| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Critical Discourse Analysis of COVID-19 BBC News on X Platform

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| ABSTRACT

This study critically examines the BBC's COVID-19 discourse on the social media platform X (previously Twitter) to explore how media language shaped public attitudes and health behaviors during the pandemic. The research investigates the BBC tweets posted between January 2020 and May 2023 using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework. By analyzing the inclusive pronoun, metaphor, and modality, the study reveals how the BBC crafted messages of collective responsibility, urgency, and empathy to promote public compliance with health guidelines. The methodology follows Fairclough's three-dimensional model which includes textual analysis of linguistic features, discursive practice of intertextuality and framing, and social practice analysis of societal contexts. Tweets were purposively sampled based on engagement metrics and relevance, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the evolving discourse throughout the pandemic's progression. This comprehensive approach highlights how BBC discourse aligned with authoritative sources (including government policies and scientific findings) to reinforce credibility and influence public understanding. Key findings demonstrate the BBC's role in framing health behaviors through emotive storytelling which humanized the pandemic's impact and fostered empathy. Repetition of key slogans strengthened public commitment to collective responsibility and compliance with health measures. The study also uncovers underlying power dynamics and social inequalities reflected in the discourse, emphasizing the media's influence in shaping public responses during the crises. This research contributes to understanding the intersection of language, power, and ideology in pandemic reporting. It underscores the need for ethical media practices and enhanced public media literacy to navigate health emergencies effectively.

| KEYWORDS

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), English Media, Covid-19

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic (which began in late 2019) represents one of the most significant global challenges in modern history that impacts every aspect of human life. From healthcare to education and the economy, the crisis brought unexpected changes that required governments, institutions, and individuals to adapt rapidly. In this context, media outlets emerged as crucial players, serving as an essential source of information to help the public navigate the complexities of the pandemic. Among these, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) stood out as a trusted voice, disseminating critical updates, expert insights, and evolving health guidelines.

Digital platforms played a pivotal role during the pandemic by facilitating rapid communication and widespread engagement. *Twitter* (now known as *X*) became an essential tool for organizations like the BBC to share timely and targeted information. With its short-form messages, interactive features, and ability to reach global audiences instantly, X allowed the BBC to engage directly with users, shaping public perceptions and responses to the pandemic in real time. However, the language

and strategies used in such communication require careful examination, as they have the power to inform, influence, and even manipulate societal behavior.

Media discourse is never neutral; it reflects underlying ideologies, power dynamics, and cultural values. During a crisis like COVID-19, how the media frames events and chooses its language can influence public understanding and behavior. Media outlets must balance their role as informers with their responsibilities as shapers of public opinion.

A key dimension of this analysis involves exploring how BBC's pandemic discourse evolved over time. Early communications focused heavily on raising awareness about the virus and the importance of protective measures. Over time, the focus shifted to vaccination campaigns, addressing misinformation, and analyzing government policies. Each stage of the pandemic presented new challenges, requiring the media to adapt its messages accordingly.

1.1. Purpose of the study

This study adopts a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to explore these issues, focusing specifically on the BBC's pandemic discourse on X. CDA is a crucial tool for examining how language is used to convey power, ideology, and societal values. By analyzing the BBC's tweets, this research aims to uncover the implicit and explicit ways in which media discourse shaped public attitudes and behaviors during the pandemic.

The purpose of the study is to conduct a critical discourse analysis of COVID-19 news reporting in English media, focusing on how institutions like the BBC framed and disseminated information about the pandemic on platforms like Twitter (now X). The study aims to identify the discursive strategies used to shape public understanding and response to COVID-19, uncover how these strategies evolved, and explore how issues of power, ideology, and social inequalities were reflected in the language of the pandemic reporting. Moreover, the research seeks to shed light on the role of media discourse in influencing public attitudes and behaviors during a global health crisis. Accordingly, the main research question is:

- To what extent did BBC's pandemic discourse on the X platform influence public attitudes and health behaviors during the global health crisis?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an exceptional reliance on media platforms for updates, health guidelines, and news related to the virus. Consequently, digital media became a primary source for delivering crucial information to the public. This reliance emphasizes the need to understand how COVID-19 news shaped public discourse, particularly through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in news reporting on social media platforms. This literature review explores existing research on media discourse during health crises which focuses on the role of discourse in framing public attitudes and behaviors, how discursive practices reflect institutional power and ideology, and the impact of social media's extensive reach on shaping public health.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) examines language use and underlying ideologies in texts focusing on how language reinforces social structures and power relations (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 2008). Critical discourse analysis (CDA)'s application in media discourse explores how institutions use language to shape public perception, often aligning messages with specific agendas or ideological perspectives (Wodak & Meyer, 2015)

According to Fairclough (2003), media discourse has an important role in shaping social and cultural norms (particularly during crises) where the framing of messages can significantly influence public opinion. In this context, discourse serves as a powerful tool for shaping issues such as health threats, in ways that potentially influence audience responses.

The work of Van Dijk (1998) on media discourse highlights institutions (including news agencies) control power through " ideological squaring" which positions certain groups or perspectives as favorable and others as unfavorable. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this ideological framing often translated into messages that either supported or critiqued various governmental and institutional responses. Such messages have potential implications for public compliance with health guidelines and overall perceptions of the pandemic's seriousness. CDA is especially relevant in examining how public health information was disseminated and how language choices in media discourse may have contributed to the societal perception of the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the media's role in shaping perceptions of health crises. Previous research in health communication shows that media coverage during outbreaks (such as Ebola and Zika viruses) influences public behavior and attitudes toward the crisis (Sell & Hosangadi &Trotochaud, 2018; Dudo & Dahlstrom & Brossard, 2007). These studies indicate that the media's framing of the outbreak (through language and emphasis on certain aspects over others) can affect how seriously the public perceives the health threat. In COVID-19 reporting, terms like "pandemic", " lockdown", and " social distancing" were repeatedly used to emphasize the crisis's seriousness and encourage compliance with safety measures.

Social media platforms (particularly X) became essential immediate information resources during the pandemic. The platform allowed institutions like the BBC to disseminate updates, guidance, and analyses rapidly (Brennen, Simon, Howard & Nielsen, 2020). However, the X platform has an open and user-generated nature which means that it reflects both institutional messages and public responses, creating an interactive space where information sharing and audience interpretation merge. The interaction between institutional posts and user responses on platforms like X allows for a dynamic analysis of how audiences engage with, challenge, or reinforce the messages presented by news agencies.

Research indicates that media coverage can shape not only attitudes but also behaviors, particularly in health contexts. For example, during the H1N1 pandemic, media emphasis on personal hygiene and vaccination was associated with increased public compliance with health guidelines (Tang & Wang, 2021). Similarly, during COVID-19, media messages about mask-wearing, vaccination, and social distancing were found to influence public behaviors directly (Zarocostas, 2020).

The BBC, as a trusted media institution, played a central role in communicating health guidelines, potentially affecting how the public viewed and acted on these recommendations.

Scholars argue that news framing can lead to "agenda-setting effects", where repeated exposure to specific topics influences the audience's perception of their importance (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

In COVID-19 reporting, the BBC and other news outlets frequently highlighted issues such as healthcare system strain, government responses, and vaccine developments which likely impact the public's prioritization of these topics. This repetition of key themes can reinforce certain views while marginalizing others, potentially shaping public attitudes on controversial issues like lockdown and mask-wearing.

CDA of health crisis reporting often reveals embedded ideologies and power structures within media messages (Chouliaraki,2006). In the case of COVID-19, media outlets (including BBC) served as both information sources and shapers of public opinion. The BBC's portrayal of government responses, healthcare guidelines, and the seriousness of the pandemic reflected broader institutional and political perspectives, highlighting both the challenges faced by health systems and the decisions made by policy-makers.

Studies on media representation during COVID-19 suggest that language choices reflect and perpetuate social inequalities (Kıran & Bölükbaşı,2021). For example, terms like "vulnerable populations" often highlighted socio-economic disparities, while discussions on vaccine distribution underscored issues of access and equity.

The analysis of such discursive patterns offers insights into how media institutions communicate power and ideology. CDA reveals that terms, framing choices, and selective reporting in COVID-19 coverage often underscored issues of authority and compliance. The BBC's reporting style, tone, and language in posts on the *X* platform can be examined for signs of alignment or critique with governmental policies. By analyzing these messages, researchers can discern how the BBC's framing may reinforce or contest dominant power structures and ideologies.

The unique nature of social media platforms (such as X) poses new challenges and opportunities for critical discourse analysis in media studies. Unlike traditional media, social media offers immediate public feedback and widespread dissemination that amplifies the impact of institutional messages. This interactivity enables both the institution and the audience to shape discourse dynamically. During COVID-19, the BBC's X posts not only informed the public but also provided a space for public debate and discussion, allowing researchers to analyze the public's reception of pandemic discourse in real time.

The ability to "like", "retweet", and "comment" on posts means that audience engagement can amplify specific messages, shaping discourse beyond the institution's initial framing. In this way, *X*'s interactive features enable discursive patterns to evolve in response to user engagement, creating a cycle in which public responses can shape future institutional messages. The BBC's use of X for COVID-19 reporting illustrates how traditional media institutions adapt their discourse strategies on social media platforms, affecting the reach and influence of their messages.

Critical discourse analysis of COVID-19 reporting on BBC's X account offers valuable insights into the discursive strategies used to shape public understanding and response. By examining the BBC's discourse on COVID-19, this study can contribute to a broader understanding of the media's role in shaping public attitudes and behaviors during global health crises.

3. METHODOLOGY
3.1. Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research design, specifically a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to examine how BBC News shaped public attitudes and health behaviors through its COVID-19 discourse on X. By focusing on language use, this methodology will explore power relations, ideologies, and societal values embedded in BBC's pandemic coverage.

3.2. Procedure

The study employed a critical discourse analysis (CDA) framework to explore how BBC's tweets related to the pandemic shaped public attitudes and health behaviors during COVID-19. The data were selected from the BBC News X account (@BBCNews). The tweets were found in hashtags like #COVID19, #Coronavirus, and #Pandemic from January 2020 to May 2023. The data were exported directly from the X platform using screenshots. The textual content of tweets was extracted using an iPhone-compatible optical character recognition (OCR) library. The analysis was guided by Fairclough's three-dimensional model which is explained in detail in the Data Analysis section.

3.3. Data Collection

Corpus: a purposive sampling strategy was used to select tweets from BBC News's X account (@BBCNews) from the start of the pandemic (January 2020) to the end of emergency states of COVID-19 (May 2023). The number of selected tweets is 17 tweets. This timeframe allows for a longitudinal analysis, capturing evolving discursive patterns as the pandemic developed.

Sampling Criteria: tweets that discuss COVID-19 were selected based on hashtags like #COVID19, #Coronavirus, #Pandemic, or related keywords to ensure a focused analysis of relevant posts. Both highly engaged tweets (high number of likes, retweets, and comments) and those representing diverse stages of the pandemic were included to capture a range of discursive strategies.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis followed a CDA approach that draws on Fairclough's three-dimensional model (text, discourse practice, and social practice) to examine how BBC News used language to influence public understanding and health behaviors during the pandemic. This model is particularly relevant for analyzing how language is shaped by and, in turn, shapes social structures.

Textual Analysis: the first level of analysis involves examining individual tweets for specific linguistic features such as vocabulary choice, metaphors, and modality. Attention were given to:

- Pronoun use: assessing the use of collective pronouns (we, our) versus individual-focused pronouns (you).
- Metaphors: identifying metaphorical language, for example, "fight against COVID-19" to determine how the pandemic was framed.
- Modality: analyzing the strength of language, particularly through modal verbs such as "must", and "could" to uncover persuasive intent.

Discursive practice analysis: the second level examines how the text interacts with wider discursive processes such as how BBC News tweets fit within broader media discourse on COVID-19. This step involves exploring:

- Intertextuality: identifying references to government policies, health advisories, or scientific sources to understand how BBC News positioned itself within an authoritative discourse.
- Repetition and framing: evaluating recurring themes and frames (e.g., health crisis, and global threat) and analyzing their role in reinforcing certain viewpoints.

Social practice analysis: the final level situates BBC's discourse within the broader social context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The level considers:

- Power and ideology: investigating how BBC's tweets reflect and reinforce societal power structures, health policies, and governmental authority during the pandemic.
- Social inequalities: analyzing whether BBC's discourse addressed societal inequalities such as the differential impact of the pandemic on vulnerable populations.

Fairclough's CDA framework served as the primary theoretical approach to guide the analysis, which provides a basis for understanding how language, power, and ideology interact in the media discourse of BBC News.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

Content validity was applied by consulting a colleague in a discourse analysis course to ensure the validity of this research. This consultation aimed to verify that the analytical framework and research design comprehensively cover the critical aspects of discourse analysis. This process ensured that the research instrument adequately and effectively answered the research question.

This research achieved reliability through inter-rater reliability. The same colleague reviewed the analytical criteria and analyzed some data integrated into the research. This collaboration reduced the potential for bias and enhanced the consistency of the analytical process. The agreement on results was likely high which demonstrates the reliability of the methodological approach.

4.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the BBC's COVID-19 posts on X platforms was divided according to Fairclough's three-dimensional model:

1. Textual analysis: focuses on the language used in tweets.

Figure 1. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*Stay home, save lives*

The UK government's latest advice on coronavirus is asking everyone to stay home, to

help protect the NHS"

The inclusive pronoun "everyone" positions staying home as a universal responsibility. It appeals to collective identity, fostering a sense of shared duty to protect the National Health Service (NHS) and save lives. This message creates a moral obligation for compliance.

Figure 2. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*We've discovered a new more contagious virus, a variant, that is spreading at a dangerous rate*"

The use of the pronoun "we" serves to establish authority and expertise. It also fosters a sense of shared responsibility, creating solidarity between authorities and the public. This inclusive language builds trust, reassures the audience, and encourages compliance with health measures that align public attitudes and behaviors with the efforts to address the virus.

Figure 3. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*The weeks ahead will be the hardest yet, but I really do believe we're entering the last phase of the struggle*"

 The use of the phrase "last phase of the struggle" gives a sense of a real crisis like in the case of a war, framing the pandemic as a challenging battle that demands strength and determination. This language encourages people to keep going and gives hope that the end is near, helping them to stay positive during difficult times.

Figure 4. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*We've discovered a new more contagious virus, a variant, that is spreading at a dangerous rate*"

While "spreading" can be used literally to describe the transmission of the virus, it is also metaphorical here, it emphasizes the movement and expansion of the virus in an almost uncontrolled manner. Thus, it conveys urgency, emphasizing the need for quick action and compliance with restrictions.

Figure 4. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*You must stay at home*"

The model verb "must" indicates authority and urgency. It highlights the seriousness of the instructions, making it clear that it is obligatory to follow.

Figure 5. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*People with minor symptoms should stay at home for seven days*"

The use of "should" introduces a softer, advisory tone compared to "must". This indicates flexibility, likely aimed at gaining voluntary compliance without alienating individuals.

Figure 6. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*The virus is here whether we like it or not, and is going to spread*"

The use of the word "here" emphasizes the virus's immediate presence. It indicates that it is a current and unavoidable threat. It creates urgency and reinforces the need for action, urging the public to accept the situation and comply with health measures, as the virus cannot be ignored or avoided.

2. **Discursive practice analysis**: analyze how the tweets relate to broader media discourse and how they position the BBC within the discourse on COVID-19.

Figure 6. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"This is the worst public health crisis for a generation"

UK PM Boris Johnson says it is "not right" to compare coronavirus to flu, adding "many more families are going to lose loved ones before their time" as the virus spreads

The BBC aligns its discourse with authoritative government messaging by quoting the Prime Minister. This enhances the information's legitimacy while emphasizing the pandemic's gravity.

Figure 7. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"Our clear message is that you can have every confidence in the safety, in the effectiveness and in the quality" of the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid vaccine

The direct support for the vaccine connects the BBC's discourse to scientific and governmental efforts to build public confidence in vaccination. The repetition of "safety," "effectiveness," and "quality" comforts the audience, addressing concerns about vaccine hesitancy. The mention of the resource, which is "Dr. June Raine," and its position builds confidence and encourages the public to take the vaccine.

Figure 8. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*Stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives*"

This phrase, repeated across several government and media communications, became a central pandemic slogan. It frames staying home as a patriotic and moral duty, appealing to both national pride and empathy.

Figure 9. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*Boris Johnson says the coronavirus outbreak is now the "top priority" for the government*"

By framing the pandemic as a "top priority" the BBC emphasizes the seriousness of the crisis while aligning with the governmental efforts to convey authority and readiness. The starting with "Boris Johnson" attracts attention and provides seriousness to the situation.

Figure 10. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"I'm now at home alone, and nobody can give me a hug"
'Hannah' from Surrey became ill with coronavirus, and her husband John cared for her while she was unwell
He contracted the virus and was then admitted to hospital where he died

This personal story humanizes the pandemic, making the consequences of COVID-19 tangible and relatable. It shifts the focus from statistics to individual experiences that elicit empathy. The sequence of the events ending with the death of the husband impacts the readers and makes them recognize the seriousness of the pandemic. It highlights the importance of social distancing as the virus can spread to your loved ones and cause death. This emotional story encourages the public to maintain physical distance which helps to prevent the virus's spread.

3. **Social Practice Analysis**: situates the tweets within the broader societal contexts, examining power, ideology, and social inequalities.

Figure 11. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

Stay home, save lives
The UK government's latest advice on coronavirus is asking everyone to stay home, to
"help protect the NHS"

The directive reflects governmental authority while framing compliance as an act of social responsibility. This reinforces ideological discourse that prioritizes collective welfare over individual freedoms during crises.

Figure 12. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"Donald Trump finally wears mask in public"
The use of Donald Trump as a figure encourages the public to wear a mask, as they find the Residents of America wearing it. Moreover, it amplifies the seriousness of the situation, so the president considers the problem and tries to avoid it by wearing a mask. This tweet encourages the public to wear a mask which helps protect them from the virus and stop spreading it.

Figure 13. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*A minority of people are putting the health of the nation at risk by not following the rules*"

This constructs a moral hierarchy, where the ones who follow the rules are virtuous and non-compliers are deviant. Such language can stigmatize certain groups, perpetuating divisions within society.

Figure 14. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

"*It's a bit scary coming into work at times, but our residents need us*"

The sentence balances fear ("scary") with need ("need us"), underscoring the tension between personal risk and professional commitment. Furthermore, the emotional tone elicits empathy from the audience, as the workers are forced to go to work otherwise, they must not! It amplifies that going outside the home is a risk.

Figure 15. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

X Lemon Juice cures the virus
 X Mosquitos spread the virus
X Taking a blood test will get you a coronavirus test
Here's some coronavirus myths you should ignore

This statement uses a Model Negation (X) to reject false information, positioning the BBC as a corrective force against misinformation. By directly debunking myths, the discourse highlights the importance of evidence-based knowledge and public health accuracy. The structure emphasizes clarity and authority and reinforces the media's role in providing reliable, factual guidance during the pandemic. Moreover, a more informed audience may have been less likely to engage in risky behaviors influenced by false information.

The analysis revealed how the BBC framed its discourse using authoritative sources (e.g., government leaders and health experts) and emotive language. Tweets like ("*Stay at home, protect our NHS and save lives*") appealed to collective responsibility and fostered compliance by tying health behaviors to national identity and morality.

Figure 16. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

Directives such as (*From today, wearing a mask is mandatory in shops in England
It already is in shops in Scotland*") and ("*You must stay at home*") were framed as necessary for protecting lives and minimizing the crisis. The repetition and clear messaging likely reinforce the importance of adherence to health guidelines and normalizing practices like social distancing and mask-wearing.

In tweets like ("*I'm now at home alone, and nobody can give me a hug*") and ("'*Hannah' from Surrey... her husband John... was then admitted to hospital where he died.*". Emotional storytelling might have strengthened public resolve to comply with health measures by showcasing the personal costs of the virus.

Moreover, tweets such as ("*A minority of people are putting the health of the nation at risk by not following the rules*") created a moral dichotomy between responsible citizens and rule-breakers. This language likely influenced public attitudes by stigmatizing non-compliance and promoting social cohesion through shared responsibility. This message shaped societal norms and encouraged behaviors.

Figure 17. Tweet from @BBCNews account on X

Tweets like ("*This coronavirus is not going to go away, just as flu doesn't go away*") prepare the public for the ongoing nature of the pandemic. This helped manage expectations and reduced the likelihood of frustration or panic when the crisis persisted. Framing the pandemic as a prolonged issue likely encouraged sustained adherence to health behaviors, despite growing exhaustion.

The analyzed tweets reflect the BBC's use of language to balance authority, empathy, and urgency during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through linguistic strategies such as inclusive pronouns, metaphors, and modality, the tweets construct messages that promote collective action and compliance.

Intertextual references to government policies and scientific findings enhance the BBC's credibility, while human-interest stories add relatability. This analysis underscores the BBC's influential role in shaping public attitudes and behaviors during the pandemic.

5. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the BBC's COVID-19 discourse on X underscores the media's profound influence on shaping public attitudes and behaviors during global crises. Through linguistic strategies like inclusive pronouns, metaphor, and modality, the BBC constructed discourse that emphasized collective responsibility, compliance with health measures, and empathy for those affected by the pandemic. By aligning its messaging with authoritative sources such as government policies and scientific findings, the BBC enhanced its credibility and positioned itself as a trusted information source during the crisis.

The BBC's tweets framed health guidelines and government measures as acts of moral and social responsibility, using repetition and emotive language to reinforce public adherence. For instance, directives such as "*Stay home, protect our NHS, and save lives*" promoted collective action and linked compliance to national identity. Human-interest stories further add reliability, personalizing the pandemic's impact to elicit empathy and commitment to health behaviors.

However, the discourse also revealed underlying power dynamics and ideological undertones. The BBC crafted messages that aligned with wider societal expectations and institutional principles by emphasizing social disparities and framing non-compliance negatively. The X platform's interactivity (through likes, retweets, and comments) amplified these messages, fostering a dynamic cycle of influence between institutional discourse and public engagement.

The current study highlights the critical role of media discourse in public health crises, illustrating how language not only informs but also shapes societal behavior and perceptions. It emphasizes the need for continued research into the interplay between media language, power, and ideology in shaping public responses during global challenges.

6. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

While this study provides valuable insight into how the BBC's pandemic discourse on X shaped public attitudes and health behaviors, several limitations should be considered. First, the analysis focuses solely on tweets from one media institution, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Other media outlets, cultural contexts, and linguistic styles might yield different patterns and strategies. Future studies could broaden the scope by comparing multiple institutions or exploring non-Western media platforms.

Second, the reliance on purposive sampling might introduce bias, as the selected tweets represent only a portion of the broader discourse. Some critical aspects of the pandemic discourse may have not been covered, potentially affecting the completeness of the analysis. Employing a larger, more randomized dataset could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the language used.

Third, the interactive nature of X, including public responses and engagement metrics, was not extensively analyzed. While institutional posts were studied, the public's reactions could provide further insights into how messages were received, challenged, or reinforced. Incorporating user response or emotional tone analysis could strengthen the study's conclusions.

Fourth, the study is unable to directly verify the impact of BBC's discourse on individual attitudes and behaviors. Instead, the study infers potential influence by analyzing the nature of the discourse and its framing of pandemic information.

Despite these limitations, the study holds significant implications. It highlights the critical role of media in shaping public health behaviors and the ethical responsibility of institutions to balance accurate reporting with sensitivity to public concerns. Additionally, it underscores the importance of media literacy, as understanding the influence of the discourse can empower individuals to critically assess the information they consume. Future research can further explore how media discourse interacts with evolving public perceptions in dynamic social contexts.

Ethical Consideration: This study adheres to ethical guidelines by analyzing publicly available tweets from the BBC News account on X, which also ensures that no sensitive or personal data is included. The focus is on institutional discourse, making sure that no individuals are targeted. Measures such as peer consultation and the use of established frameworks reduced bias. While maintaining ethical standards, the study critically examines media practices to provide meaningful insights into the societal impact of pandemic reporting.

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