

Peer Review of "Are We Sure We Fully Understand What an Infodemic Is? A Global Perspective on Infodemiological Problems"

Anonymous

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KEYWORDS

communication; conspiracy; COVID-19; education; fake news; infodemic; infodemiology; mass media; public health; risk perception; science

This is a peer-review report submitted for the paper "Are We Sure We Fully Understand What an Infodemic Is? A Global Perspective on Infodemiological Problems."

Round 1 Review

General Comments

This paper [1] aims to highlight principal problems related to the understanding of the infodemic phenomenon. Although it debates interesting aspects of this field, the paper seems incomplete and evasive. Moreover, the authors used problematic definitions for distinct types of information disorder.

Specific Comments

Major Comments

1. The neologism "dismisinformation" is problematic; we commonly use "misinformation" as an umbrella term when we cannot distinguish the type of information disorder.

2. The definition of fake news is advancing toward a specific information disorder, that is, it is not a mere simplification of phenomena (see, for instance, Molina et al [2]).
3. The authors affirm that infodemics cannot exist without disinformation. This sentence is imprecise because information disorder also includes malinformation, fake news, and conspiracy theory. The background adopted by the authors to reflect on the presented problems can be compromised by such misconceptions.
4. I recommend that the authors concentrate their efforts on a specific problem, presenting a deep argumentation about the mechanisms that contribute to the success of information disorder during the pandemic.

Conflicts of Interest

None declared.

References

1. Rovetta A, Castaldo L. Are We Sure We Fully Understand What an Infodemic Is? A Global Perspective on Infodemiological Problems. *JMIRx Med* 2022;3(3):e36510 [FREE Full text] [doi: [10.2196/36510](https://doi.org/10.2196/36510)]
2. Molina MD, Sundar SS, Le T, Lee D. "Fake News" Is Not Simply False Information: A Concept Explication and Taxonomy of Online Content. *American Behavioral Scientist* 2019 Oct 14;65(2):180-212. [doi: [10.1177/0002764219878224](https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764219878224)]

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