

## Rise in Public Interest in COVID-19 Symptoms and the Need for Proper Information: Insights from the Google Trends Analysis

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**Abstract :** The first case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) in Pakistan was recorded on February 26th, 2020. While the country went through various phases of lockdowns, the importance of proper sensitization campaigns was highlighted by healthcare workers to combat misinformation. Past studies via Google trends analysis have shown a rise in public interest in multiple COVID-19-related symptoms as well as cardiovascular symptoms. As there is a paucity of data related to the trends in Pakistan, we conducted a retrospective analysis to bridge further information. **Methods:** As per the recommendations from past studies, a Google trend analysis was conducted for various symptoms, including 'Fever', 'Chest Pain', 'Shortness of Breath', and 'Cough' between 1st January 2019 to 31st December 2021. The trends in various search results were analyzed and modeled. **Results:** Our analysis found various rises in public interest in the various symptoms (fever, chest pain, shortness of breath, and cough) that correspond closely to the wave of the virus's spread in the country. **Conclusion:** Our study confirms similar trends in Pakistan as previously reported in studies from India, USA, and UK, whereby the public interest in various COVID-19 symptoms rose with the number of cases. This further highlights the need for a strong approach to combat misinformation during such a critical period.

**Keywords :** covid, trend, Pakistan, public

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