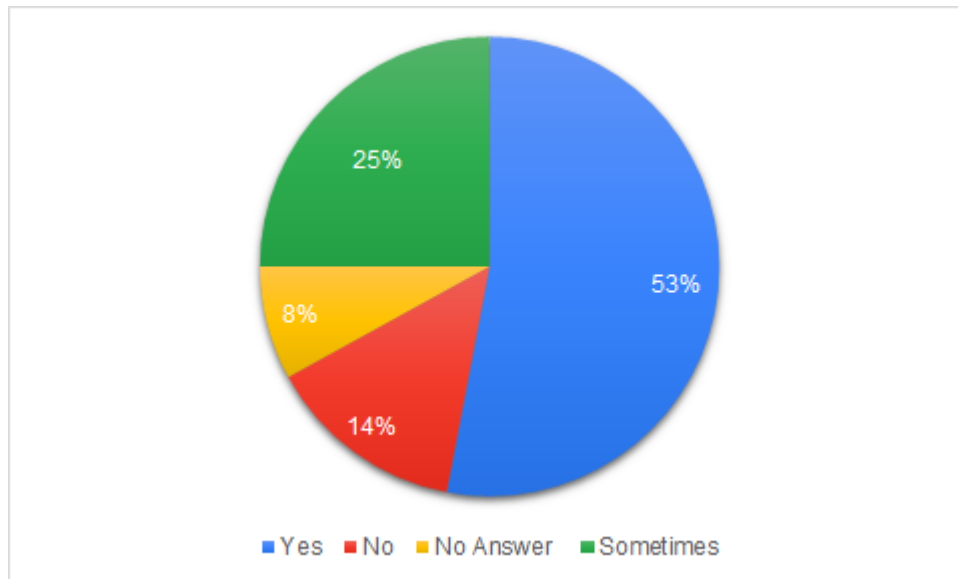**Believing information related to Covid-19 on Social Media**

Chart 8: The percentage of believing information related to Covid-19 on Social Media

The chart clears that only 14 percent of people believe all the information about Covid-19 on Social Media while 39 percent of respondents do not believe while 43 percent sometimes believe.

Cross-checking news/information posted by others on social media related to covid-19

Chart 9: The percentage of cross-checking news/information posted by others on social media related to covid-19

From the chart above we come to know that 53 percent of people cross-check the information posted on Facebook related to Covid-19 while 25 percent sometimes check. 14 percent of the respondents mentioned they did not check while only 8 percent did not answer the question.

Publishing any information and news related to covid-19 on social media
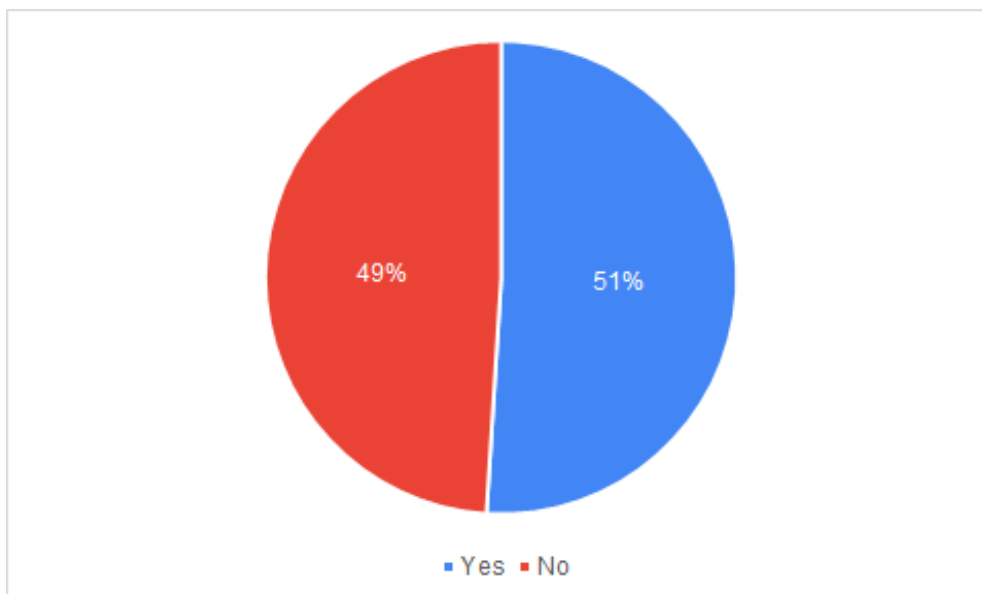
Chart 10: The percentage of publishing any information and news related to covid-19 on social media

The chart shows that 51 percent of people published information and news related to covid-19 on social media. And on the other hand 49 percent of people didn't publish any information about covid-19 on social media.
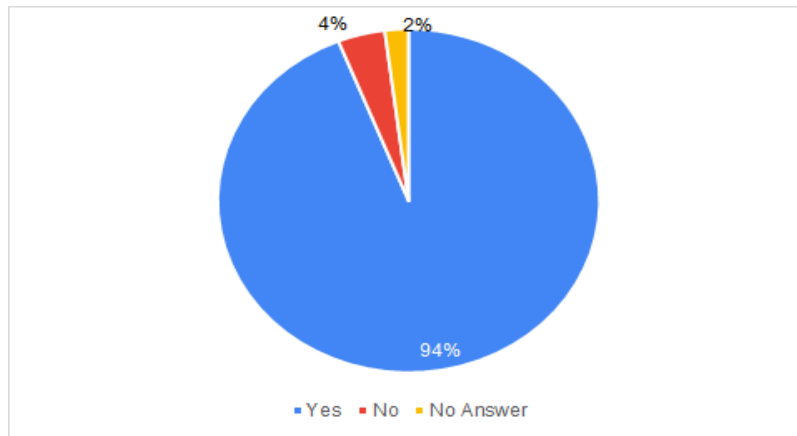
Finding any wrong information about covid-19 on social media
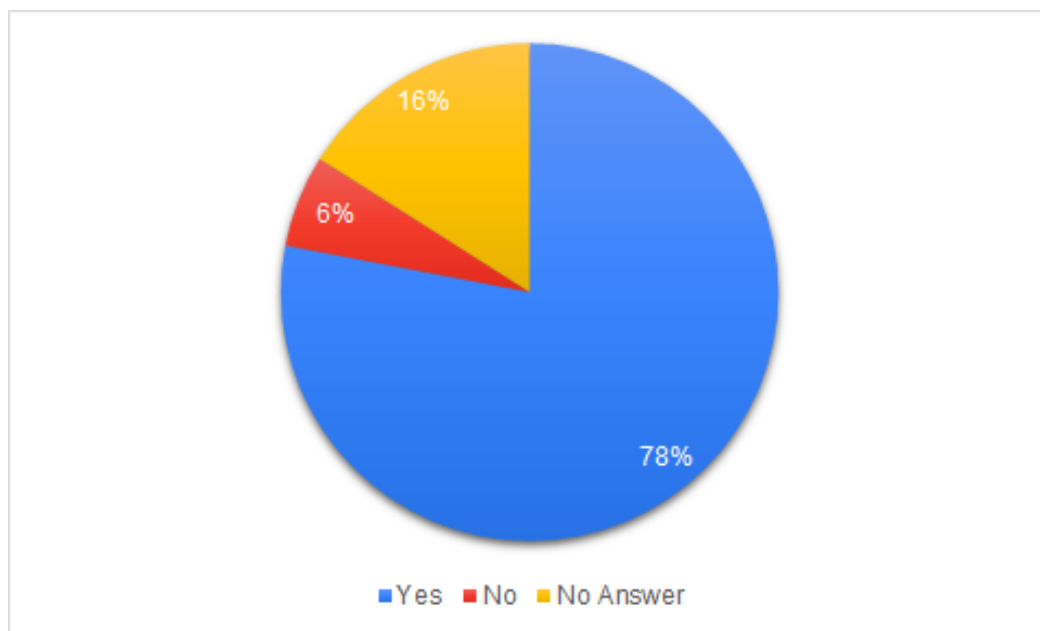
**Chart 11: The percentage of finding any wrong information about covid-19 on social
medi**a

The chart shows that 78 percent of people find many wrong information about covid-19 on social media. On the other side, only 6 percent of people Didn't find anything wrong while 16 percent of people did not answer this question.

Opinion on wrong information about covid-19 can mislead people

Chart12: The percentage of opinion on wrong information about covid-19 can mislead people

The chart shows that almost 94 percent of people think that wrong information on Social Media can mislead people.

Opinion on filters and policies needed to be set up for social media posting during humanitarian crises such as the spread of COVID-19.
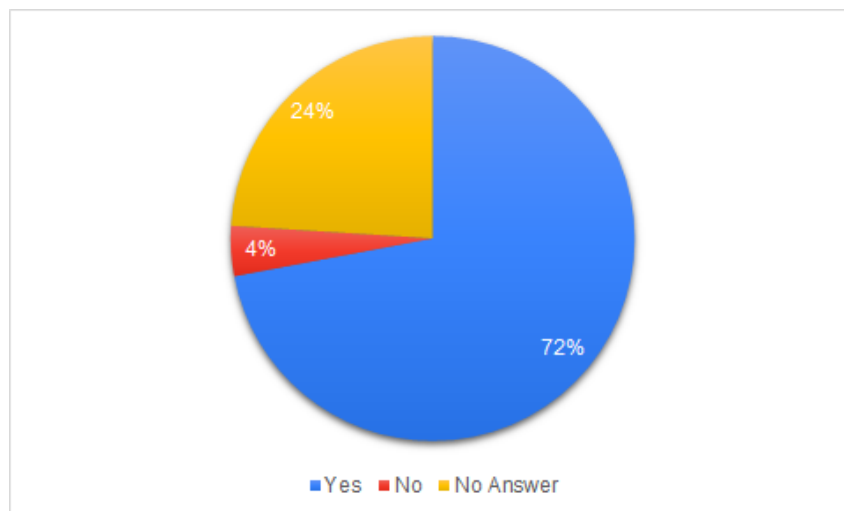
Chart 13: The percentage of opinion on filters and policies needed to be set up for social media posting during humanitarian crises such as the spread of COVID-19.

The chart above shows that 72 percent of respondents thought that filters and policies needed to be set up for social media posting during humanitarian crises such as the spread of COVID-19 while only 4 percent people mentioned not needing to set any policy and 24 percent did not answer it.

Chapter V
Discussion and Conclusion

Due to Covid -19 most people are stuck in their home and use Social Media for both communication and entertainment purposes. Many people watch news of Covid -19 on social media rather than tuning TV channels. This study aims to identify the impact of social media on panic during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Analyzing the data of this study, it was found that all the respondents use Social Media and about 89 percent of the respondents watch and read news about Covid-19 on Social Media. The interesting fact is a large percentage of the respondents think publishing more news on social media regarding Covid-19 spreads awareness that would help the people to be safe. At the same time, about 67 percent of people think more news can make panic or spread fear among the people. But the fact is anyone can post and share anything on facebook and 82 percent of the respondents always or sometimes believes all the information they find on Social Media. In that case cross-checking the information is must to get proper information and about 78 percent people mentioned they always or sometimes cross-check the information as the same percent of the respondents mentioned they found wrong information about Covid-19 on social media. Wrong information can mislead people and 94 percent of the respondents agreed wrong information on Covid-19 can mislead the users and 73 percent respondents mentioned to avoid the flow of wrong information, filters and policy can be set up for social media postings.

Depending on the data and discussion it is clear that the Social Media has both negative and positive impact on panic during Covid -19 pandemic. It also helps the people to be aware during the pandemic to be safe while also creates panic among the people. But it depends on how they use it as some people cross-check the information while some do not so there is a possibility to be misled by wrong information. It can be said proper monitoring and specific policy can be made to ensure the positive impact of Social Media during pandemic like Covid-19.

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