Immigrant Families' Health-Related Information Behaviors on Instant Messaging Platforms

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Message

Members of immigrant families engage in complex, multi-layered health-related information behaviours. These are predicated on uncovering “truth” as much as an interest in expressing love and care.
Jim: Looks like masks don’t work as well as we think, mom! http://cbc.ca/news/canada-mask-advice-232.html

10:23pm

Sal: Wow! This whole thing is a scam to get the PPE makers money!!

10:25pm

Mom: You guys are fools. HK has got this figured out. http://scmp.com/news/masks-are-the-way-to-go.html

2:39am

Mom: Wear your masks! I'll send you some tomorrow!

2:39am
“Misinformation” had really fuzzy boundaries in the face of uncertainty

“Trusted source” is not something we all agreed on (“national news”, “public health” all have nation-level complexities)

I don’t think anyone ever clicked the links to read them carefully
Immigrant Family Chats

Typically multi-generational: grandma, grandpa, uncles, aunties, and all my cousins (some that I didn’t even know!)

Living in multiple countries, across multiple cities

Information sources are highly variant
Interview Study

6 participants: adult children of immigrant families

Countries of origin: China, Syria, Somalia, Portugal

Questions: sharing, discussion, verifying
Findings

We observed that older adults preferred information from country of origin: this reflects cultural background, generational bias, and who their friends were!

Contributions are often motivated by love and care.

Withholding information in WhatsApp was common to avoid conflict.

Credibility is a construction (consistency).
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