

Surfing the Waves of Infodemic: Building a Cohesive Philippine Framework Against Misinformation

Introduction The sudden exponential increase in information accompanying COVID-19 has presented significant barriers to effective health communication. In a country where 76 million active social media accounts originate, this Infodemic due to the pandemic has exposed inadequacies in Philippines information systems. As such, this paper aims to present the Infodemic in the Philippine context, analyze existing frameworks countering misinformation, identify problems, and propose solutions for misinformation.

Methods A comprehensive review of existing policies was conducted by inputting keywords in known databases, and analyzing literature, laws, and social media policies in the Philippines.

Key findings The analysis has showed that (1) the current un-centralized system presents difficulties in mobilizing experts; (2) the older demographic is a neglected population amid high risk for misinformation; (3) individual passivity in searching for legitimate sources put people at higher risk; (4) current legal frameworks insufficiently characterize and delineate misinformation and disinformation, leading to concerns on implementation and human rights. To address this, evidence recommends (1) creating a centralized government institution, representative of various sectors, to serve as the source of understandable and reliable scientific information; (2) strengthening current legal frameworks, with an emphasis on education, due process, and human rights; (3) ingraining a culture of fact-checking within the Filipino psyche via stakeholder engagement. Clear roles and responsibilities, along with active stakeholder engagement, are needed to build individual resilience against misinformation and strengthen veritable institutions that aid the country in responding to future health crises.

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