Reviewer’s report

Title: Newspaper coverage before and after the HPV vaccination crisis began in Japan: A text mining analysis

Version: 0 Date: 25 Aug 2018

Reviewer: Julia Brotherton

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for asking me to review this paper. It is of interest to see confirmed what has been informally observed - that the media coverage in Japan is dominated by anti-vaccination concerns and that scientific voices reflecting the global consensus and evidence of the safety of the vaccines are largely absent. This is important to document as it does present a major impediment to restoring the HPV vaccination program in Japan. I have some minor comments to improve what is a comprehensive and clear manuscript further.

Abstract: I am worried the conclusion is a little naïve. Whilst scientists may think it self-evident that journalists should strive for balanced reporting, ultimately journalists report news and work for editors whose aim is to sell newspapers. I think it would be more helpful to call for the government, scientists and medical societies to be stronger advocates in the public space for the vaccine so that there is an opposing voice for journalists to report. The authors do this appropriately in their discussion/conclusion section. It is my perception that journalists may only be reporting one side because the anti-vaccine voice is proactive, highly emotional and not being opposed by government, who in most countries would be the coordinating body for an organised and scientifically robust response to such concerns.

Results: The last sentence of the results is unusual and I would prefer to see a summary of the data presented in the results section and interpreted in the discussion as per convention for scientific manuscripts rather than the summary being given in the discussion. For example, the discussion paragraphs' text describing the key findings outlined in each figure would be appropriate in results.

In Appendix 2, suggest only give % to one decimal place and add the % symbol in the columns for ease of reading and interpretation.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?  
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I recommend additional statistical review

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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I have been an investigator on investigator initiated grants that have supported laboratory testing for a cervical cancer typing study (supported by Seqirus) and a recurrent respiratory papillomatosis study (supported by MSD). I have never received any personal financial benefits.

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