Review of: "Forecasting by Analogy: A Parallel between the Trend of Confirmed COVID-19 Deaths in the Winters of 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 in Italy"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Review Comments

While the study provides valuable insights and predictions, there are some drawbacks that should be considered:

1. The entire study hinges on the assumption that the two periods under consideration (2022-2023 and 2023-2024) are sufficiently similar in various aspects. The extent of similarity may be challenging to accurately gauge, and variations in critical factors could significantly impact the validity of the predictions.

2. The study relies heavily on the concept of forecasting by analogy, which inherently has limitations. While the authors acknowledge this, the lack of a more robust validation method or sensitivity analysis to test the model against other potential analogies might weaken the study's reliability.

3. The study primarily focuses on meteorological conditions, holiday behaviours, and vaccination rates, but there may be other variables influencing the COVID-19 dynamics that are not considered. Omitted factors, such as changes in public health policies or the emergence of new variants with distinct characteristics, could affect the predictions.

5. The study assumes constant growth and decline rates based on historical data. However, the COVID-19 situation is dynamic, and factors such as changes in public behaviour, vaccination campaigns, or government interventions may alter these rates over time.

In conclusion, while the study offers valuable insights, addressing these drawbacks would enhance its methodological rigor, reliability, and applicability in informing public health decisions.

Decision: The study can be considered with minor corrections.