

Setting the Agenda in Communication About the COVID-19 Pandemic on Facebook in Vietnam

<https://doi.org/10.25008/jkiski.v9i2.1164>

**Nguyen Tan Khang^{1*}, Nguyen Van Tuong¹,
Dang Thi Mai Ly², Nguyen Hoang Anh Thu¹**

¹VNUHCM-University of Social Sciences and Humanities

No. 10-12 Dinh Tien Hoang, Ben Nghe Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City –Vietnam

²Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics and Finance

141-145, Điện Biên Phủ, Phường 15, Bình Thạnh, Hồ Chí Minh - Vietnam

Submitted: November 19, 2023, **Revised:** July 21, 2024, **Accepted:** December 15, 2024

Accredited by Kemdikbudristek No. 152/E/KPT/2023

Abstract - The study utilizes research methods including document analysis, questionnaire surveys, and statistical data processing to examine the reception of information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic during the social distancing period from May 2021 to October 2021 among students of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City. Through this study, it is observed that the Vietnamese government has directed its efforts towards disseminating information about the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing a public consultation program on the Facebook social media platform, one of the most widely used platforms in Vietnam. Additionally, the study applies the Theory of Agenda-Setting to retrospectively examine how governmental agencies and media outlets have persuaded the public and students regarding COVID-19-related issues during the social distancing period through a well-structured public consultation program.

Keywords: Access to Information, Public Consultation Programs, Media Establishment, Pandemic Communication, Awareness

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed the lives of over 6.5 million people and infected more than 600 million people worldwide (According to WHO, September 11, 2022). In Vietnam alone, there have been four outbreaks with a minimum total of 43,000 deaths and over 11.4 million cases (Ministry of Health's COVID-19 information portal). However, Vietnam remains one of the countries with effective pandemic control campaigns. Part of this success can be attributed to the COVID-19 communication campaigns on various mass media platforms throughout the period since the outbreak emerged in late 2019.

Facebook is one of the mass media channels used by both government agencies and individuals throughout the pandemic. Facebook has played a significant role in disseminating messages that help government agencies and citizens collaborate to combat COVID-19. Among them, students are a target audience frequently exposed to information about the COVID-19 pandemic on Facebook.

Therefore, we conducted a study to determine the reality of students' access to information about the COVID-19 pandemic and examined it from the perspective of the Theory of Setting the Agenda. From there, we observed the communication methods used to establish agenda-setting programs on the Facebook social media platform in Vietnam during the COVID-19 pandemic, aiming to collectively

prevent and push back the COVID-19 pandemic – a matter related to the safety and well-being of every individual's life.

Theoretical Framework

Information and Information Classification

According to Nguyen Van Ha, there are three ways to understand information: First, "information is the act of transmitting, delivering news from organizations or individuals to others and usually occurs unidirectionally, from the sending entity to the receiving entity... Announcements, directives, and resolutions of the government disseminated to lower levels and citizens are considered information activities." (Nguyen Van Ha, 2022). Second, "information is the content of the message transmitted and delivered between the sending entity and the receiving entity" (Nguyen Van Ha, 2022). Third, information is the object, means, and material of journalistic activities... Here, information means news" (Nguyen Van Ha, 2022).

Regarding information about the COVID-19 pandemic on Facebook mentioned in this study, it can be understood according to the first and third classifications mentioned above.

Facebook Social Network

According to the online Oxford dictionary, "a social network is a website or application for social interaction, where users can add information, messages, images, etc., and communicate with each other." Article 22, Clause 3, Decree No. 72/2013/ND-CP on the Management, Provision, Use of Internet Services, and Information on the Network issued by the Government of Vietnam on July 15, 2013 explains: "Social network is an information system providing network users with storage, provision, use, search, sharing, and exchange of information services, including services creating personal web pages, forums, online chats, sharing audio, images, and similar services."

Facebook was founded in February 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg and his colleagues Andrew McCollum and Eduardo Saverin. Over the past 18 years of formation and development, Facebook has become one of the social networks with the highest number of users worldwide.

Therefore, considering the definitions above, Facebook meets the criteria of a social network with a wide range of features that enable users to interact and communicate with each other through the Internet environment.

Agenda-Setting Theory

The foundation of the Agenda-Setting theory is the result of the research conducted by author Walter Lippmann in his book "Public Opinion" published in 1922. Walter Lippmann "pointed out that people tend to focus on certain issues and do not have enough time and capacity to pay attention to all issues in society" (Pham Hai Chung, editor, 2019).

Based on that, two researchers, Maxwell McCombs E. and Donald Shaw, inherited, developed, and established the Agenda-Setting theory in 1972.

"The Agenda-Setting theory describes the strong influence of the media in establishing the importance of information sent to the public. According to this theory, the public's level of interest in social issues mainly stems from the frequency and intensity of media coverage" (Pham Hai Chung, editor, 2019).

Typical examples of this theory are the U.S. presidential elections that took place in the historical years of 1968, 2008, and 2016. In 1987, Iyengar and Kinder proposed a hypothesis about the Agenda-Setting theory stating that: Issues prominently covered in national news become issues that the public perceives as the most important for the country.

"In summary, the Agenda-Setting theory asserts that the mass media has the power to increase the perceived importance of issues and events by the audience. They enhance the prominence of issues or create easy reception from the public. Typically, issues that receive more priority and media coverage are more likely to become news that the public cares about because they are considered important and noteworthy" (Pham Hai Chung, editor, 2019).

In this study, we will arrange the order from high to low based on the public's level of interest in each type of information to determine whether or not an "agenda-setting program" is established through mass media on the Facebook social media platform.

Material and Methodology

This study employs several research methods, including document analysis, survey questionnaires, and statistical data analysis.

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities, with a sample size of 506 regular students selected using a simple random sampling method according to the formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+N*e^2)}$$

In which:

n is the sample size to be calculated;

N is the population size (total);

e is the desired margin of error [calculated as a percentage using the formula (1 - assumed confidence level)]. Here, we chose a 95% confidence level, corresponding to a desired margin of error of 5%. Applying the formula, we have $e = 1 - 95\% = 0.05$.

According to the statistical data provided by the Student Affairs Office for the academic year 2021-2022, the total number of regular students enrolled at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities, from the first to the fourth year is 11,344 students. Applying the formula, we have an estimated sample size of approximately 386 participants. The study conducted a random online survey and obtained 525 responses, of which 506 responses were valid, surpassing the targeted sample size for the survey.

Result and Discussion

The current status of receiving information about the COVID-19 pandemic on Facebook among students

Through the survey and analysis process, we classified information about the COVID-19 pandemic on the social media platform Facebook into 18 categories and divided them into 2 groups based on the categorization by Pham Huy Ky, Do Thi Thu Hang, and colleagues, including the group of "open social news" and the group of "state management support information" (Pham Huy Ky, Do Thi Thu Hang, and colleagues, 2019). (Table 1)

Table 1. Groups of information about the COVID-19 pandemic appearing on Facebook

No.	Content of the information	Date of issuance/publication	Information category
1	Information about the daily number of SARS-CoV-2 virus infections.	Daily during the pandemic	
2	Information about the daily number of deaths related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus.	Daily during the pandemic	
3	Information about the daily number of SARS-CoV-2 virus recoveries.	Daily during the pandemic	
4	Urgent information regarding the search for individuals who have been to locations with confirmed COVID-19 cases, as well as the travel itineraries of infected individuals (F0).	Daily during the pandemic	Open social news
5	Information related to the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, such as the immunization rate and vaccine-related complications.	According to the announcement of the Ministry of Health during the pandemic	

6	Information related to widespread COVID-19 testing.	Daily during the pandemic	
7	Information related to post-COVID-19 health issues.	Daily during the pandemic	
8	Information related to the provision of essential food and supplies during social isolation and extended periods of lockdown.	Daily during the pandemic	
9	Information about overwhelmed healthcare systems during the peak of the pandemic.	According to the announcement of the Ministry of Health during the pandemic	
10	Information related to the prioritized vaccination campaigns against COVID-19.	Daily during the pandemic	
11	Information related to Government Directive 15, including restrictions on public gatherings, maintaining a 2-meter distance, limitations on inter-regional travel, and temporary closure of non-essential businesses.	27/3/2020	
12	Information related to Government Directive 16, including social distancing measures, restrictions on public gatherings (no more than 2 people), maintaining a 2-meter distance, suspension of inter-regional travel except for essential purposes, and temporary closure of non-essential businesses.	27/3/2020	
13	Information related to Government Directive 19, including restrictions on crowded public gatherings, suspension of festivals, religious rituals, and sports events, maintaining a minimum distance of 1 meter, and temporary closure of entertainment venues, karaoke, massage parlors, bars, clubs, and beauty salons.	24/4/2020	Government support and management information
14	Information related to the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee Directive 10, including restrictions on public gatherings (no more than 3 people), maintaining a minimum distance of 1.5 meters, suspension of non-essential businesses and spontaneous markets, and suspension of public passenger transportation.	19/6/2021	
15	Information related to the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee Directive 18, including the conditional reopening of service businesses, use	30/9/2021	

	of QR codes for domestic travel declaration, gradual restoration and development of socio-economic activities, etc.	
16	Information related to the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee Directive 12, including quarantine measures, containment of the spread of the disease, maintenance, and expansion of safe zones, and strict control at entry and exit points of the city.	22/7/2021
17	Information related to establishing and protecting "green zones" in various localities.	Daily, according to the situation of the pandemic and the guidance of the authorities
18	Information related to the use of travel permits, apps for reporting population movements, and health declarations when traveling during periods of social distancing.	Daily, according to the policies of each period during the pandemic

From the information groups above, we conducted a survey on the level of information accessibility among students of the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City National University. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the ratios, average scores, and standard deviations of the information related to the COVID-19 pandemic accessed by students on Facebook

No.	Indicative signs	Level of choice					Mean score	Standard deviation
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always		
1	Open social news						3.7927	.74515
1.1	Information about the daily number of SARS-CoV-2 virus infections.	9	16	125	198	158	3.949	.9192
1.2	Information about the daily number of deaths related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus.	8	35	131	182	150	3.852	.9768
1.3	Information about the daily number of SARS-CoV-2 virus recoveries.	8	31	141	200	126	3.800	.9364
1.4	Urgent information regarding the search for individuals who have been to locations with confirmed COVID-19 cases, as well as the travel itineraries of	9	65	139	179	114	3.640	1.0230

No.	Indicative signs	Level of choice					Mean score	Standard deviation
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always		
	infected individuals (F0).							
1.5	Information related to the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, such as the immunization rate and vaccine-related complications.	5	38	133	208	122	3.798	.9243
		1.0	7.5	26.3	41.1	24.1		
1.6	Information related to widespread COVID-19 testing.	10	43	156	186	111	3.682	.9727
		2.0	8.5	30.8	36.8	21.9		
1.7	Information related to post-COVID-19 health issues.	6	33	137	206	124	3.808	.9210
		1.2	6.5	27.1	40.7	24.5		
1.8	Information related to the provision of essential food and supplies during social isolation and extended periods of lockdown.	14	31	147	198	116	3.733	.9719
		2.8	6.1	29.1	39.1	22.9		
1.9	Information about overwhelmed healthcare systems during the peak of the pandemic.	6	40	145	205	110	3.737	.9271
		1.2	7.9	28.7	40.5	21.7		
1.10	Information related to the prioritized vaccination campaigns against COVID-19.	8	31	115	188	164	3.927	.9671
		1.6	6.1	22.7	37.2	32.4		
2	Government support and management information						3.7740	.77468
2.1	Information related to Directive 15 of the Prime Minister, including: no gathering of more than 10 people in public places, maintaining a 2-meter distance, restricting travel between localities, temporary suspension of non-essential business services except for essential services.	5	20	126	210	145	3.929	.8827
		1.0	4.0	24.9	41.5	28.7		

No.	Indicative signs	Level of choice					Mean score	Standard deviation
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always		
2.2	Information related to Directive 16 of the Prime Minister, including: social distancing measures, no gathering of more than 2 people in public places, maintaining a 2-meter distance, suspending inter-provincial travel except for necessary cases, temporary suspension of non-essential business services except for essential services.	6	25	124	214	137	3.891	.9000
2.3	Information related to Directive 19 of the Prime Minister, including: avoiding crowded gatherings in public places, suspending festivals, religious ceremonies, sports events, maintaining a minimum distance of 1 meter, temporary suspension of entertainment venues, karaoke, massage, bars, nightclubs, beauty establishments.	3	31	137	213	122	3.830	.8848
2.4	Information related to Directive 10 of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, including: no gathering of more than 3 people in public places, maintaining a minimum distance of 1.5 meters, suspending non-essential	9	42	160	191	104	3.670	.9522

No.	Indicative signs	Level of choice					Mean score	Standard deviation
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always		
	businesses and spontaneous markets, suspending public passenger transportation.							
2.5	Information related to Directive 18 of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, including: conditional reopening of service businesses, using QR codes for local travel declaration, gradual recovery and development of socio-economic activities, etc.	9	46	157	198	96	3.644	.9481
2.6	Information related to Directive 12 of the Ho Chi Minh City Party Committee, including: lockdown measures, controlling the spread of the disease, maintaining and expanding safe zones, controlling the spread of high-risk areas through "individuals isolating from each other, families isolating from each other," tightening checkpoints at entry and exit points of Ho Chi Minh City.	10	47	152	202	95	3.642	.9547
2.7	Information related to the establishment and protection of "green zones" in localities.	8	42	132	199	125	3.773	.9656
2.8		3	35	134	216	118	3.812	.8913

No.	Indicative signs	Level of choice					Mean score	Standard deviation
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always		
	Information related to the use of travel permits, apps for reporting population movement, health declarations when traveling during the social distancing period.	.6	6.9	26.5	42.7	23.3		
Total							3.7833	.63731

The results in Table 2 show that most students self-assessed their level of access to COVID-19-related information as "frequent" with an average score of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.63. Among them, the level of access to information in the Open Social News Information Group (N1) was more frequent compared to the Support Group for Government Management Information (N2) with average scores and standard deviations as follows: Mean Score (N1) = 3.79; Standard Deviation (N1) = 0.74 and Mean Score (N2) = 3.77; Standard Deviation (N2) = 0.77.

The statistical results also indicate that for the Open Social News Information Group, most students had a relatively frequent level of access to information within this group, with a total percentage of access falling into the categories of "frequent" and "always" being above 50%. There was a high similarity in the data among the types of information within the Open Social News Information Group, with a standard deviation below 1.0 at 0.74515. Only the "Urgent information on locating people who have come into contact with F0 cases, and the travel itinerary of F0 cases" had a standard deviation above 1.0 at 1.0230.

In the open news information group, most students accessed COVID-19-related information on the social media platform Facebook at a less frequent level, including: "Information about the overloaded healthcare system during the intense outbreak phase" (Mean Score = 3.73; Standard Deviation = 0.92); "Information related to the provision of essential food and supplies during the period of social distancing and prolonged social distancing" (Mean Score = 3.73; Standard Deviation = 0.97); "Information related to widespread COVID-19 testing" (Mean Score = 3.68; Standard Deviation = 0.97); "Urgent information on locating people who have come into contact with F0 cases, and the travel itinerary of F0 cases" (Mean Score = 3.64; Standard Deviation = 1.02). Some other content was rated as being accessed most frequently, including "Information about the daily number of SARS-CoV-2 infections" (Mean Score = 3.94; Standard Deviation = 0.91); followed by "Information related to COVID-19 vaccination prioritization groups" (Mean Score = 3.92; Standard Deviation = 0.96); "Information about the daily number of deaths related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus" (Mean Score = 3.85; Standard Deviation = 0.97)...

For the state management support information group, the student's access to information is similarly frequent, with a total percentage of access at a level of frequent and always above 50%. The data shows a high similarity among the types of information in the state management support information group, with a standard deviation below 1.0 at 0.77468, and none of the types of information have a standard deviation above 1.0. In this information group, the students evaluated the following information as accessed less frequently: "Information related to Directive 10 of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City" (M = 3.67, SD = 0.95); "Information related to Directive 18 of the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City" (M = 3.64, SD = 0.94); and "Information related to Directive 12 of the City Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City" (M = 3.64, SD = 0.95). The remaining information was mostly evaluated by students as accessed more frequently, including "Information related to Directive 15 of the Prime Minister" (M = 3.92, SD = 0.88); "Information related to Directive 16 of the Prime Minister" (M = 3.89, SD = 0.90); and "Information related to Directive 19 of the Prime Minister" (M = 3.83, SD = 0.88)...

Therefore, it can be tentatively concluded that during the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ho Chi Minh City, students of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh City

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, National University access information about the COVID-19 pandemic on the social media platform Facebook with a fairly frequent level. This can be explained by the prolonged social distancing measures, which require students to rely more on entertainment media, including Facebook. As a result, students have more opportunities to access information about the COVID-19 pandemic both passively and actively.

Analysis of the situation from the perspective of the Agenda-Setting Theory

Based on the Agenda-Setting Theory and the survey results, we prioritize the types of information based on public interest as follows:

Table 3. The order of issues in the group of open social news that the public and students prioritize during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Vietnam

No.	Information content	Date of issuance/publication	Mean score	The order of importance of the issue according to the public
1	Information on daily cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection.	Daily during the pandemic	3.949	1
2	Information related to COVID-19 vaccination for prioritized groups.	According to the announcement of the Ministry of Health during the pandemic	3.927	2
3	Information on daily deaths related to SARS-CoV-2	Daily during the pandemic	3.852	3
4	Information related to post-COVID-19 health issues	Daily during the pandemic	3.808	4
5	Information on daily cases recovered from SARS-CoV-2 infection	Daily during the pandemic	3.800	5
6	Information related to the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines, such as immunity rates and vaccine-related complications	According to the announcement of the Ministry of Health during the pandemic	3.798	6
7	Information on overwhelmed healthcare systems during periods of severe outbreaks	According to the announcement of the Ministry of Health during the pandemic	3.737	7
8	Information related to the provision of essential supplies and food during social isolation and prolonged social distancing	Daily during the pandemic	3.733	8
9	Information related to widespread COVID-19 testing	Daily during the pandemic	3.682	9
10	Urgent information regarding locating individuals who have come into contact with confirmed cases (F0) and their travel itineraries	Daily during the pandemic	3.640	10

In the group of open social news, which is updated daily and appears frequently on the social media platform Facebook, the level of public interest in these issues does not differ significantly based on the average frequency of public and student engagement. This result is mainly because this group of

open social news is essential and belongs to the category of timely and immediate news, which naturally attracts more attention from the public. Therefore, during the COVID-19 outbreak in Vietnam, the group of open social news becomes a 'public agenda' established by professional press agencies based on the social media platform Facebook.

Table 4. The order of the issues in the open state management support information group that the public students prioritize during the COVID-19 outbreak in Vietnam

No.	Information content	Date of issuance/publication	Mean score	The order of importance of the issue according to the public
1	Information related to Directive 15 by the Prime Minister includes: no gathering of more than 10 people in public places, maintaining a distance of 2 meters, restricting travel between localities, and temporary suspension of non-essential business and service activities.	27/3/2020	3.929	1
2	Information related to Directive 16 by the Prime Minister includes: social distancing measures, no gathering of more than 2 people in public places, maintaining a distance of 2 meters, suspension of inter-provincial travel except for necessary cases, and temporary suspension of non-essential business and service activities.	27/3/2020	3.891	2
3	Information related to Directive 19 by the Prime Minister includes: avoiding crowded gatherings in public places, suspension of festivals, religious ceremonies, and sporting events, maintaining a minimum distance of 1 meter, temporary closure of entertainment venues, karaoke, massage parlors, bars, nightclubs, beauty establishments.	24/4/2020	3.830	3
4	Information related to the use of travel permits, mobile applications for population movement reporting, and health declaration during the social distancing period.	Daily according to the policies of each period during the pandemic	3.812	4
5	Information related to the establishment and protection of "green zones" in localities.	Daily according to the pandemic situation and the directives of the government	3.773	5
6	Information related to Directive 10 by the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City includes: no	19/6/2021	3.670	6

	gathering of more than 3 people in public places, maintaining a minimum distance of 1.5 meters, suspension of non-essential business activities and spontaneous markets, and suspension of public passenger transportation.			
7	Information related to Directive 18 by the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City includes: conditional reopening of business and service activities, use of QR codes for domestic travel declaration, gradual recovery, and socio-economic development, etc.	30/9/2021	3.644	7
8	Information related to Directive 12 by the Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City includes: lockdown measures, controlling the spread of the epidemic, maintaining and expanding safe areas, strict control of high-risk areas through "individuals isolated from individuals, families isolated from families," tightening checkpoints at entry and exit points of Ho Chi Minh City.	22/7/2021	3.642	8

In the group of government management support information, there is a clear difference between issues issued by the central government and issues issued at the local level, such as in Ho Chi Minh City. Issues issued by the government, such as Directive 15, Directive 16, and Directive 19, rank first, second, and third respectively in terms of public interest. Conversely, information issued at the local level in Ho Chi Minh City, such as Directive 10, Directive 18, and Directive 12, occupy the bottom three positions in the priority ranking of public student interest.

This can be explained from several perspectives. First, the information issued by the government pertains to nationwide issues and is implemented on a larger scale, while the documents issued by the Ho Chi Minh City government merely inherit the directives of the central government and provide guidance or reminders for local implementation. Second, within the Vietnamese press and media landscape, government information, particularly from the central government, is implicitly understood to be important, and prominent, and requires the establishment of a public agenda related to those issues. Third, the public has a habit of accessing information from mass media sources and accepts that information related to government-issued issues is more significant and valuable.

Therefore, in the group of government management support information, there is a clear distinction in the priority level of public interest between issues issued by the central government and those issued by local authorities.

In summary, by applying the theory of Agenda-Setting to analyze the current situation of receiving information about the COVID-19 pandemic in Vietnam, specifically focusing on the public student audience, it can be observed that the social media platform Facebook serves as a mass media tool that establishes public agendas related to the pandemic. Within this context, the open social news category serves as an "agenda-setting program" established through continuously updated news, almost on a daily basis, resulting in a relatively consistent level of public interest across the various types of information within this category. On the other hand, within the group of government management support information, there is a clear distinction between information issued by the central government and information issued by local authorities in terms of the level of public interest. The public shows a

higher level of interest in issues that are related to or have a nationwide impact throughout the course of the pandemic outbreak.

Conclusions

The research results on 506 students from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University - Ho Chi Minh City, showed that the majority of students self-assessed their level of access to information related to COVID-19 on the social media platform Facebook as "frequent" with an average score of 3.78 and a standard deviation of 0.63. Among them, the level of access to information in the open social news category was higher compared to the government management support information category, with average scores and standard deviations as follows: Mean (N1) = 3.79 > Mean (N2) = 3.77. In the open social news category, most students show frequent interest in information about daily COVID-19 infection cases, the number of deaths related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus, information regarding COVID-19 vaccination for priority groups, and more. With the government management support information category, most students also show regular interest in the Prime Minister's Directives, including Directives 15, 16, and 19, which involve social distancing, avoiding crowded places, maintaining distance, temporarily suspending business operations of service, beauty establishments, and halting festive events, religious rituals, sports events, and more at localities and public places. On the other hand, information related to Directives 10, 18, and 12 issued by the People's Committee and Party Committee of Ho Chi Minh City receives significantly less frequent attention from students. This can partly be explained by the limited access to these pieces of information on the Facebook social media platform. These findings emphasize the influence and value of government-issued information during the Covid-19 period, which has proven to be effective in terms of communication in Vietnam.

On the other hand, the study also shows that on the Facebook social media platform, programs related to the management, administration, and fight against the epidemic by the government and media agencies were established during the fourth wave of the COVID-19 outbreak in Vietnam. Once again, the practicality of public communication reaffirms the propositions of the Agenda-Setting theory, especially regarding the influence of mass media on shaping public perception of what information is important and worthy of attention. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, creating an impression of important information and generating public interest has a positive effect on disease prevention and control efforts.

References

- Government. (2013). Decree No. 72/2013/ND-CP on the Management, Provision, and Use of Internet Services and Information on the Internet issued by the Government on July 15, 2013.
- Ministry of Health. (2022). Ministry of Health's information portal on the COVID-19 pandemic. Retrieved from: <https://covid19.gov.vn/>
- Nguyen Van Dung (Editor) and Do Thi Thu Hang. (2018). *Communication - Theories and Basic Skills*. Hanoi: Information and Communication Publishing House.
- Nguyen Van Ha. (2022). *Theoretical Foundations of Journalism*. Ho Chi Minh City: Ho Chi Minh City National University Publishing House.
- Oxford Learner's Dictionaries. (2022). Social network. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/social-network?q=social+network>
- Pham Hai Chung. (2019). *Advanced Communication Theory*. Hanoi: World Publishing House.
- Pham Huy Ky and Do Thi Thu Hang (Co-Editors). (2019). *Social Networks in the Context of Information Society Development in Vietnam - Theories, Practices, and Experiences*. Hanoi: Labor Publishing House.
- WHO. (2022). WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard. Retrieved from: <https://covid19.who.int/>