
Key Insights
What we want to explore – GLOBALLY

• What sources of information do people trust and see how does that varies globally and demographically.
• What are citizens perceptions of misinformation, how often do they see it, are they effected, and what do they do?
• Are People’ decision, opinions or attitudes related to the information they are exposed to and the social media platforms they use?
• Is there is significant relationship between people’ attitude and what kinds of information bubbles they are in. and for skeptics what types of content might they trust.

Personal Opinions:

• I fully trust my government.
• I feel like the government is not giving the full picture when it comes to COVID-19.
• I feel my government is not doing enough to control the pandemic.
• I believe that when we have the vaccine things will go back to normal.
• I am interested in news of a COVID-19 vaccine.
• I don’t want to engage with WHO.
Methodology

Conducted in 24 countries
23,500 global citizens
Aged 18 to 40

Balanced gender and age, sampling
Income reflecting local citizens

24th October 2020 – 7th January 2021
The Methodology empowering the study

- **Methodology: Random device engagement (RDE)**
  - Reaching survey respondents through mobile apps and websites, engaging them organically with a great user experience.

- **RDE benefits**
  - Global reach.
  - Millions of respondents.
  - Real consumers (without professional survey takers).

*Pollfish reached 140 countries & 245M respondents in 2020 using RDE*
Benefits of RDE & Pollfish

- **Reaching Millennials and Gen Z audiences.**
  - Being **mobile first** makes us effective in finding and engaging with younger audiences who typically are not part of panels.

- **Speed & Representability**
  - Millions of consumers assure data collection speed, fast turnarounds & representability of audiences.

- **Data consistency**
  - One methodology and vendor guarantees consistent data across 24 countries & 23.5k respondents.
Agile research: The ability to quickly design & launch studies, iterating based on current input.

- **DIY first:**
  - A key component of agile research, because it allows quick and efficient survey design and launch.

- **Real-time dashboards:**
  - Visibility for immediate reaction to live data and iterations.

- **Flexibility:**
  - Data exports, crosstabs, BigQuery to operationalize data.
National mainstream media is still tops although Gen Z and Millennials rely on multiple sources for their COVID-19 information.

Most important sources of info in a multi-source environment

- **43.6%**
  - national news media

- **36.2%**
  - use search platforms

- **35.2%**
  - international news media

- **34.2%**
  - social media content from traditional media

Personal interaction ranks lower in terms of sources of information

- **22.4%**
  - from family

- **19.8%**
  - from friends

- **16.1%**
  - from friends’ social media

**Takeaway**

National mainstream media as well as their social media platforms continue to be trusted channels for reaching Gen Z and Millennials. However, in a handful of countries, respondents rely more on the WHO and other alternative sources over national media.
Science content is seen as shareworthy

Most likely to share on social media

- 43.9% scientific content
- 36.7% information relevant to themselves
- 28.5% information that is concerning

More likely to share this type of content

- 28.3% articles
- 24.1% videos
- 23.0% images

Takeaway

Science rules when it comes to sharing COVID-19 content. This shows the digital literacy of Gen Z and Millennials in the pandemic and appears to buck the general trend on social media where funny, entertaining and emotional content spread fastest.
3 Awareness of false news is high, but so is apathy

“Fake News” Awareness
- 59.1% Very Aware of the fact that COVID-19 information on social media or messaging apps could be false
- 35.1% I ignore the content

How one reacts to fake news
- 24.4% I report the content
- 19.3% I comment on the content
- 8.7% I unfollow the person who posted it
- 7.1% I share the content
- 5.5% I don’t know

Takeaway
Many Gen Z and Millennials are aware of false news and they can often spot it. However, the challenge is in recruiting them to actively counter it, rather than letting it slide.
4  

Gen Z and Millennials have multiple worries beyond getting sick

Top concerns included:

- **55.5%** risk of friends and family contracting COVID-19
- **53.8%** economy crashing
- **39.8%** employment uncertainty

Crashing economy is the top concern of respondents in Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Italy, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, Spain, and Turkey.

Takeaway
Gen Z and Millennials are grappling with multiple concerns when it comes to COVID-19. Health communicators need to be aware that these concerns can be interlinked and/or competing, and to acknowledge perceived trade-offs – for example, between lives and livelihoods.
Interest in COVID-19 vaccine is soaring

55.0% are interested in information regarding a COVID-19 vaccine

41.9% state that social media content by the WHO would be their first source

**COVID-19 Content Preferences Now**

Takeaway

As governments around the world roll out immunisation programs, interest in vaccines is likely to continue to be high. Health communicators have a critical opportunity to shape public receptiveness to vaccines, allay fears and increase uptake. But don’t rely on celebrities or influencers.
So much information, yet not the full picture

58.3% are overwhelmed by information
52.0% have stopped paying attention to COVID-19 news

Resourceful sceptics

59.3% feel the media is not telling them everything
57.1% feel that their government is not giving the full picture on the pandemic

Takeaway
Pandemic fatigue is setting in and people are overwhelmed. They also yearn for things to go back to normal. This is a critical window for health communicators to emphasize that things can only get back to normal if people staying vigilant and comply with health guidelines whether it’s wearing masks, social distancing or getting vaccinated.
Finding out more

- Interactive Dashboards.

www.covid19-infodemic.com/who.html

- Data is open and available to download and research.
DASHBOARD DEMO
Where next for the Microsite? Behavioral

- Deep dive into behavioral characteristics that drive skepticism, lack of adherence, and vaccine ambivalence.
- Individual country insights
- Data is open and available. Training on data.

TRUST MY GOVERNMENT

No. of platforms using per person: 5.66
%Trust the Government: 51.48%

Top 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Platform</th>
<th>Percentage Calendar</th>
<th>TrustGovPer Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td>66.57%</td>
<td>48.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>66.48%</td>
<td>50.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>63.48%</td>
<td>49.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>63.78%</td>
<td>48.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook_Messenger</td>
<td>47.19%</td>
<td>49.58%</td>
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</table>

Top 5 Index:

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</thead>
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<td>Tencent_QQ</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<td>Weibo</td>
<td>2.73%</td>
<td>81.25%</td>
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<td>QQzone</td>
<td>1.09%</td>
<td>78.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WeChat</td>
<td>6.81%</td>
<td>75.28%</td>
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</table>

Bottom 5 Index:

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<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>21.94%</td>
<td>48.26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>15.18%</td>
<td>48.17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>16.91%</td>
<td>46.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinder</td>
<td>1.11%</td>
<td>35.06%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Global social platform

*Q9.2_I trust My government
Social Media & COVID-19

A Global Study of Digital Crisis Interaction among Gen Z and Millennials

Conducted in cooperation with Wunderman Thompson, University of Melbourne
Pollfish and the WHO

Professor Ingrid Volkmer,
University of Melbourne
March 31, 2021
Study includes 24 countries, ‘hot spot’ countries (WHO definition), all continents.
Outcomes help drafting future crisis communication strategies.
• A new generational specific sphere of global health crisis communication!
• Millennials and Gen Z interact on crisis issues directly with each other across continents, share content in transnational peer-to-peer communities, often on highly specific crisis issues and ‘broadcast’ subjective crisis perceptions on an international scale via social media.

• For this generation, health crisis communication is no longer exclusively national or regional but rather embedded in a worldwide sphere of digital interaction.
• Social media platforms constitute the globalized communication ecosystems for Millennials and Gen Z.

• Average number of platforms used is 5, in Brazil 6 and Nigeria 7.

• Outcomes of our study reveal different patterns of platform use across age brackets, gender and national contexts.
### Nigeria: Age Group 18 – 24 years: WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Channels Used</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td>86.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>74.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>65.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Messenger</td>
<td>54.28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telegram</td>
<td>50.99%</td>
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<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>49.67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>47.04%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>36.18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TikTok</td>
<td>27.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>15.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>14.47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brazil: Age Group 18 – 24 years: *WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Channels Used</th>
<th>Brazil: Age Group 18 – 24 years</th>
<th>Social media friends or followers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td>92.56%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>79.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>71.71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>68.24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook Messenger</td>
<td>49.13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>47.39%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TikTok</td>
<td>43.18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinterest</td>
<td>29.53%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>18.86%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Russia: Age Group 18-24 years

#### Social Media Channels Used

*Which social media platforms or messaging apps do you usually use? (Multiple Responses)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>74.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td>66.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>62.26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telegram</td>
<td>56.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TikTok</td>
<td>48.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viber</td>
<td>27.36%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>22.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoom</td>
<td>22.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>20.75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>20.44%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
More attention required in digital policy debates regarding the role of social media as generational specific sites of health crisis information.
• The role of Facebook platforms in global crisis communication raises regarding new questions about corporatization, monetarization of health crisis content, of platform governance and transnational digital policy in a global pandemic.

• ‘Fake news’ is addressed in public debates, however, other issues require attention: data privacy, data harvesting, algorithmic filters, ‘bots’ and ‘trolls’.

• While Facebook is in the focus of digital policy discussions, the study reveals the key role of other platforms as well. This requires attention in digital policy on a global and national level.
‘Digital divide’ and new dimensions..

• Social media platforms and messaging applications have the potential to assist in closing the digital divide by leapfrogging traditional infrastructure gaps in low-income countries.

• In times of a health crisis: potential of gap between young and older generations that could create crisis information divides.
• Health crisis communication – individualized navigation across the globalized multi-source environment
For COVID-19 news, information and updates, to which of the following sources do you go first?

Age group 18-24 years, Egypt, 42% actively searching!

Sources for COVID-19 News and Information

(Multiple Responses)

- Actively searching using search sites: 42.54%
- Social media content by the World Health Organization (WHO): 34.29%
- International newspapers, Television and Radio: 32.38%
- National newspapers, Television and Radio: 30.48%
- Social media content by science and health experts: 30.48%
- Social media content by my government: 28.57%
- Social media content by traditional media: 22.22%
- Friends: 20.63%
- Family: 18.41%
- Social media content by friends: 17.46%
- Social media content by celebrities and influencers: 16.83%
- Social media content by family: 15.87%
- Social media content by sources I cannot identify: 12.70%
- Co-workers: 10.48%
- Educators: 9.84%
- Religious leaders: 5.08%
- Other:
"For COVID-19 news, information and updates, to which of the following sources do you go first?" Egypt, Age Group 30-40, actively using several sources

**Sources for COVID-19 News and Information (Multiple Responses)**

- Actively searching using search sites: 44.58%
- International newspapers, Television and Radio: 43.96%
- Social media content by the World Health Organization (WHO): 42.29%
- National newspapers, Television and Radio: 39.58%
- Social media content by my government: 35.83%
- Social media content by science and health experts: 34.17%
- Social media content by traditional media: 29.38%
- Family: 23.13%
- Friends: 22.29%
- Social media content by friends: 21.95%
- Social media content by family: 20.00%
- Co-workers: 18.54%
- Social media content by sources I cannot identify: 16.25%
- Social media content by celebrities and influencers: 14.79%
- Religious leaders: 4.58%
- Educators: 4.17%
- Other
### Trusted Sources of Information

When it comes to trust in sources, people have different opinions. Please rank the sources based on your level of trust from the list below. (Matrix, Single Response)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Highly trust</th>
<th>Trust</th>
<th>Somewhat trust</th>
<th>Don't trust</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Health Organization (WHO)</td>
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<td>65.79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science and health experts</td>
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<td>My government</td>
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<td>24.34%</td>
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<td>Television</td>
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<td>14.47%</td>
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<td>Newspapers</td>
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<td>15.79%</td>
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<td>Top results on search sites</td>
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<td>Radio</td>
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<td>Educators</td>
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<td>Religious leaders</td>
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<td>Friends</td>
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<td>Alternative movement leaders</td>
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<td>My social media community</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information from messaging Apps</td>
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<td>Co-workers</td>
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<td>World Health Organization (WHO)</td>
<td>47.50%</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Science and health experts</td>
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<td>Family</td>
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<tr>
<td>My government</td>
<td>18.75%</td>
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<td>Television</td>
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<td>Educators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-workers</td>
<td>6.88%</td>
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</table>
• Respondents across the 24 very different countries actively engage with sources, search information and break out of their filter bubbles.

• The sources where they seek first information and the sources they trust are very different!!

• Information seems to be compared: information by WHO and scientists contrasted with national media, hence, degrees of ‘distrust’ in national media.

• Overall, they actively create their own individual crisis narratives!

• Search sites rank highly and constitute important sources. Search sites - not only Google - are influential and result ranking requires attention.
• Everyone can be a communicator - ‘followers’ and ‘Influencer’ - new crisis actors...!
• The ability of social media users to build their own communities of ‘followers’ is an important dimension of today's global crisis communication.

• Individuals are able to take on roles as ‘communicator’ by instantly delivering specific messages, content, videoclips, memes, share their own crisis issues.

• These new dimensions of crisis communication are often highly subjective, relate to what ‘is relevant to me.’
“I most likely share content with my network that ….”
Mexico, Age Group: 18-24

Preferences When Sharing Contents
(Multiple Responses)

- Is scientific: 60.40%
- Is relevant to me: 43.20%
- Includes/is an article: 37.60%
- Is concerning: 32.00%
- Includes/is an infographic: 24.40%
- Includes/is an image: 22.40%
- Creates emotional reaction: 17.20%
- Includes/is a meme: 16.00%
- Includes/is a video: 16.00%
- Has a lot of shares/likes/retweets: 12.80%
- Tells a story: 12.80%
- Is humorous: 2.40%
- Is related to an influencer or celebrity: 8.80%
- Includes/is an audio clip: 5.20%
- I don’t pay attention to COVID-19 content: n/a
- Other: n/a

Questions

I most likely share content with my networks that... Please select all that apply.

When checking COVID-19 content - I pay specific attention to COVID-19 content which... Please select all that apply.
"I most likely share content with my network that ...."
China, Age Group: 18-24

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<thead>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a lot of shares/likes/retweets</td>
<td>29.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes/is a video</td>
<td>26.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes/is an image</td>
<td>25.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes/is an article</td>
<td>25.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tells a story</td>
<td>22.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is humorous</td>
<td>22.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is relevant to me</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is concerning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes/is an audio clip</td>
<td>14.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is related to an influencer or celebrity</td>
<td>13.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't pay attention to COVID-19 content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When checking COVID-19 content - I pay specific attention to COVID-19 content which... Please select all that apply.
"I most likely share content with my network that ...."

Argentina, Age Group: 18-24
Follower communities ...

More than 5000 followers:
• 9% Nigeria
• 7% Morocco
• 7% South Korea
• 6% South Africa, Brazil, Turkey, India
• 5% India
• Average between 100 and 1000
• Health communication strategies should consider different types of messages (from memes to clips) to directly engage.

• Furthermore, the inclusion of influencer to create messages that are targeting not large groups of the population but specific groups of individuals becomes important.
And ...

• suggestions from respondents how communication during the pandemic could be improved .. (open responses)
“How do you think the WHO could improve communication about the COVID crisis?”

• “More information should be available to a wide range of people, for example on social media.”

• “The WHO should buy personal ads to pop up on Facebook and WhatsApp.”

• “Could approach the subject in a lighter way for a young audience.”

• “Share information on more platforms to scale up the social media circle.”

• ”By partnering with national governments to regularly post updated and standardize the approaches taken across the world.”
Thank You

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