

HOW COVID-19 Vaccine Content Attributes Relate to Engagement and Why it Matters on TikTok

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Introduction

TikTok is a distinctive **algorithmic-driven platform**, where users' engagements determine the algorithmic recommended content and its default **“For You” page that largely amplify and boost user-favored content**. TikTok gains its popularity during Covid-19 pandemic, particularly among young adults and teenagers who are vulnerable to misinformation. It is timely and critical to examine **what Covid-19 vaccine content attributes elicit more engagement**. The current study conducted a content analysis of 173 TikTok videos. The results provide theoretical and practical implications to health communications on TikTok.



<https://www.somagnews.com/tiktok-releases-artificial-intelligence-software-for-sale/>.

Method

This study employed a quantitative content analysis of COVID-19 vaccine videos on TikTok. The sample data were collected on 3 November 2021 through an unofficial TikTok API, using search term “covid vaccine”.

- A. 250 videos were downloaded, 173 of them were qualified to be analyzed. No attitude contents were eliminated
- B. Two coders were trained to analyze the content (Cohen's Kappa = .89).
- C. Run multiple regressions to investigate the relationship between content attributes and engagement.
- D. Engagement metrics were log transformed.

Results

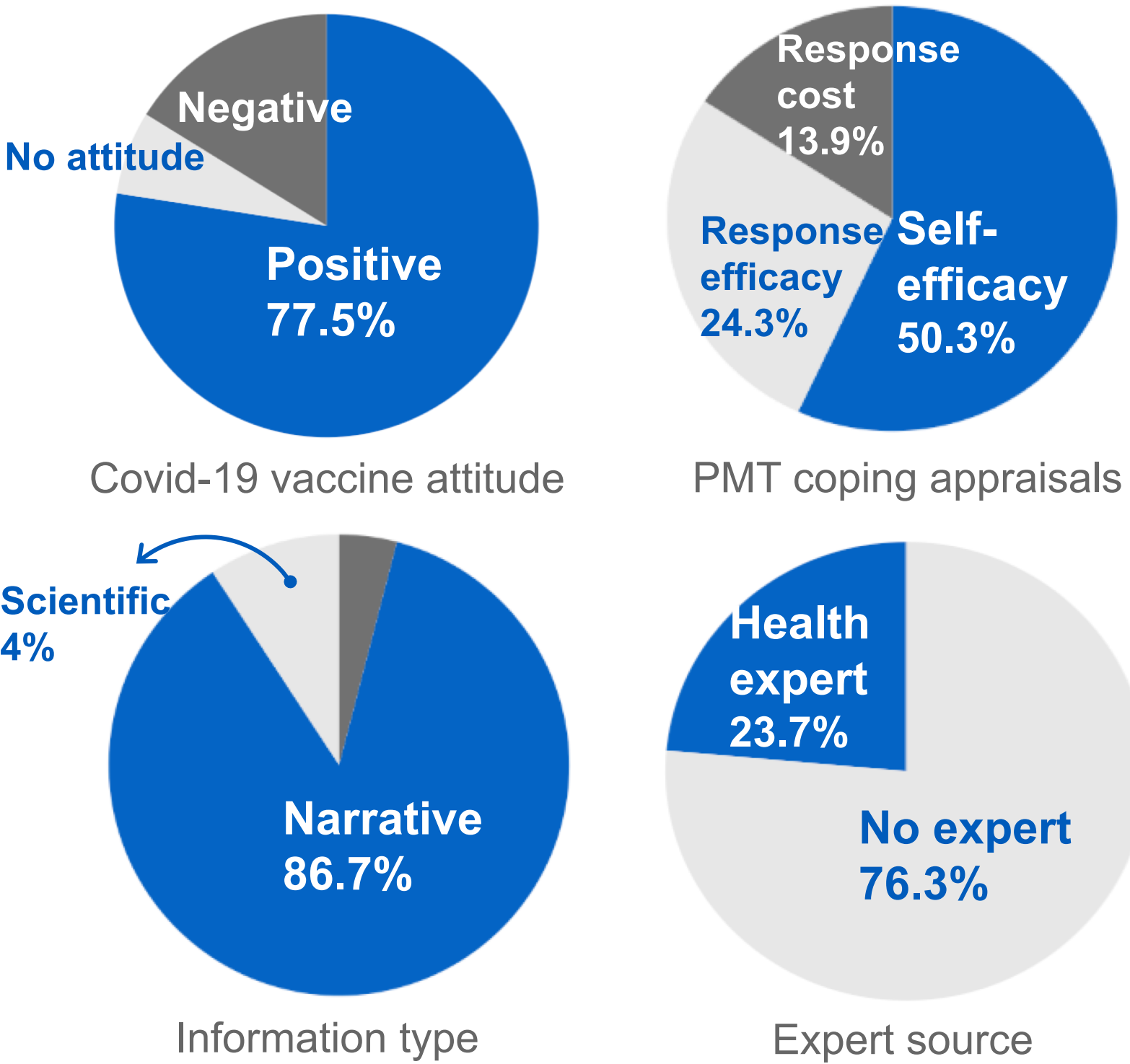


Figure A: Frequency of Independent variables

A

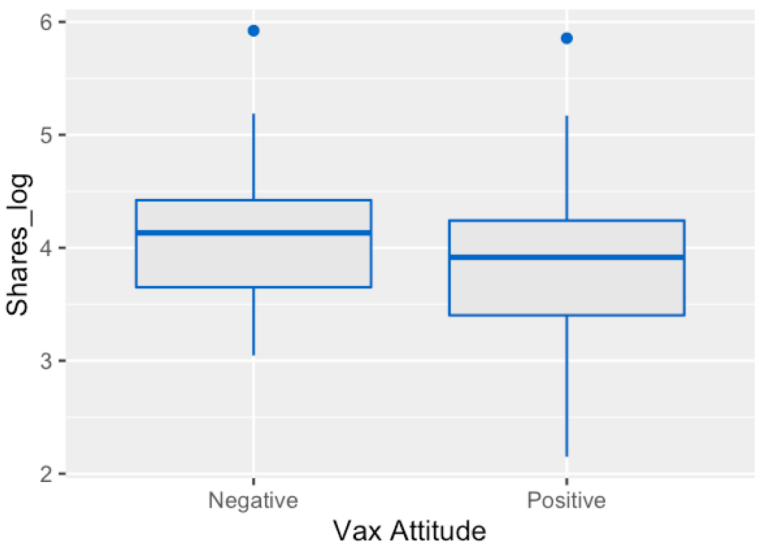
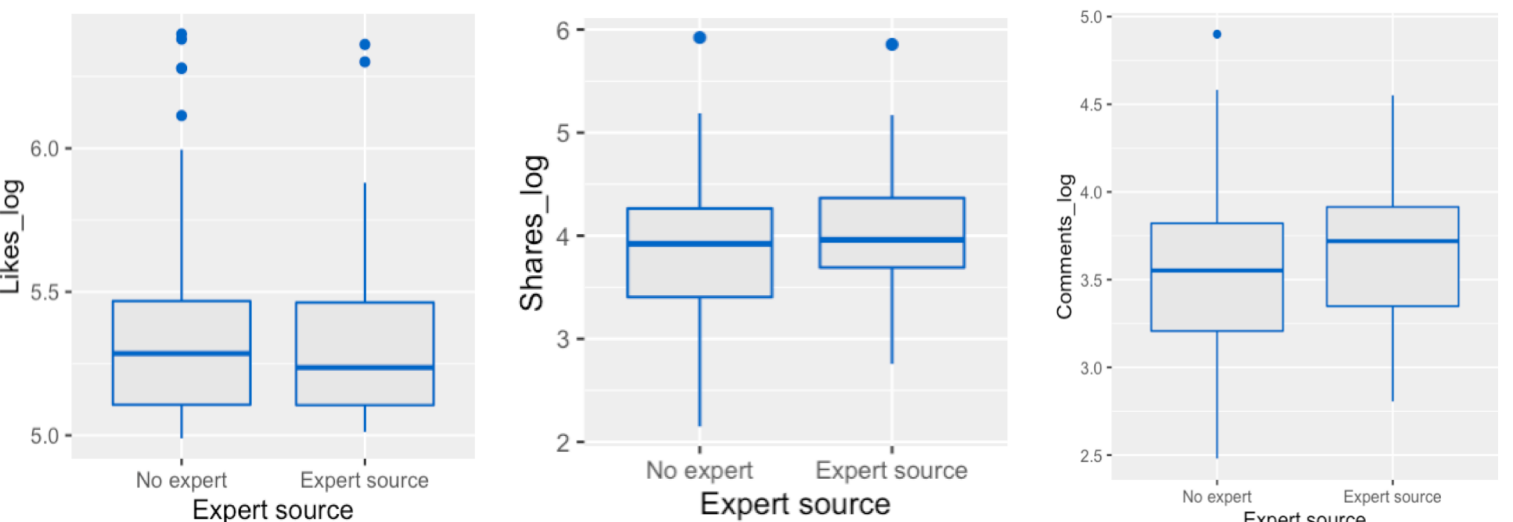


Figure B: Relationship between vaccine attitude and shares(log).

B

Information type of vaccine was not related to engagement.

C



D

Table 1			
	Self-efficacy	Response efficacy	Response cost
Shares(log)	-.350*	.170	.244
Likes(log)	-.002	-.005	.004
Comments(log)	-.198*	.072	.181

E



Contents that express negative attitudes on vaccine only employed narrative information type.

Alpha level was adjusted to $\alpha_{Bonferroni_correction} = .0125$

Discussion

- Negative vaccine attitude elicits more shares, even though the relationship is marginally significant. By the same token, contents including self-efficacy relates to less shares and comments. This pattern indicates that toxic health content is easier to go viral and could be more likely to be fed to user's “For You” page on TikTok.
- Neither information type nor health expert source relates to engagement metrics on TikTok. This could be because TikTok is originally developed for entertainment purposes.
- The mainstream culture on TikTok is framed as imitation and replication. In light of the nature of TikTok, content creators should capitalize the replication ritual rather than simply adopt from the traditional health education strategy.
- One effective strategy is to launch “challenges” to engage and educate users. For example, the handwashing dancing video created by Vietnamese officials.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/51792971>



Selected References

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