



ACADEMIC WEEKLY DIGEST

Fighting Fake News: Online Disinformation in Covid Times

In this study, [Professor Glenn Parry](#) and colleagues looked at Fake News, in particular anti-vax discussions online.

Drawing upon case study research investigating the Irish Health Service Executive's (HSE) response to a fake news attack on their human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination campaign, we argue that responses to



fake news should be analysed from a legitimacy perspective. This study contributes to fake news and legitimacy management by moving beyond fact-checking and debunking strategies.

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About Professor Glenn Parry

Chair of Digital Transformation and Associate Dean of Research & Innovation, He is also Head, Department of Digital Economy Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Worked with Marie Joachim, Assistant Professor in Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship at ESSCA Ecole de management and Itziar Castello, an Academic and Advisor at Bayes Business School.

DISCUSSING FAKE NEWS, IN PARTICULAR THE VALIDITY OF THE HPV VACCINE

By Professor Glenn Parry, Marie Joachim & Itziar Castello

Professor Glenn Parry and colleagues looked at Fake News, particularly anti-vax discussions online. In their previous British Academy report they looked at France and Italy and the anti-COVID discussion. They then looked at Ireland and the attacks on the validity of the HPV vaccine. It is this latter discourse that forms the focus of their paper.

The anti-vax discourse is very emotionally driven. Typically, the Government and Health institutional response is very much based on science and logic, reinforcing the institutions rhetoric - but that approach doesn't engage people in a way that will change minds and opinions. However, a young Irish woman named Laura Brennan caught HPV and decided to be an advocate for the HSE (the Irish Health Authority) and fight the online fake news.

By studying her approach they found that to argue persuasively you need to emotionally engage the reader and alongside use the scientific facts, which isn't the normal strategy.

Through emotional engagement it is possible to rebuild the legitimacy of the institution that has been attacked, and ultimately increase vaccination rates.

Publication:

Joachim, M., Castelló, I., & Parry, G. (2024). Moving Beyond "Facts Are Facts": Managing Emotions and Legitimacy After a Fake News Attack. *Business & Society*, 0(0).



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