

Peer Review Report

Review Report on Measuring the Evolution of Risk Communication Strategy for Health Authorities during the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Empirical Comparison between China and the United States

Original Article, Int J Public Health

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EVALUATION

Q 1 Please summarize the main findings of the study.

This study conducts three types of analysis : topic analysis, sentiment analysis, and risk communication strategy analysis. This study finds that the context of strategies could be measured by the topic variation, emotion expressions, and confirmed cases. CDC and NHC tend to adopt different risk communication strategies and have specific change routines facing the pandemic.

Q 2 Please highlight the limitations and strengths.

Strengths:

The strengths of this paper are:

1. The research topic is engaging.
2. The motivation is clear.
3. Interesting datasets.
4. The quantitative analysis of the risk communication strategy is novel.

Weakness:

The weakness of this paper are:

1. The reason for choosing the transcripts for the first quarter of 2020 needs to be further discussed.
2. The separate structure for the transcripts of CDC and NHC needs to be included.
3. The title's expression "Measuring the Risk Communication Strategy" is inappropriate.

Q 3 Please provide your detailed review report to the authors. The editors prefer to receive your review structured in major and minor comments. Please consider in your review the methods (statistical methods valid and correctly applied (e.g. sample size, choice of test), is the study replicable based on the method description?), results, data interpretation and references. If there are any objective errors, or if the conclusions are not supported, you should detail your concerns.

This paper compares the risk communication strategies of public health departments in China and the United States based on subject matter and sentiment analysis. The approach to quantify the risk communication strategy is interesting and inspiring. I suggest revising the following questions before publishing this article.

1. Line 69-72

"(1) It was crucial for from January to April 2020."

The reason for choosing transcripts released in the first quarter of 2020 is insufficient to prove they are "crucial" for the government (i.e., why the initial outbreak of COVID-19 is worth attention). Some references may be helpful to illustrate.

2. Line 87-98

"According to the structure of the news transcripts, which more accorded with the features (i.e., exchange of information) of risk communication."

I am confused if the transcripts of CDC and NHC share the same structure of "the announcement part and the question answering (Q&A) part." If not, the CDC and NHC transcript structure should be explicitly described.

3. Line 185

"Risk Communication Strategy Analysis"

I have severe concerns about the title "Risk Communication Strategy Analysis" and the title of this paper, "Measuring the Risk Communication Strategy" . According to the definition given by the author, the "Risk Communication Strategy" can be regarded as a typical method/pattern in the process of risk information exchange. To reveal the strategy, the author analyzes the emotion and topics of the news conference transcripts to represent the risk communication strategy. However, it is inappropriate to call this analysis process "Measuring the Risk Communication Strategy." IMHO, it is more likely that this paper conducts an "evolution analysis" in the context of risk communication strategy. Hence, I strongly recommend the author reconsider their title.

PLEASE COMMENT

Q 4 Is the title appropriate, concise, attractive?

The title of the article is attractive, but needs to be reconsidered in terms of its accuracy. For details, please refer to the third point of the amendments.

Q 5 Are the keywords appropriate?

The keywords used in the article are appropriate.

Q 6 Is the English language of sufficient quality?

high quality.

Q 7 Is the quality of the figures and tables satisfactory?

Yes.

Q 8 Does the reference list cover the relevant literature adequately and in an unbiased manner?

References to the article meet the requirements.

QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Q 9 Originality



Q 10 Rigor



Q 11 Significance to the field



Q 12 Interest to a general audience



Q 13 Quality of the writing



Q 14 Overall scientific quality of the study



REVISION LEVEL

Q 15 Please make a recommendation based on your comments:

Minor revisions.