

#Covid-19: The 4 most under-reported stories on coronavirus

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As Covid-19 continues to spread across the globe, and news and social media conversations on the current pandemic continue to rise, much of the information reported on has had to do with the rising number of confirmed cases, the number of deaths and preventive measures that countries have been implementing since the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Covid-19 a global pandemic.

But did you know that since 1 January 2020 to date, there have been 26.1 million news articles, globally, reporting on the coronavirus, but just under 6,000 of those news articles are talking about a possible vaccine? As the global leader in media intelligence, Meltwater not only tracked the most reported on news and social media topics since the start of 2020 but also took a look into the four most under-reported on topics surrounding the coronavirus.

1. How the news is under-reporting on a vaccine

One of the first trending topics to emerge from the coronavirus was a vaccine, or lack thereof, and the potential of a vaccine being created. While governments around the world are working towards treatment for coronavirus, this news isn't making as many headlines globally.

While the process of finding a vaccine began as many parts of the world started to go into self-quarantine, researchers across the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries have started the global race towards making a vaccine, with just over 7,000 news articles mentioning 'research' with 'coronavirus' and 'vaccine', indicating that there is a slightly higher interest in news media on the research that scientists are doing for a vaccine than the actual potential of one being created.

With the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation donating \$100m to help develop a vaccine, news articles are reporting more on this, with over 4,000 news articles already written between 1 March 2020 and 8 April 2020, in comparison to news articles that do not mention the foundation's involvement.

Only on 16 March 2020 did 'research', 'coronavirus' and 'vaccine' gain more media exposure on in the news due to reporting on fake test kits and herbal treatments for the coronavirus.

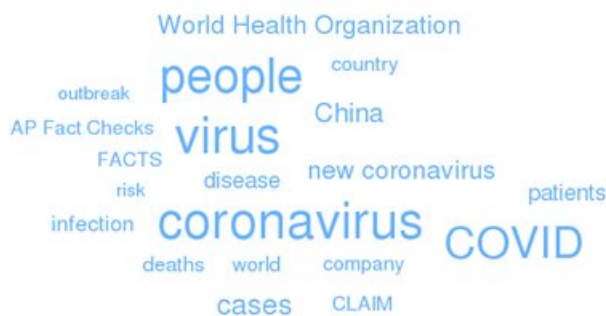


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One of the biggest themes to come out of news media mentions on the 'coronavirus' and 'vaccines' is 'people.' 'People' refers to the impact on citizens of the world that a current lack of a vaccine has, but also what people should do while they wait for a vaccine. While some news articles are reporting that it could take between 12 and 18 months for a successful vaccine to be developed, the human impact in the interim could be devastating, especially from an economic standpoint.



Coronavirus & Vaccine Themes



Global trending themes on 'coronavirus and vaccine' in news media between 1 January 2020 and 8 April 2020

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'AP Fact Check' also emerged as a trending theme for news articles talking about the 'coronavirus' and 'vaccine'. This theme refers to the news articles that are debunking fake news around the coronavirus. Across the globe, there are only 532 news articles that have reported on this since the beginning of the year.

2. The silently positive social media response to a possible vaccine

On social media, there have been over two million mentions of 'coronavirus' and 'vaccine' together, in comparison to the 223 million social media mentions of just the 'coronavirus' since the start of the year.

But when it comes to the general consensus around a vaccine for the coronavirus, social media users don't feel too positive or confident about it, as indicated by the data below. Between January and March, negative feelings have been growing for a vaccine, with 91% of social media mentions in March showing low confidence in the possibility of a vaccine, with social media posts referring to vaccine projects underway as well as better restrictions being a more feasible way of preventing the spread of the virus than a vaccine.

Coronavirus, Vaccine Sentiment

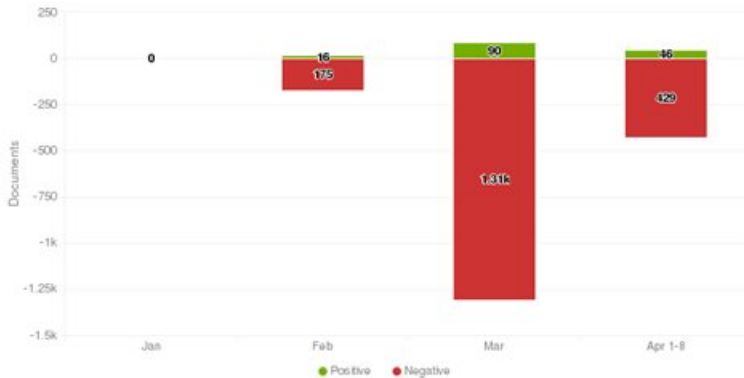


Global sentiment analysis, in numbers on 'coronavirus' and 'vaccine' on social media

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The announcement, in March, however, where the USA signed a \$450m deal with Johnson & Johnson contributed to 94% of all social media mentions on 'coronavirus', 'vaccine' and 'Johnson & Johnson' showing little confidence in the vaccine project.

Coronavirus, Vaccine, J&J



Global sentiment analysis in numbers on 'coronavirus', 'vaccine' and 'Johnson & Johnson' between 1 January 2020 and 8 April 2020

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But despite the overwhelming adversity of a vaccine for the coronavirus, March was the month where social media posts were mostly positive, in comparison to January and February. While there were over 63,000 positive social media posts about a vaccine, and 10 times more were of negative sentiment, social media users are still hopeful that one is possible and well on its way.

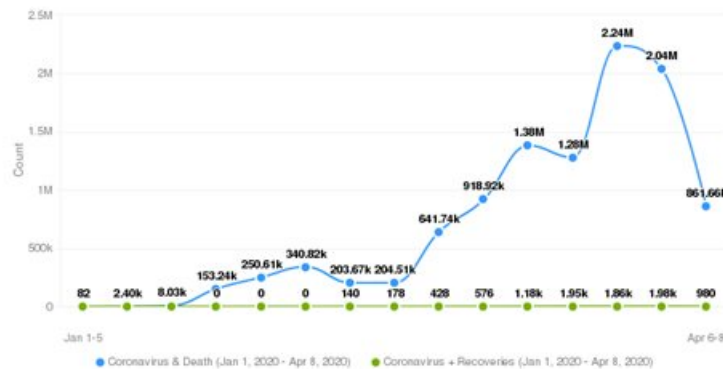
3. Number of recoveries is also under-reported by the media

As the news and social media continues to talk about growing concerns and the impact that the coronavirus has had on society in terms of [restricted border entry](#), [travel bans](#) and [disruptions to the economy](#), there have been far fewer media mentions when it comes to the recoveries that have been made.

With 26.1 million news articles talking about the coronavirus across the globe, just over 5,000 of those news articles have mentioned 'recoveries' in relation to the virus. On social media, while 223 million mentions have been made on the coronavirus, just over 8,000 of those mentions talk about recoveries, compared to the social media mentions that include 'coronavirus' and 'death'.



Media Exposure



Global media exposure on 'coronavirus' and 'death' (blue) and 'coronavirus' and 'recoveries' (green) between 1 January 2020 and 8 April 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

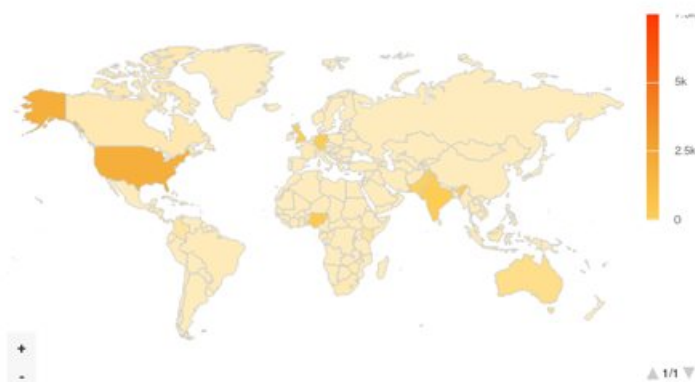
In the news, the USA remains as the number one country for reporting on coronavirus recoveries (53.81%). This is due to news articles reporting on the recoveries of influential people, such as singer Pink and actress Linda Lusardi.

Nigeria and South Africa, respectively at 3.26% and 2.04%, are the top two countries in Africa to do the same, with Nigeria mainly reporting on the discharging of recovered patients, and South African news articles reported on the recovery of Patient Zero (the first person in the country to be infected with the virus) and Netball SA president Cecilia Molokwane.

While social media mentions on the recovery cases have been few, the USA has been the number one country to engage in these conversations online (20.45%) and mentions not just recoveries from the virus, but how economies plan to recover from the pandemic. Nigeria is the number one African country to do so on social media (3.08%), with users sharing their experience of having the virus after recovering from it.



Coronavirus, Recovery Heat Map



[click to enlarge](#)

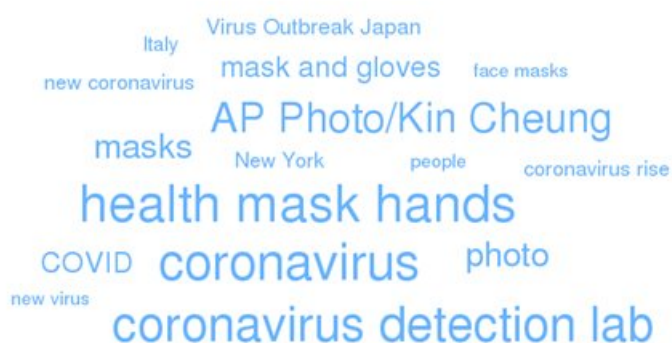
4. The importance of masks as the real influencers is under-reported

The sale of masks has seen a large increase in the wake of the global pandemic. And while it has been talked about in the media as a preventative measure, few news articles talk about how face masks have become a symbol of health in these times.

As one of the trending themes to emerge from 'coronavirus' and 'recoveries', 'face masks', 'mask and gloves' and 'health mask hands' refers to how these items, mainly associated with essential workers, are now playing a big part in preventing the spread of the virus among non-essential workers.

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Coronavirus & Recoveries Theme



Global trending themes in news media mentions on 'coronavirus' and 'recoveries' between 1 January 2020 and 8 April 2020

[click to enlarge](#)

While influencers and celebrities have taken to social media to share posts reacting to the coronavirus and wearing masks, the top social media posters, by reach, to mention 'coronavirus' and 'recovery' are 'Kashmir Today', a Facebook account providing updates on the coronavirus to their online community, and 'MyMeleTOP' on Twitter, a Nigerian-based account that wished Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson a speedy recovery after testing positive for the coronavirus.

With [seven out of 10 people](#) searching for details and information on the coronavirus on a daily basis, the online world has become a valuable source for updates on what is happening in the real world. While the attention around the coronavirus has grown significantly during 2020, other topics of interest have become whispers in the noise surrounding Covid-19.

As researchers continue to look for a vaccine, and the world embraces face masks as a prominent symbol of prevention, the data behind the insights on what has been under-reported on in relation to the coronavirus does provide an opportunity to shed light on what news and social media may not.

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