

FLATTENING

MISINFORMATION CURVE

MISINFORMATION CURVE

IN THE

DIGITAL AGE



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## DIGITAL AGE

### Background:

From the origin of evolution & of the human languages, their evolution over eons (encompassing, peoples and the use they make of languages), there has always been a need to communicate - i.e. pass on, exchange, transmit, retract or transact information as a sort of currency for human relationship and management of knowledge - sometimes verbal, non verbal and with modernity written forms.

*The passage/transmission of information in human space required studies for more effective communication. In the middle of all that the Digital Age happened to us all - happen because although we were 'developing' it, we little know how large or or how fast it would be in various forms. Then the **INTERNET** happened to us all!*



## DIGITAL AGE

### Background:

In November 2019 for example, our world received a microscopic, unwelcome visitor - the Corona Virus into our lives. Its arrival (a hitherto unknown entity) gave rise to the COVID19 disease affecting millions on all continents and all nations. It forever changed the norm as we knew it in our societal structure and human information interactions spuriously accelerated.

- An almost perpendicular rise is our information curve since it's gradient goes beyond any curve we've ever seen! All rushing on us with unprecedented impact!



## DEFINITIONS:

### PANDEMIC & INFODEMICS – a current example

Pandemic is an Epidemic (disease spread) beyond the border of one country such as the Covid19 which the WHO declared a global Pandemic in February 2020.

The Pandemic gave rise to the huge, confounding wave of information, which has been declared as Infodemics- generated by fear of the unknown, speculations, as well as various spectrum of information activities resulting in billions and billions of information items on the web, and other sources - formal and informal, new & old!



## DIGITAL AGE

**STATE OF GLOBAL INFORMATION :- an on-going example**

**A quick use of any reputable search engine will provide a mind boggling Tsunami of information**

- 1. I chose Google on 1<sup>st</sup> Sep. Search - 'Journalists' reports on Covid 19'. Result is 564,000,000+(over 564 million in 0.48 seconds) –Journalists' Reports only on the web globally!!!**
- 2. I searched for 'infodemic', The Result is 1,590,000+ (over 1.5 million) in 0.41 seconds on the world wide web!!!!**
- 3. Over 9,740,000,000 (9.74 billion!) in 0.52 minutes courses on Covid-19 – Free!**

**Thanks to the internet our world is a global information village – all of these in swamp a user in under 2 minutes.**

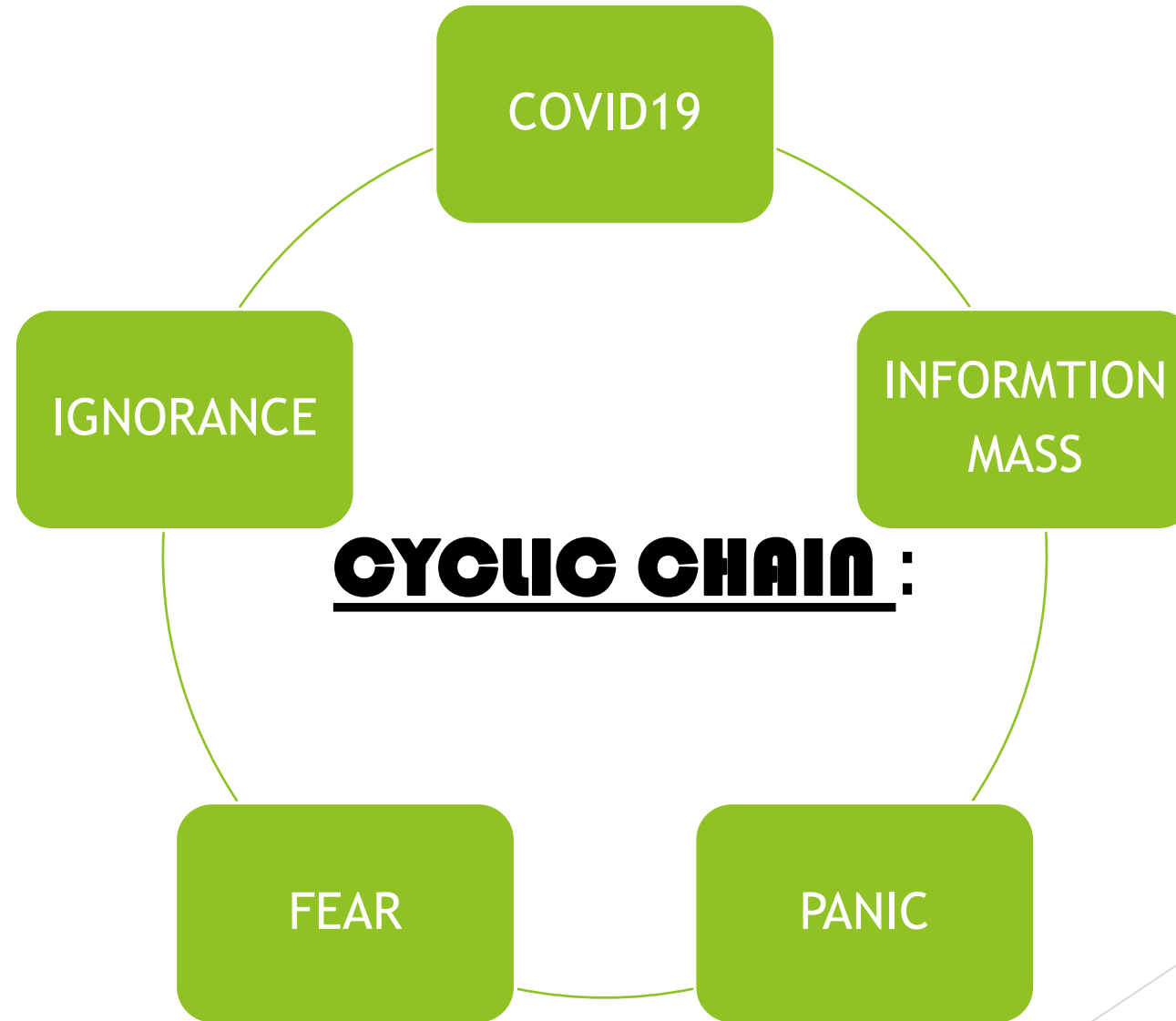
**Over 70% of these information are overloads (infodemic/ infocracy/ infothump) and in most cases damaging to the undiscerning user**

**ISMPPH**

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## EXAMPLE OF DIGITAL AGE INFORMATION OVERLOAD





## DIGITAL AGE CRAZY INFORMATION CURVE

DRIVEN by INFORMATION MASS from multiple sources - over which individuals have limited control - Comprising:

Truths, Scholarly Publications, News,  
Facts

**Fiction**, Lies, Untruths

Myths, Fake News

**Misinformation**, Disinformation

All carefully packaged from various sources esp. SM, Web & Word of Mouth,  
Our world never had it so good and real time too! - But crazy curve



1.

**DRIVEN** by **INFORMATION MASS** from multiple sources - over which individuals **SHOULD** have control -

- Must all be used deliberately, creditably and verifiably - evidence and data driven.

- All these sources must have governance by forces of communication & debunk unreliable news.

- There must be a regular and concerted effort to put out the good stuff first before the unreliable and fake news get out there - consistently





## DIGITAL AGE

### **We have to be Discerning of where we obtain information – Go To Sources**

- We may not be able to cut the volume of information but we can
- Check the veracity of a website
- Check the veracity of information (quality of source)
- Communication outlets are key to shaping perceptions of risks and targeting communities to protect health & lives so please go to mainline media with track record and veracity
- These outlets can minimize rumors and misinformation, helping reduce public anxiety, panic and fears about the Covid threat - in essence helping to flatten the curve



## **What not to quote and where not to go for info**

- ❖ **The social media is a quick source of real time information (admixture of good, bad and the ugly) but not as reliable. On SM everyone is a reporter.**
- ❖ **Websites for sensation and Fake News**
- ❖ **Everyone on Whatapp is a professional “Communicator” – beware of what you pass on**
- ❖ **Personal Opinion of People.**



## FLATTENING THE CURVE IN DIGITAL AGE

### WHY USE COMMUNICATORS FOR THIS INFODEMIC?

- **COVID-19 has spread to most countries with currently no cure or vaccine, information is a vital tool for encouraging people to take the available preventive measures to protect and save lives**
- **Communicators are key to shaping perceptions of risks and targeting communities to protect health & lives – must take responsibility**
- **Communicators can minimize rumors and misinformation, helping reduce public anxiety, panic and fears about the Covid threat (help flatten impact)**
- **Communication sources can disseminate advice and solutions that can help reduce health risks and save people's lives**



## FLATTENING THE CURVE

### How to help **FLATTEN THE CURVE**

- **Communicate/share facts, truthful information on COVID-19 pandemic & the Coordinated response.**
- **Be responsible. Avoid amplifying the voices of misinformation/ fears/confusion/Gossip/Personal Opinions.**
- **Pass on measures that mitigate or help the containment / or the spread of the disease.**
- **Be socially responsible & be seen as such.**
- **Refrain from being sensationalist or alarmist. There is already much fear so the reduction/elimination is our collective goal**
- **Use official, reliable, scientific, truthful & verified sources – PTF, NCDC, WHO, FMoH etc.**
- **Quote scientists, researchers, public health professionals,**



**CONCLUSION: WE CAN ALL HELP FLATTEN THE CURVE AS INFORMATION GATEKEEPERS  
COMMUNICATORS HOLD THE KEY TO FLATTENING THE CURVE BECAUSE WE ARE**



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**INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF MEDIA IN PUBLIC HEALTH  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**