

Content Analysis of the Reports in Mass Media of Bangladesh on the Issues of Communication Disorders and Autism

Fatima Alam¹ and Md. Zahid Hossain Khan²

¹Senior Lecturer, Proyash Institute of Special Education and Research (PISER) Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP), Dhaka, Bangladesh

²MPhil Researcher, Department of Communication Disorders, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Corresponding Author: Fatima Alam, fatima.alam.du@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Autism, Health promotion, Health awareness, Mass media of Bangladesh

RECEIVED

29 July 2024

ACCEPTED

3 September 2024

PUBLISHED

7 December 2024

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14263211>

ABSTRACT

Mass media is one of the most effective means of disseminating health information. Mass media can create awareness about autism by sharing and disseminating information. In Bangladesh, the press has published various health programs and data for decades. There are precedents of reaching the people of Bangladesh through various social issues through television. Now, the spread of mass media has increased in many ways. The media has many social responsibilities. Various health-related information can be conveyed to the general public in different ways by mass media. The issue of autism can be seen in the media of Bangladesh. Media coverage and dissemination of information on communication disorders and autism are very limited in Bangladesh. Also, various weaknesses can be noticed in creating content and news. This article has tried to find a comparative picture of how communication disorders and autism are presented in Bangladeshi media. It follows a quantitative content analysis method. Several recommendations have been made from the research. Following these recommendations, mass media can play an important role in disseminating various health-related information to everyone in a more effective way.

1. INTRODUCTION

Around the world, mass media has been one of the robust tools of information and entertainment since the 1900s. Due to various tools of mass media, various kinds of daily life-related information reaches ordinary people very quickly. With the help of mass media, regular viewers and readers can quickly get acquainted with the various happenings of the world. Information about political, social, religious, economic, literary, and war is read and consumed through mass media. Mass media plays a significant role in forming and changing information, public opinion, and belief in a knowledge-based society. Mass media is currently an essential means of disseminating health information. Mass media has a substantial role in raising awareness about health issues. Various information related to autism is reaching the general public quickly with the help of mass media. Television and mass media are some of the favourite and accessible media for the large population of a country like Bangladesh.

As we know, health is a fundamental human right. Good health is desirable for every human being for life and livelihood. Mass media needs to give special attention to health and medical issues in Bangladesh. Although there are many studies abroad on health and medical issues in newspapers, there should be more research on this in Bangladesh. Various problems related to autism published in Bangladesh's television and daily media have been the subject of this article. One of mass media's most essential aspects is promoting medical and health-related content. While mass media's nature, style, and environment constantly change, its critical societal role remains intact. People always expect timely, accurate, relevant, and unbiased news or information from the media. They consider mass media to be the primary source of information and rely on it for information.

Similarly, people expect accurate and objective health and medical information from the media. The public and all involved in public health and medical professions consider mass media a powerful means of reaching the general public. Mass media in different countries have played a unique role in positive social change by conveying health information to the people.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mass media is an important social institution in any modern society. Mass media campaigns promote healthy behaviours and discourage unhealthy behaviours. Mass media has become an effective tool for public health practitioners in their efforts to improve public health (Randolph & Viswanath,

2004). It is widely recognized that the influence of mass media on people is immense (Quattrin, 2015). The mass media mainly influences the health practices and perceptions of the general public (Ohaja et al., 2022). Mass media is among the most critical mechanisms of integration into a society and its culture (Viswanath et al., 2021). Media and other channels serve the informational function by providing information. This information has various aspects of health. Promoting awareness and knowledge is one of the core functions of mass media. Effective media campaigns on public health are well-designed messages delivered to their intended audience with sufficient reach and frequency to be seen, heard, and remembered (Abroms & Maibach, 2008). Mass media is people's primary information source. Media like TV news plays essential roles in contributing to public health practice and outcomes (Gollust et al., 2019). Media advocates use mass media in its most potent form to foster a democratic process so that residents and others can participate in the decisions that affect the neighbourhoods, schools, workplaces, and communities that shape their health (Dorfman & Krasnow, 2014). Media advocacy accelerates and amplifies community organizing and policy advocacy. Mass media can easily reach people through various types of communication tools. Mass media directs viewers' attention to various issues. Media makes people aware through the information provided. Many studies have shown that many people depend on newspapers for health information. Policymakers also gather much information through the mass media (Baum & Potter, 2008). Health issues in the media can influence the general public and policymakers.

Through journalism and communication materials, mass media has constantly played the role of an observer in the progress of the state, society, and human civilization with its social commitment to the question of people's right to know information and the responsibility of reporting information in the media (Baum & Potter, 2008). Journalists or media workers also provide modern public health information to make people health conscious. For example, Mass media campaigns can change smoking-related cognitions and prompt quitting behaviour, particularly when combined with other tobacco control efforts (Vallone et al., 2011). Practitioners love to present medical procedures and advancements in the health field to the general public through mass media. In order to make everyone aware of the health rights of the people, journalists expose the health risks, the weak aspects of the health sector, and corruption in the health institutions to the public. Mass media is a system through which various essential issues can be disseminated to the public immediately or within a relatively short period.

Mass media, with various campaigns, have long been a tool for promoting public health (Noar, 2006). In the modern era, media is one of the tools for spreading education, specifically health education. Print media constantly educate people about education, health, religion, politics, entertainment, sports, etc. In the current globalization context, the media's position is at the centre. Globalization of information has created dynamics in the entire context of the world, and the impact of those dynamics is also evident in the mass media. It is said that the media has become the eyes and ears of the existing population of society, and the media is shaping public opinion (Otten, 1992). The mass media decides in front of the people what is good, what is terrible, what is positive, what is harmful, what is acceptable, what is unacceptable, etc. Mass media shapes the thought patterns of individuals. People are forced to walk and think, according to the media. Interest in knowing news is one of the primitive instincts of humans. Modern mass media does not only serve the details of the happenings, but its role is vast and varied. Mass media is the most crucial thing in modern life. The role of mass media in the process of changing socioeconomic conditions is enormous. Just reporting news is now a partial job of mass media. Beyond that, the work is more extensive. Monitoring and observation are crucial for the mass media.

2.1 Media of Bangladesh and health priorities

Many television channels, newspapers, and radio are active in Bangladesh. The mission of the state-controlled Bangladesh Television is to serve information, spread education, and encourage development activities, entertainment content, and cultural elements (Daily Star, 2022). Bangladesh Television broadcasts various programs with essential information about mother and child health. Information and data related to life and health are exchanged with the public through various TV Programs and news (Rahman, 2020). Televisions in Bangladesh also broadcast health programs and news. The mass media, especially television channels, have highlighted the horrors of various public health issues, like dengue, by broadcasting directly from various hospitals in the capital city of Dhaka (Rahman, 2020).

From various Live TV Programs, thousands of people with similar problems get solutions through a question. Apart from this, there is also a discussion program on various issues on every TV channel in Bangladesh. Experts come to discuss various days, including Tobacco Free Day, Mental Health Day, and Cancer Day. There are also health reporters and related experts on various health issues who speak as the stakeholders talk about various issues

through TV news and programs. Health issues predominate among these. Viewers are directly connected with the program. As a result, the patients and the public can speak directly with the doctors. Renowned doctors in the country talk about the symptoms of various diseases and the remedies they offer in these programs.

2.2 Communication Disorders and Autism

According to American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (1993), a communication disorder refers to a difficulty or impairment in a person's ability to receive, transmit, process, or understand information transmitted through a verbal, nonverbal, or graphic symbol system. This inertia can affect many aspects of communication, including a person's hearing, language, and speech. On the other hand, Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental condition. In this condition, a person's ability to communicate and engage in social interaction changes. Significant effects are seen in the ability to exhibit typical human behavioural patterns. (Asperger et al., 1944; Das et al., 2018). From a behavioural perspective, ASD primarily refers to deficits and limitations in social communication and the presence of repetitive behaviours. This trait manifests in individuals in various ways.

3. AIM OF THE RESEARCH

Through this research, we have tried to know how the importance of communication disorders and autism is given in the media of Bangladesh. The current article is a review essay primarily based on information from secondary sources. Data analysis from secondary sources has been considered an essential method in mass communication research. In keeping with the purpose of the present essay, the essay has been structured by analyzing the data obtained from various secondary sources like books, journals, magazines, newspaper reports, and websites.

4. METHOD

This study attempts to examine the quantitative landscape of communication disorders and autism-related news and content across various media platforms in Bangladesh with a view to comprehensively understanding the current situation. A mixed-method approach integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methods was used to ensure a holistic analysis of the

content. Data collection involved a combination of content analysis, structured observation, and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including media professionals and experts in communication disorders and autism. Secondary data sources, such as reports, research papers, and media archives, were also used to gain a deeper contextual understanding of the topic.

Rigorous steps were taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument. For content analysis, a clearly defined coding scheme was developed, piloted, and refined to reduce ambiguity and ensure consistency across different coders. Observations followed a structured format to minimize bias and ensure uniformity in data recording. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to allow flexibility while maintaining a focus on key themes, with a pre-tested interview guide to check for clarity and relevance. In terms of data analysis, quantitative data collected through content analysis was processed using statistical software to identify trends and patterns in media coverage. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize the frequency and nature of autism and communication disorder-related content. In contrast, inferential statistics were used to assess any significant relationships between variables such as media type, content tone, and audience engagement.

4.1 Data collection procedure

Data for the research was collected from January 2020 to December 2021; for the television channels category, information has been collected from Jamuna Television, ATN News, and Channel 24. For daily newspapers, Dainik Prothom Alo and Dainik Jugantar reviewed various news items. Some information was also collected from ColorsFM 101.6 on the radio. Parent interviews were collected via phone calls and a link to a Google Form.

Content Research: A representative sample was used for methodological content analysis. Sources include a wide variety of platforms.

Different television channels: The study selected major national TV channels in Bangladesh based on their variety of broadcast content. These include news channels, entertainment channels, and educational channels.

Radio Stations: Programs and information on FM radio stations broadcasting in the country are analyzed. *Newspapers and Magazines:* Newspapers and

magazines published within Bangladesh's geographical boundaries are analyzed. Various newspaper articles and information are analyzed.

Online News Platforms: Data from online news portals are analyzed to find out the various contents of digital media.

Research-specific variables were analyzed for content and data analysis. The frequency of different coverage, type of media (news report, feature story, editorial, etc.), and type of coverage (positive, negative, neutral) are also investigated in different topics.

Observation

The observational method was used for content analysis for this study. Various methods are used in this work.

Program Monitoring: Television and radio programs are monitored. Events where health and social issues are discussed are observed.

Interview

Interviews are conducted with stakeholders, including journalists, presenters, and producers from various media, healthcare professionals, academics, child rights activists, and parents and guardians of children with autism. The purpose of all interviews was to identify various issues related to the representation of communication disorders and autism in the media.

4.2 Data analysis

Quantitative analysis: Quantitative data from content analysis were analyzed using statistical methods. Frequency analysis is done. Frequency is calculated by understanding the type of information disseminated and published in different media.

Qualitative analysis: Qualitative data from interviews and observations are used for thematic analysis. The analysis is done in Bangladesh's larger social, cultural, and policy context.

Use of secondary data sources: Secondary data sources supplement the primary data. Peer-reviewed journals and articles on communication disorders, autism, and media representations are searched. Various government and private papers are analyzed. Various books, theses, and other literature are collected. A robust methodological framework is developed for the research, which is conducted using mixed methods. It combines quantitative content analysis, qualitative interviews and observations, and secondary data sources.

5. RESULTS

Contents	Jamuna TV	ATN News	Channel 24	Prothom Alo	Jugantor	Colours FM 101.6	Total
News reports on Autism	9	11	8	30	15	-	73
News Reports	146	132	121	-	10	-	409
Feature on Autism	7	8	6	-	9	-	30
Documentary Clip	3	4	8	-	-	-	15
Advertisements	120	100	130	30	25	-	405
Drama	10	0	15	-	-	-	25
Talk show on Autism	5	4	3	-	-	-	12
Talk shows	64	61	36	-	-	-	161
Graphics Presentation	10	15	10	15	10	-	60
Health Show on Autism	4	5	6	-	-	-	15
Health Show	80	85	86	-	-	-	251
Cooking shows	90	40	40	-	-	-	170
Entertainment news programs	80	65	94	-	-	-	239
Fantasy television programs	64	12	121	-	-	-	197
Horror television programs	0	0	36	-	-	-	36
Late-night TV programs	10	56	0	-	-	-	66
Morning television shows	130	10	35	-	-	-	175
Television news magazines	45	78	56	-	-	-	179
Radio Show/Podcast	-	-	-	-	-	48	2518
					Total		5036

Data analysis and results from the mass media:

Table 5.1: Analysis of contents

6. DISCUSSION ON AUTISM IN THE MASS MEDIA OF BANGLADESH

We have looked at various newspapers. We reviewed a variety of content related to news and other presentations. Various issues are directly discussed in various media, including newspapers, radio, and television. We have also noticed that the mentality of disabled children and empathy is not seen very seriously in different news outlets. Reporters directly cover conflicts and daily incidents in different areas for mass media. This news creates an impact on the psychology of disabled children. The media of Bangladesh is not playing an essential role in this regard. We also find that different types of images are used in news presentations. The type of videos and images is very harsh. The mass media do not give the mental issues of children and other disabled people much importance.

6.1 Drama

To know about the representation of children with autism in the media of Bangladesh, we have observed various dramas. Dramas are not presented with an emphasis on disabled people. In many cases, the title and the naming of plays could be better, which harms the psychology of people with disabilities. Different types of dramas on various topics are shown on different televisions. A variety of children's programs are promoted. These are not being made considering the mental development of children and their direction. Also, actors of various levels participate in such programs. Even those who act in plays do not give much importance to the psychology of children or the linguistic aspects of disabled children. We have examined the types of stories used in various dramas. Significantly, few dramas recognize social issues. In many cases, severe illness issues are presented unconsciously. The physical development and mental development of disabled children are not seen to promote drama.

Many types of characters or stories are used in drama productions, negatively affecting children's psychology and their parents. We have analyzed the characters of such dramas. Those who play the characters have yet to learn about child psychology or their mindset. No government institution or social organization organizes training or an awareness program on such issues. There is no direct opportunity for drama actors or directors to get ideas about disabilities and autism in Bangladesh.

We looked at the television programs. Autism or disability is not presented very seriously in such dramas. We notice that different programs are

aired because of different types of stories in different dramas. Nevertheless, in such programs, the issue of disability is not given much importance. Autism is also not given much importance. Although such issues are important in a drama, the issues are presented little from a scientific or clinical point of view. Such dramas are not very popular with the general audience. We are observing the structure of various dramas from YouTube. The crews of such dramas only present or act. Their autism awareness or training is not known.

6.1 Health-related programs on TV

We have seen various health-related programs on television channels in Bangladesh. Various health-related issues are discussed in such programs. Most of the programs are attended by a doctor or specialists. Sometimes, we see disability-related issues. Disability is presented in such programs on various topics. Such programs do not specifically discuss the problems of children with disabilities, their plight, and their health risks. Viewers have the opportunity to participate in such programs. We have seen opportunities for audience participation in programs through various telephone and social media channels. We have noticed that viewers who ask questions tend to ask about pervasive problems. Children and family members with disabilities do not effectively participate in such programs. We did not see any background or detailed discussion of the various questions on disability.

6.2 Live television program

In live televised health programs, doctors give various pieces of advice. They provide advice on various medical services and other matters. The questions from the general public are few, and doctors answer only some of them. General practitioners regularly participate in such programs. General viewers do not ask any questions about disabilities. Disabilities are rarely discussed in health programs. Common queries about such programs are discussed. Disability issues are discussed on special days. Most of the time, the general audience questions are at the elementary level. On average, specialist doctors give general advice. Different audiences often participate in television programs, but no special awareness programs are broadcast. We have searched various magazines and found that the issue of disability is discussed in magazines, but the prevalence is very low.

6.3 Advertisement

We see 350 television advertisements and 55 newspaper advertisements. These advertisements have a direct negative impact on child psychology. Various products are advertised for children. We have not seen any presence of disabled children. Such advertisements use catchy lines to attract readers and viewers. In many cases, disrespecting children or their emotional state is not taken very seriously.

6.4 Newspaper health reports

Articles on disability are published in specific health pages of newspapers. However, there are very few articles and news about children with autism. Specialized doctors write such articles. Disability issues are not addressed seriously. In this case, ordinary readers and ordinary people do not pay much attention or interest to the articles and news of the newspaper. The health section of the newspaper deals specifically with various typical problems. Newspapers published various columns and opinions. We notice that doctors' writings are being published on special days. The number of writings on disability is deficient. Some extraordinary writings are being published by connecting the parents to the mental development of disabled children. The type of writing that is published chiefly focuses on general issues. There is a crisis in publishing. Newspapers publish more articles on ordinary people's diseases and mental health. We see those writings present a common theme of more obstacles.

6.5 Newspaper special editions

On national disability days or special days, we only see particular pages in newspapers. Various articles are published on the occasion of Autism Awareness Day. Experts write such features and reports. In most cases, the texts are typically written. Through this type of writing, there would be an opportunity to convey general information to the reader. Much has been written about developing relationships between parents and their children. There is no discussion of language development strategies for children with disabilities. The mental and socio-economic security of disabled children is not present at all.

In most cases, news and features about the success of various government initiatives and the role of various social institutions are being published. We have searched various texts. In most cases, reports are written for

general purposes. These texts are not explicitly published for children with disabilities or their parents. In many cases, pictures of disabled children are printed in newspapers. There is no particular policy in the media of Bangladesh for printing pictures of such children. Although other regular articles on health issues are published in newspapers and magazines, we do not see much writing about various disabilities-related problems. The human side of disabled children and parents of disabled children is often overlooked. There is little interest among the general reader in writing about autism.

6.6 Program-oriented TV channels

We find news and documentaries on disability. In such programs, we rarely see children with autism. Programs do not provide important information about disabilities. The programs do not promote autism information. In our observation, we learned that the language used in such programs is unsuitable for children or parents. By observing various programs, we find that the type of music used in the program is unsuitable for children with disabilities. Also, the type of graphic animation used in the program does not give much importance to the handicap issue. We have also noticed presentations of murders, politics, or social problems in various programs. The kind of state or social crisis that is shown is not child-friendly. Television often broadcasts much news that negatively impacts children's psychology. There is no child psychology or gender sensitivity in television news presentations and reporting. We have also noticed no presentations on social behavior or how to build social relationships in the programs.

6.7 Television news

The type of news broadcast on television does not regularly broadcast any news that focuses on autism. We watch various health news on television. Such news sometimes attempts to present topics related to autism. Most of the time, issues related to the public interest are given importance. No particular health programs are offered to or for children with autism. Some programs are presented on Autism Day or any national day. We have observed shallow engagement of the general audience in such news. Autism issues are not regularly presented on television. In very few cases, programs are being promoted with such activities.

In most cases, various government activities and social issues are highlighted in such programs. Care of autistic children and various social issues related to language education of autistic children are not given much importance. We see little importance given to scientific and medical matters.

6.8 Graphical representation

The kind of graphical presentation on television contains no information about disabilities. We took a look at some of the television graphics and animations. No such information appeared to be presented. Autistic children's upbringing, different ways of living for them, or different aspects of developing their language skills can be said to be completely absent.

6.10 Comedy show

We watched various shows on television. Comedy programs do not feature any disability issues or documentaries. Comedians provide awareness on many topics. Many topics are discussed, attracting the attention of the general audience. For people with disabilities, there is not much to say about such things. People with language impairments, including autism, are often overlooked in presentations. We found no image of autism awareness or empathy among comedians.

6.11 Animation

We took a look at a few animation shows. No representation of children with autism was observed in television cartoons or animation-based programs. We did not see any image for the awareness of parents or social institutions of autistic children. Social issues have yet to be seen as necessary in animated television series. We observed no positive representation of children with autism or disabilities in animated television series.

6.12 Documentary

We found no documentaries for children with autism in children's television programs. Televisions are indifferent in this regard. We have not found any information or incidents related to the representation of autistic children in children's dramas or their lives. We have not seen any representation of autistic children at various award ceremonies. There is no television

information or television presentation about autism programs or documentaries to inform parents.

6.13 Cooking programs and game show

We did not see the presentation of children with autism in different cooking shows. Such TV programs could not contain information related to their nutrition or lifestyle. We have seen different types of game show presentations. There is no opportunity for the physically challenged to participate in these programs. Autistic children are absent from such programs. Such programs did not appear to present any awareness information for autistic children. Entertainment news programs do not feature news documentaries about children with autism. We do not see much representation of childhood disability autism in television programs.

6.14 Morning breakfast shows

Television broadcasts various morning programs. We do not see the opportunity to promote programs about children with autism very seriously. Two television shows of Jamuna Television celebrate the success of people involved in various works on autism on a special day. Reports on autism or the daily lives of autistic children are not regularly disseminated. No information that children need to be aware of for their emotional development is seen to be thoughtfully disseminated in such programs. The types of songs played in various music videos do not pay much attention to the representation of children with autism or their lives. Disability is not presented very seriously in various discussion forums.

The condition of such programs is very weak. Autism is not presented very seriously in various reality television shows. Such shows do not present any information for the audience to raise awareness of issues such as physical disabilities. No disability-related information or social awareness programs are being presented especially. There is no regular news presentation or information about people with disabilities in various technology-related programs. Science-based TV programs do not seem to present the fundamentals of children with autism from a scientific perspective. Various educational programs do not seem to promote information about autism. We do not get any information to educate parents of children with autism. Such programs do not convey information to promote children's psychological and linguistic development. Such programs reveal little about the issues of educating children in special education. We

observe various sports news and programs. Autistic children are not given much opportunity or participation in these programs. While typical children are presented with various programs, special children are absent. Children's parents are not allowed to participate in such programs.

6.15 Documentaries

Various documentaries are aired on the occasion of the special day. Documentaries on disability are not broadcast regularly. If there is any government initiative or project, then unique documentaries are aired. Documentaries are not made suitable for children. More and more different activities, different project introductions, and achievements are highlighted. Such documentaries feature various experts. They take the issue of autism as a whole. Steps for autistic children and awareness of parents are not much noticed. Autism programs are not widely seen on television in Bangladesh. On special days of the year, only a few programs based on the discussion are seen. In such programs, various issues of state policy and society are highlighted. Sometimes, parents of autistic children participate in these programs. Rather than listening to their experiences, they discuss general issues. Success stories and news are widely publicized at the event. Television programs air documentaries on autistic children from time to time. During these campaigns, construction can be observed from a scientific point of view.

6.16 Children program

Also, children's TV programs and magazines do not promote any particular program about children with disabilities and autism. We have analyzed various programs related to children. In general, children's mental health development is emphasized on various issues. These programs do not have many opportunities to attract the attention of children with disabilities. We have experimentally observed Bangladesh Television's Moner Kotha (in English: Mind Talk) and Sisimpur program. Although there are two children's programs, there is no direct discussion of disability issues and children with autism in such places. Various educational awareness topics were presented in the Sisimpur program. No specific information is published specifically for children with autism. Parents feel that there needs to be more consistency in the type of children's programs broadcast on private television.

Children's mental health and lifestyle programs are almost nonexistent. Apart from this, the children's entertainment centre broadcasts various television

programs. Children with disabilities and children with autism can participate in many programs. Due to various reasons, programs are only made by connecting some of these children. More training is needed for people involved in such programs. They lack the technical skills and training to create programs for children with disabilities and autism. The conventional training provided is of average quality. It can be said that the issue of child disability is not represented in the media of Bangladesh. Sign language is rarely used in the news. Special news coverage of people with disabilities is rare. There are hardly any news reports specifically for autistic children.

6.17 Music

The type of music presented on television is very important to children's disabilities. The topic of autism is absent in musical programs. Almost no music is explicitly presented for autistic children. No such work can be noticed in the music industry of Bangladesh to make children aware or to increase their interest. Children's disabilities are not included in the songs broadcast on various radio stations. Some songs are broadcast on television at different times of the year to create social awareness. Songs attract little attention from parents and teachers. Such songs attract little attention. It can be said that no music practice attracts children with disabilities to the music industry of Bangladesh. Musicians or the media do not seem to be doing anything to attract children with autism.

6.18 Radio show

Radio stations in Bangladesh do not have regular programs about children and disabled people. All available programs are effective mental health programs. General information is disseminated through these programs. In such programs, psychologists offer advice on their interests—those who participate present common problems. Various topics are presented through discussion. There are no regular radio programs about children with autism. Also, in such programs, there is an opportunity to reveal the audience's identity. Parents of autistic children are socially intimidated to participate in these programs. Such programs effectively convey is not well-researched. Those participating in this radio program discuss everyday problems and crises more. Children with autism and their parents do not have the opportunity to discuss their social and

emotional development. Even those who participate as experts in such programs do not discuss autism much. Parents are often afraid to call or connect to such programs due to the disclosure of the child's identity. Parents are afraid to discuss various issues on live radio shows. There is a social crisis in Bangladesh with children's disabilities. Therefore, parents do not want to use the opportunity to discuss their children socially. We have observed this matter seriously by observing various television programs in Bangladesh.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing the research data, we submit the following recommendations:

- Language usage is most important in news reporting. Media should be more sensitive and responsible when using language. Training in gender and media research for journalists is essential.
- Emphasis should be placed on regular programs and news dissemination on autism. News and programs should be promoted, emphasizing the participation of children with autism, children's families, and teachers.
- Journalists and media personnel should receive basic and awareness training on autism-related topics. The media should publish regular reports and programs on the challenges faced by people with disabilities, including children with autism. Expert reports and features on awareness raising should be promoted.
- To disseminate newspapers and TV reports on skills, services, support providers, and various facilities available to children with autism and their families.
- Reports on opportunities for health, education, food, shelter, employment, and skill development should be disseminated.
- Information on support and services should be disseminated regularly. Children and individuals with autism and their families need to ensure they get the information from the media.
- Children with autism cannot be labelled 'disabled' or 'mentally' in the media. Programs should be promoted to raise awareness about negative stereotypes or myths. Journalists and media should be sensitive when using the terms "disorder," "disability," "abnormality," and "special" to describe the nature of disability in the media.
- Journalism studies and research in universities should create opportunities for students and researchers to study the sensitivity of

children with autism. Different activities of disabled people, their social status, rights, etc., should be regularly presented before society. Documentaries should be disseminated on behavior or manners towards persons with disabilities, their unrestricted movement, assistive systems, and accessibility.

- Emphasis should be placed on creating family awareness about the education of children with disabilities in media. Initiatives can be taken to arrange Bengali sign language in various TV programs for disabled people. The accommodation of disabled people in their lifestyles should be provided by regular news and programs.
- Mass media can play an essential role in creating awareness about accessibility ramps or ramps for physically challenged people, disabled-friendly toilets, braille or tactile for visually impaired people, etc. Programs can also be created for a comprehensive campaign to ensure that engineers keep accessibility management in mind for people with disabilities in the country's architecture, infrastructure, and construction.
- Expert advice should be disseminated regularly over media. Media should promote what special arrangements can be made for child entertainment. The newspaper could publish special issues in the journal 'Autism Treatment' or 'Autism Care'.

8. CONCLUSION

Autism and other communication disorders are related to neurological disorders affecting how an individual communicates and interacts. It is essential for the media to accurately and sensitively portray communication disorders-related issues and autism to raise awareness and understanding among the general public. In Bangladesh, there is a lack of awareness and understanding about autism, which leads to stigmatization and discrimination against individuals with autism and their families. By featuring communication disorders and autism-related content in the media, Bangladesh can work towards creating a more inclusive and supportive society for individuals with communication disorders and autism. Wholly the media can promote acceptance and understanding of autism by featuring stories and experiences of individuals with autism and their families. This can help to humanize and personalize the issue and encourage empathy and support among the general public. Overall, the media in Bangladesh needs to priorities communication disorders and autism-

related content to raise awareness and understanding of this condition and create a more inclusive and supportive society for individuals with autism and their families.

REFERENCES

- Abroms, L. C., & Maibach, E. W. (2008). The Effectiveness of Mass Communication to Change Public Behavior. *Annual Review of Public Health, 29*(1), 219–234. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.29.020907.090824>
- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (1993). *Definitions of communication disorders and variations* [Relevant Paper]. Available from www.asha.org/policy.
- Baum, M. A., & Potter, P. B. K. (2008). The Relationships Between Mass Media, Public Opinion, and Foreign Policy: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis. *Annual Review of Political Science, 11*(1), 39–65. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.060406.214132>
- Daily Star. (2022, September 20). *Mental Health: The Role of Media*. The Daily Star; The Daily Star. <https://www.thedailystar.net/roundtables/news/mental-health-the-role-media-3123506>
- Dorfman, L., & Krasnow, I. D. (2014). Public Health and Media Advocacy. *Annual Review of Public Health, 35*(1), 293–306. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-032013-182503>
- Gollust, S. E., Fowler, E. F., & Niederdeppe, J. (2019). Television News Coverage of Public Health Issues and Implications for Public Health Policy and Practice. *Annual Review of Public Health, 40*(1), 167–185. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-040218-044017>
- Noar, S. M. (2006). A 10-Year Retrospective of Research in Health Mass Media Campaigns: Where Do We Go From Here? *Journal of Health Communication, 11*(1), 21–42. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730500461059>
- Ohaja, M., Senkyire, E. K., Ewetan, O., Asiedua, E., & Azuh, D. (2022). A narrative literature review on media and maternal health in Africa. *World Medical & Health Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wmh3.546>
- Otten, A. L. (1992). The Influence of the Mass Media on Health Policy. *Health Affairs, 11*(4), 111–118. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.11.4.111>

- Quattrin, R. (2015). Health Promotion Campaigns and Mass Media: Looking for Evidence. *Primary Health Care: Open Access*, 05(01). <https://doi.org/10.4172/2167-1079.1000190>
- Rahman, R. (2020, October 11). *Changing media behaviour and role of media: Impacts and Challenges*. The Daily Star. <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/news/changing-media-behaviour-and-role-media-impacts-and-challenges-1975857>
- Ramanadhan, S., & Viswanath, K. (2006). Health and the Information Nonseeker: A Profile. *Health Communication*, 20(2), 131–139. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327027hc2002_4
- Randolph, W., & Viswanath, K. (2004). Lessons Learned from Public Health Mass Media Campaigns: Marketing Health in a Crowded Media World. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 25(1), 419–437. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.25.101802.123046>
- Shamilishvili, G. (2019). Psychological influence of modern mass media on formation of gender stereotypes. *Economics Ecology Socium*, 3(2), 71–76. <https://doi.org/10.31520/2616-7107/2019.3.2-8>
- Vallone, D. M., Duke, J. C., Cullen, J., McCausland, K. L., & Allen, J. A. (2011). Evaluation of EX: A National Mass Media Smoking Cessation Campaign. *American Journal of Public Health*, 101(2), 302–309. <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2009.190454>
- Viswanath, K., Ramanadhan, S., & Kontos, E. Z. (2021). Mass Media. *Macrosocial Determinants of Population Health*, 275–294. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-70812-6_13