Review of: "Government Communication and Behavioral Change amidst COVID-19: Role of Awareness and Fear & Panic"

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Title: Government Communication and Behavioral Change amidst COVID-19: Role of Awareness and Fear & Panic

The article demonstrates a significant contribution to the area of effective governance and communication management. An area that may assist to elevate the quality of the paper is to discuss the overall findings and relate them to the theory of good governance (Willem Trommel, 2020). This theory explains how a government sufficiently executes its responsibility by applying the good governance approach. This ensures that political, social, and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and helps in maximising the protection of the citizens.

The writing can be improved by re-constructing the overlapping ideas such as explaining further what the author means by "COVID-19 awareness mediates the relationship between government communication and behavioral change". Another hypothesis that needs further explanation is "Fear & panic moderates the relationship between COVID-19 awareness and behavioral change." There needs to be a clear difference between both. Perhaps the discussion needs to be rewritten.

Consistency in the findings serves as the nucleus of the paper. Thus, consistency in the output is important. In the results and findings, it was stated that the citizens often followed briefings from the governments. However, it was also stated in the discussion that largely respondents did not follow the government communication or the periodic briefings. They mostly rely on sources other than the government briefing. This logically negates the effectiveness of the government's communication in gearing public awareness on precautionary steps in battling COVID-19. Inserting theory of information/ communication risk(Berg, S.H, 2021; Heydari, 2021) would be best discussed here to resolve issues on the effectiveness of government communication. The general model of risk communication has evolved with the increasing number of studies on risk communication currently. Generally, the level and type of risk communication are subject to the complexity of such a risk and the level of potential risk as well as risk perception. Thus the importance of effective government communication and how this assist to garner people's awareness may later result in behavioural changes.

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