

## A Comparative Study of Various Sources of Healthcare Information

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### Abstract

The main purpose of this article is to explore and examine the contributions of various sources of providing information to the people in Pakistani society. These selected sources are PTV, Radio Pakistan, national health workers, newspapers, signboards, doctors, and friends. For examining the roles these sources play, a specific area of public communication campaigns was selected. It was also examined that how much their roles are discriminated on the basis of different demographic characteristics e.g. gender, locality, age, education, and income.

Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, billboards, posters, and pamphlets have been used to inform the public about different health issues (Flay, 1987). Several other forms of communication are used in different societies and situations keeping in view the nature of communication adventure and characteristics of the target audiences. However, the sources of providing information selected for this study are divided into two broad categories for the purpose of exposition:

- i. Mass Communication that includes television, radio, newspapers, and signboards;
- ii. Interpersonal Communication that includes national health workers (formal communication), doctors, and friends (informal communication).

The institutions called *mass media* have two common principal characteristics. The *mass* component means that many diverse receivers are undifferentiated in the message of the source and that the message is created for all. The *media* component indicates the involvement of some mechanical or electronic device between the source of the message and the receiver (Neuendorf, 1990). Media are diverse in nature, inherently variable in the pattern of their ownership, economics, and editorial policies. The only principal feature they all share is that they communicate regularly to a large number of people having different individual psychological context (Jabbar, 1999).