

Background

- Misinformation about COVID-19 threatens public health (Soto-Vasquez et al. 2020; Nguyen & Catalan, 2020; Longoria, 2021)
- Communities of color are disproportionately targeted by disinformation campaigns (Soto-Vasquez et al. 2020; Nguyen & Catalan, 2020)
- Interventions that teach digital media literacy skills improve resistance to disinformation (McGrew et al., 2019; Guess et al., 2020)
- Need for culturally relevant, community-developed workshops (Longoria et al., 2021)

Disinformation resilience means:

- ✓ Digital media literacy skills to investigate claims online
- ✓ Discriminant trust to trust true news and distrust false news
- ✓ Restraint from sharing false information to networks
- ✓ Community support to help peers and family members navigate information online

Community Partners

- PEN America is a non-profit organization dedicated to free expression
- Partnered with community leaders from Mi Familia Vota, the National Congress of American Indians, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, and the National Action Network to understand challenges and responses to misinformation



Project Description

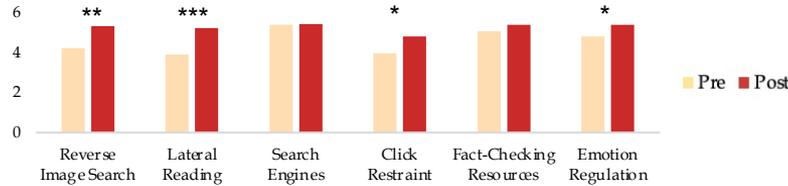
- 70 participants recruited by community partners to complete one of four interventions (Oct. 14th - Dec. 16th, 2021)
- Delivered on Zoom by trained co-facilitators from PEN and MFV, NCAI, AAJC, and NAN
- Pre-post intervention design
- Data analyzed with linear, logistic mixed effects regressions

Outcomes

The intervention improved community members' ability to critically evaluate and investigate health information online

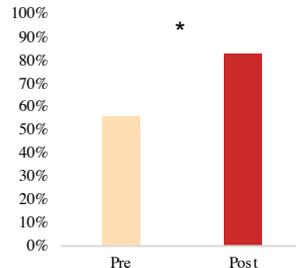
Digital media literacy skills teach people how to *critically evaluate and investigate information* they find online

- Reverse image search: Finding origins of an image
- Lateral reading: Comparing claims across sources
- Search engines: Being able to look up information
- Click restraint: Not engaging with dubious content
- Using fact-checks: Accessing expert evaluations of information
- Checking emotional responses: Monitoring claims for strong or outrageous information



Community members were better able to discern between true and false news about COVID-19 from 56% to 83% accuracy

Accuracy in Discerning True from False COVID-19 Claims



Participants were asked to evaluate a series of news headlines containing true or false claims about COVID-19 and political topics.

Accuracy was calculated by examining the % of false headlines they correctly identified as false, and the % of true headlines they correctly identified as true.

Participants were also significantly more likely to report **researching the headlines** after the intervention (46%), relative to before (5.2%), when they were evaluating the veracity of the information.

True Example:

"Data show the unvaccinated are 20 times more likely to die of COVID-19 than fully vaccinated people."

False Example:

"Male Infertility is a side-effect of Ivermectin."

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

- Researchers & practitioners should collaborate to address misinformation about health issues in community contexts
- Efforts to prevent disinformation in diverse communities should bring in community leaders and experts to share their perspective
- We should support community members in developing in-language materials and resources
- Collaborations are needed with ethnic media organizations (e.g., Indian Today News) and social media sources (e.g., Nextshark)
- Interventions should be tailored to the strengths and challenges facing specific communities

Next Steps

Future research

- Conducting a randomized controlled trial of intervention content on discriminant trust with health information and resilience to health disinformation
- Including longitudinal follow-ups to establish duration and size of treatment effects
- Understanding spillover effects of individuals on family and community members of participants

Future outreach

- Creating multilingual fact-checking sources and resources (e.g., Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean)
- Scaling intervention to be readily accessible online

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