

## INFODEMIC A RECENT HEARSAY FOR THE NEW WORLD AND ITS MANAGEMENT

Dr. Suyog Savant<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Kailash Asawa<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph. D Scholar, Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur  
[suyogsavant@gmail.com](mailto:suyogsavant@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Ph. D Guide, Professor and Head, Department of Public Health Dentistry Pacific Dental College and Hospital, Pacific Academy of Higher Education and Research University, Udaipur

### ABSTRACT

Infodemics has been considered as the double-edged sword, a perspective influencing the lives of common man. Human life has been affected by it, which caused derailment of normal functionality of human life. It has been considered as the blend of information and misinformation that affected the emotional status of the human beings affected by social media. In order to cope up with the rumours and myths, management of infodemics had to be dealt with alternate strategies like identifying and segregating the information from misinformation, identifying the mis endeavours of the state players and understanding the origin and the spread of the misinformation. It also dealt with the verification and spread of credible information and identifying the lapses in regards to the spread of information through proper sources and channels. To conclude, the devious nature of infodemics can throw the world into turmoil or help restore peace and serenity if is handled in proper method.

**Keywords:** Infodemics, information, misinformation, management of infodemics.

Infodemic is the new term coined to explain how much the information that is let out in the community settings through the use of print media or digital media can shape the outcome of perceptions of the society, community on the national or global scale<sup>1</sup>. It is a term used to classify the information into good or bad communication made through any social media that is feed to the people which can have adverse or favourable impact on human life<sup>2</sup>. Infodemic is a powerful term which can bring about chaos, anxiety, fear and totally derail the normality of people's life and create confusion and mistrust which in turn has a snowballing effect to cause the extension or lengthening of the recovery process after the post pandemic era<sup>3</sup>. The uncertainty that exists with the overwhelming information can put dents in the efforts made

by the health authorities due to the myths, rumours or the false perceptions of the community to accept them due to ambiguity of the information conveyed to them<sup>4</sup>.

## **WHAT IS INFODEMIC**

The word infodemic was first used by David Rothkopf in the Washington post in year 2003 where he stated that during the SARS epidemic, the world was been confronted of another rising epidemic – the epidemic of information<sup>5</sup>. David Rothkopf was a political journalist and a scientist who expressed his concerns regarding the impending dangers of information that flowed on a global scale along with SARs pandemic which made it difficult for the health authorities to restrict the or contain the epidemic of SARS<sup>6</sup>. He also went forward to quote that infodemic was a blend of speculations and suppositions, which had the blend of uncertain but impacting rumours, which threatened the national and international economies into jeopardy as the new age of information resulted into social debacles. To summarise the word infodemic it is a blend of information and epidemic coined in 2003 and has been used by the world in 2020 since the COVID 19 epidemic<sup>7</sup>.

## **MANAGEMENT OF INFODEMIC**

In order to curb the spread of infodemic, which has malicious intentions to spread disharmony in the public and hamper the efforts to build a secure world, tools and strategies have been devised which could be termed as infodemic management. The following points briefly highlight the infodemic management process through the foresaid techniques.

### **Understand and identify misinformation, disinformation and misinformation**

The misinformation, disinformation and misinformation (MDM) harms the trust of the people and causes the global economies to suffer as a result of the chaos that results due to MDM<sup>8</sup>. Amplification of the false news due to deepfakes result in hampering the recovery process of global health. This can be managed by web monitoring. Use of the search engine optimization can limit the display of the content on the search engine tool like the google which can allow limited display of information on the screen. Another method is using answer engine optimization so only limited information can be conveyed to the user rather than the flow of misinformation that occurs through the search engine<sup>9</sup>.

### **Identify tactics employed by malicious actors to create misleading information**

Mal information can be identified through some of the fake categories of news terms. Clickbait is the news that are incessantly flashed on social medias to create a ruckus attracting the whole lot of media frenzy people that give rise to web trafficking<sup>10</sup>. Propagandas spreading malicious news should be identified which are done for political gains which target the health agencies which are working for the betterment of the people.

Sham content creators deceives the newsreaders and impersonate the true news by creating the play actors to fool the public. State sponsored news or even the distorted headlines are spread to the public creating confusion and affecting the misbeliefs of the people<sup>11</sup>.

### **Analyse the nature, origins and spread of misinformation**

It can be extremely difficult to analyse the veracity of the information arising through the human or technical media. the solutions that need to be build have to apply in ways that are understandable and predictable for users and content creators, and compatible with the kind of automation that is required when operating services on the scale of the web<sup>12</sup>. Making quality count in the ranking systems and counteracting the malicious actors and expanding support who are genuine content creators is a way to move forward.

### **Verify health information and visual content online**

Visuals, such as pictures, drawings, charts, graphs and diagrams, can be important tools for providing good health information. Visuals can be an effective method to convince the people who are more drawn to visual information that is easy to comprehend and grasp. They can also reinforce written or spoken health messages.

Visual communication can benefit all audiences, especially people with lower literacy and numeracy skills. Remember, though, that visuals can't speak for themselves. People can interpret visuals, just as they do words, in different ways. Choose visuals that support the main message and have explicit headings, labels, and captions<sup>13</sup>.

### **Identify and spread credible health information**

The social media platforms should identify the credible health information and try to spread it through social media companies. Superior quality information highlighting the real facts with substantiated research proving the credibility of the information should be disbursed to the broader audience through social and medical platforms<sup>14</sup>. The information provided should be competent with the culture of the community which is understandable and with the grasp of every individual. Intersectoral communication along the different strata of the digital world should provide much more health information than the mere status quo<sup>15</sup>.

### **Identify lapses in information and built robust attitude amongst the population**

About 88 percent of the information that is circulated through the social media is misinformation. Although it is possible to intercept the messages that are transmitted through Facebook and WhatsApp, media companies and content moderators need to monitor the feed (MDM) that circulate and has to be validated to determine any lapses in information. Building a resilient attitude amongst the public, it is necessary to spread transparent communication amongst the communities and widespread use of social platforms authenticating the rights facts have to be communicated to the people which might build the right attitude amongst the people to perceive the right information<sup>16</sup>.

### **Conclusion**

To summarize, although infodemic has been coined for about two decades, its usage in the existing post pandemic world had far reaching effects on the global scale. It has been an epidemic in its own terms and has been a detrimental factor in hampering world to cope with post pandemic recovery. One of the challenges the health authorities faced was to build strategies and firewall for the infodemic management and continues to do so due to the complexities of the digital spread. It stands out as a double edge sword, information of any kind or origin, without determining its authenticity infodemic can lead the way on path to recovery or put the world into chaos.

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