

Investigating the diabetes narratives of key social media influencers: A new form of health communication

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Abstract:

E-Health is seen as the application of modern information and communication technology to advance or facilitate healthcare. People are more likely to search on social media (49%) than to see their doctors (11%) when they have healthcare problems. A special group of active social media users have appeared and started to gain attention in these years. They are not medical professionals but use social platforms to disseminate health information, create health awareness and provide health solutions to their target audiences. These so-called social media influencers have established a positive rapport with their audience. The main aim of this study is to investigate the diabetes narratives that have been presented by social media influencers (SMIs) because SMIs bring a new dimension for communicating health information with the potentially improving health outcomes. 10 social media influencers in the UK are defined in this study. Their existing diabetes narratives on social media and the impacts of those narratives on audiences' health attitudes and behaviour are analysed through qualitative and quantitative methods, including frame (content-level) and discourse (language-level) features. Moreover, a comparative analysis of questionnaire data on audiences' perception and perceived trustworthiness is conducted to investigate the effectiveness of SMIs in influencing their followers and non-followers.

Ministry of Science and Technology in PRC. She has published 14 papers and succeeded in finishing 4 research projects, one of which was the 2013 National Student Innovation Training Project.



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Biography:

Zhaozhang SUN is a PhD candidate, awarded a 4-year full scholarship in Department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries, King's College London. She gained an Honorary Bachelor degree at Central South University and a Master's degree (Distinction) at University of Leeds. Before doing her PhD, Zhaozhang served as executive editor in Science and Technology Daily, which is the official newspaper of the