Reviewer’s report

Title: How organisations promoting vaccination respond to misinformation on social media: a qualitative investigation

Version: 0 Date: 26 Apr 2019

Reviewer: Salini Mohanty

Reviewer's report:

Introduction
- This section should be expanded to provide more of a background for readers---
  o Should include a statement that vaccine hesitant parents are more likely to turn to the internet for health info instead of healthcare providers and are less like to trust health care providers
  o Could also include that communicating messages to vaccine-hesitant parents can be difficult—Nyhan et al study—seeing pictures of kids who were sick with VPDs actually made their anti-vaccine beliefs stronger
  o Anti-vaccine parents have a strong presence online—one recent example was how they used the internet to help other parents find providers to provide medical exemptions in CA to avoid the new exemption laws.
  o This paper might be helpful to expand the intro—many of the points above are referenced in this paper: https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2018.304567
  □ Would also add something about trolls and bots from this paper as this is becoming a more prevalent issue

Methods
- Line 67—what was the specific criteria used to create this "shortlist" of organizations? Was there a way to determine how often they communicated about vaccines?
- Data collection- were these interviews done in-person or over the phone?
- It's not clear how the codebook was developed.
- Are all the questions only based on the Risk Communication principles or did you have some a priori codes based on previous literature?
- What were the criteria for the participant to be eligible to participate in the survey?
  o It had to be the person who ran the social media page? Need more detail here.

Results
- Line 109—were these 5 categories decided upon before data collection? Should include that in the methods—if you were purposefully trying to make sure you covered certain organizations then need to mention that in the methods first.
- Line 120- need to tell the reader the overall themes that were uncovered first then go through each of them in depth.
- Line 122- did they notice this in general while using facebook or among people who interact with their page or posts? This is not clear
- Line 188- the results up to this point really focuses on anti-vaxxers—the next section 'construction of their audience and themselves' might be better being introduced first to set up the rest of the themes. Knowing who their audience is important first.
- There seem to be multiple sub-themes under the larger headers—next to explore these in depth— for example, under 'construction of their audience and themselves' the authors talk about who the participants believe their audience is then another section within this larger theme talks about threats/hostility of anti-vaxxers- this to me in a sub-theme within itself…
- Do you have data generally on what other types of post these organizations post—is it strictly vaccine info or other health info? What format do they use? Mostly text? Text and images? Which do they think has been the most successful in engaging people?

- Overall, there are many subthemes within the larger themes and they need to be explored more in-depth- with adding subtheme headers it will be easier for the reader to take away the main points.
**Discussion**
- Is the "silent observer" someone who doesn't comment on the public post but sends a direct message or someone who just observes comments? I'm not sure the term works for the first part because these people still took some direct action by sending a message—these pages, at least on Facebook, can see who viewed their post and engaged with it—I'm sure a lot more people saw their post then engaged with it.
- The discussion is very long and hard to get through—consider drilling down to the main takeaways.

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

No

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

Unable to assess

**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.

Not relevant to this manuscript

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Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable
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