Article

Participation of Social Media Influencers in Communicating the Global Health Crisis: An Observation of Chinese-Origin Influencers Across Argentina, the UK, and Spain During COVID-19

Yiheng Wang [1,*] and Felipe Navarro Nicoletti [2]

1 Department of Marketing and Communication, University of Cádiz, 11405 Jerez de la Frontera, Cádiz, Spain
2 Instituto de Investigaciones en Diversidad Cultural y Procesos de Cambio (IIDyPCa), CONICET/Universidad Nacional de Río Negro, San Carlos de Bariloche 8400, Río Negro, Argentina; fnavarro.nicoletti@gmail.com
* Correspondence: yiheng.wang@uca.es

Abstract: This work focuses on the digital communicative practices of influencers, as the COVID-19 pandemic has opened a communicational doorway from diverse perspectives, and social media has emerged as an important tool for people to maintain contact and acquire information. Additionally, the preventive and obligatory social distancing measures have driven us to reconsider methods of human interaction. Digital communication as the primary means of connection in the context of COVID-19 encompasses social interaction, entertainment, and informative channels. These facets usually coalesce within a single space or intersect when the practices of influencers are observed. Therefore, three influencers of Chinese origin residing in different countries are analysed, given that China was the initial epicentre of COVID-19. Influencers of Chinese descent living in the United Kingdom, Spain, and Argentina are selected to enable an exploration of more sociocultural diversity. The significance of influencers in disseminating information and content to society continues, according to observation, particularly among younger demographics. Although their main efforts do not reside in communicating COVID-19 within the context of the pandemic, their contribution indicates a complementary solution to fostering social interaction and debunking discourses of hatred aimed at individuals of Chinese or Asian descent.

Keywords: social media; COVID-19; influencers; Chinese origin; citizen participation; health communication

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed profound crises across all dimensions to both individuals and nations and the global community at large (Fuchs, 2021). During the pandemic, social media has emerged as a crucial digital communication tool, playing a pivotal role in enabling people to maintain connections and access vital information, as the continuing and collective effort of social media in everyday life shaped both immediate communicative practices in a global emergency and long-term citizen engagement during this global emergency (Wang & Marí-Sáez, 2021; Zhang & Zhao, 2020).

In the context of the past pandemic, influencers on social media have formed a part of those contributors disseminating and updating information related to the pandemic, as well as educating the public about adhering to prevention protocols (Wang & Marí-Sáez, 2021; Wang & Navarro-Nicoletti, 2023), by means of user-generated content (UGC) to their community. In the contemporary digital age, entertainment education (EE) has

evolved into more diverse forms based on the art of storytelling (Singhal & Rogers, 2012), as it adapts to the social media landscape, continuing to serve as a valuable tool from individual behaviour change at a micro-level to change of social norms at a macro-level (Wang & Marí-Sáez, 2021; Riley et al., 2021; Yue et al., 2019). This evolution sheds light, too, on a transition from traditional education to educational spaces in modernity, with the advancement of information and communication technologies fostering the thriving of EE in varied formats, such as UGC in transmedia storytelling (Navarro-Nicoletti & Wang, 2022). Moreover, as opposed to the officials and institutions based on the identification of authentic citizens (Wang & Marí-Sáez, 2021; Wang & Navarro-Nicoletti, 2023), it implies possibilities of promoting social transformation by citizen participation.

Various studies have emerged in regard to the influences during the COVID-19 pandemic from different perspectives (Abidin, 2021; Abidin et al., 2021; Seçilmiş et al., 2022; Zhang & Zhao, 2020). Nevertheless, there is a great potential to explore diaspora influencers (Zhang & Zhao, 2020), as well as those who focus on the resident country rather than their homeland, or the second generation who originate from other countries. Therefore, this research aims to carry out an analysis of actions taken by social media influencers concerning COVID-19 in Argentina, Spain, and the UK, who are Chinese diaspora influencers to their resident country or of Chinese origin, which also constitutes part of an amplifier project that is not limited to this topic.

The objective of this research is to observe the initiatives of EE carried out by this group of influencers of Chinese origin during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as their perspective of this pandemic. With this research, we aim, on one hand, to contribute communication practices and experiences from the Chinese diaspora in the context of global health crisis and, on the other hand, to provide an alternative and participatory perspective of the micro-influencer or celebrity study.

Social issues like racism and xenophobia will also be considered, based on the hypothesis of the relation between the mentioned topics in their discourse, their ethnic origin, and racism they suffered. The research questions this research asks are the following:

RQ1: What characteristics do these influencers of Chinese origin have in their profile and in their communicative strategies?

RQ2: What information and topics are they seeking to convey by adopting EE initiatives, and how do they plant the information in their initiatives to reach their target audience?

RQ3: What differences exist between influencers from each country in their narrative style and on the same or similar topic they addressed, if there are any?

1.1. Health, Culture, and Social Change and Pandemic Communication

As health forms an essential sector of social development, the importance of citizen participation in promoting social changes in the health sector and crisis response cannot be neglected from the theoretical perspective of communication for the development and social change (Servaes, 2003; Marí-Sáez, 2020). The changes in health needs that have rapidly emerged with the unequal social development between different regions and social and cultural groups in a digital context nowadays also urge us to practise health communication under a multicultural and participatory paradigm, where the focus is on emancipatory social processes such as digital solidarity (Kar et al., 2001; Marí-Sáez, 2022, 2023). During the early stages of the COVID-19 crisis, when multiple challenges were faced with limited resources, health communication illustrated how health inequality is interconnected with structural inequality, according to Dutta and his contributions on the culture-centred approach (CCA) (Dutta, 2007, 2008, 2017a, 2017b, 2020). Communicative inequality is linked to structural inequality in capitalist societies, which highlights the importance of educational initiatives that aim to transform not only individual and group behaviours but also social norms,

institutions, and structures through a cultural dimension (Dutta, 2008, 2017a, 2017b; Dutta & Jamil, 2013), rather than relying solely on technology (Gumucio-Dragón, 2001). In this context, "culture" refers to the dynamic interaction between shared meanings and contexts that shape shared values, beliefs, and practices in everyday life. "Structures", on the other hand, pertain to the patterns of distribution of social, material, political, and economic resources that affect health and well-being (Dutta & Basu, 2008; Sastry et al., 2021).

Moreover, the shortcomings and impact of the fast advancement of ICT in health communication, such as digital divide and infrastructural inequity, are exacerbated among marginalized and disadvantaged populations (Dutta, 2020; Kalocsányiová et al., 2022; Schiavo, 2014, p. 135). This underscores the need for further reflection on current health communication research. The necessity arises not only due to the intertwining of people's health conditions with their political, economic, and cultural circumstances, but also because citizens should play an active role in health promotion processes. This inclusion is essential for identifying better solutions to address the social and political issues exposed by diseases and to promote related social changes, which should not only stay at the micro-level of personal behaviour change but be promoted to the macro-level of social norms and structures (Gumucio-Dragón, 2001; Dutta & Elers, 2020; Marí-Sáez, 2020).

1.2. Social Media, Influencers, and Entertainment Education in Pandemic Communication

The emergence of social media has ushered in a new digital era for society, leading to significant changes in the dissemination of information and people's way of life, as well as new digital cultures. Whether through institutional or media channels, this has profoundly impacted social, cultural, economic, and political issues, which have disproportionately impacted historically marginalized sectors and groups with varying information consumption habits. These inequalities are exacerbated by the fact that many members of society do not interpret official or standardized discourses correctly. For example, individuals from younger generations who grew up in the digital age, particularly those who are avid social media users, often distrust traditional communication styles and institutional media (Wang & Marí-Sáez, 2021; Schmuck & Harff, 2023). As a result, mass communication strategies may not be as effective, and alternative forms of communication are increasingly sought after. This segment of the population is accustomed to different languages and styles of communication, relying on the interaction offered by social media as their primary mode of communication (Guerrero-Pico et al., 2018).

When it comes to interactions on social media, especially when looking at the positive side of empowering individuals by involving audiences and encouraging their participation in sharing and re-creation, it enhances the potential of participatory methods in EE (Riley et al., 2017) by the means of UGCs of social media users who are equipped with qualified health knowledges or are capable of disseminating educational health information with their creativity (Gupta et al., 2013; Kostygina et al., 2020). Educational content online, particularly on social media, can be both entertaining and humorous, which can easily attract viewers and influence the population, particularly among children and adolescents (Onuora et al., 2021). The audiovisual format and the platform itself enable us to perform a nuanced analysis of the videos, including their resources, user interactions, and reactions. This offers the potential for EE to adapt to the new digital context during the pandemic with alternative communicative approaches.

Furthermore, the use of transmedia narratives and diverse tools in EE can expand the domain and adapt to the current digital scenario and language diversity, overcoming the dichotomy between traditional and linear communication approaches. Two key elements are needed to conceive a transmedia narrative according to Scolari (OEI, 2015): an expanded narrative or one with possibilities for expansion and prosumers or individuals who carry

out such actions across various platforms. Influencers function as prosumers in two ways: firstly, they appropriate structured narratives with scientific language and translate it into a more common and accessible language for a larger audience, such as the younger audience more active on social media rather than "official" channels. Secondly, they harness the impact of these "official" discourses to address issues of discrimination that arise.

Regarding the agents in social media interactions capable of enhancing engagement and empowerment through participatory approaches, social media influencers have emerged as a significant force, akin to key opinion leaders (KOLs), in shaping public opinion, since social media has become an integral aspect of daily life. These influencers play a crucial role in influencing public discourse (Abidin, 2021; Lewis, 2020; Li & Feng, 2022). They hold an active function in disseminating knowledge and cultural values, often through innovative and creative entertainment-focused content (Galetti & Costa-Pereira, 2017; Riley et al., 2017; Riley et al., 2021; Yan, 2022) to the large network of followers they build, offering alternative solutions to engage and captivate audiences.

In addition, the categorization of influencers is not only limited to the digital creators on social media associated with monetization by brand collaborations like nowadays. According to Alassani and Göretz (2019), it also includes people with influence on the general public on different levels due to their professions, such as journalists or experts, or celebrities such as public figures in all fields. Namely, other than the characteristic of monetization, influencers can be people who are able to shape public opinion from the nano-level to the micro-level, macro-level, and mega-level (Alassani & Göretz, 2019; Rodrigo-Martín et al., 2021).

The current media ecosystem characterized by digitalization and social media has a strong linkage with the new digital-native generations based on existing studies. They interact with their peer group and family and other users, seek information and knowledge, form their identity (Aran-Ramspott et al., 2018), and generate participatory culture (Burgess & Green, 2009). On the other hand, as the past COVID-19 pandemic was racialized and associated with Chinese communities worldwide, it is worth taking the perspective of cultural identity (Hall, 2011) into consideration. Notions of Bhabha (2011) on the construction of hybrid cultural identity also help us understand how social inequalities were constructed and experienced by Chinese diasporic communities in the context of the COVID-19 health crisis, and how they were challenged or reinforced through communicative practices, such as hate speech and antiracist activism during the past pandemic (Cogo et al., 2024; Costello et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2023).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Design

This research adopts case studies, combined with video content analysis, in the methodology, with consideration of the possibility of studying the cases in an inductive process without neglecting their real context (Stake, 1995; Thomas, 2021; Yin, 2014; Bernete, 2013; Andréu-Abela, 2002), the contributions of digital ethnography (Pink et al., 2016) from a non-technocentric perspective, and mediation over media, following the ideas put forth by scholar Martín-Barbero (1987).

The mediations proposed by Martín-Barbero (1987), particularly in the context of Latin America and its relationship with mass media, highlight the breadth and multiplicity of cultural matrices that evolve over time. In this regard, the emergence of new technologies in Latin America represents a continuation of a longstanding process of modernization in cultural appropriation. While communication through social media in the region contributes to the visibility and expression of local cultures, it simultaneously reflects the influence of "central" cultures, which often impose their agendas.

Case studies are pivotal in research design due to their replicative logic (Eisenhardt, 1989) and fundamental characteristics of the comprehensive investigation in the real context of the specific social phenomenon employing multiple methods qualitatively (Snow & Trom, 2002). The perspective of digital ethnography is also considered in the design, which helps us to identify relevant information and obtain a comprehensive view of the practices and perspectives of what we seek to understand (Ardévol & Gómez-Cruz, 2013; Hine, 2015). This approach allows for the observation and collection of digital traces of the studied activity in digital space based on inductive processes.

Within the methodological perspective, the video content analysis endeavours to interpret the materials and results in an inquiry into the direction and information conveyed within the video content itself. As highlighted by Andréu-Abela (2002), it operates at an interpretative level to draw inferences, for instance, about the impact of videos based on comments, language, sources, and user interactions. Meanwhile, it is considered a systematic methodology (Bernete, 2013), employing categories that adhere to specific criteria, enabling comparative studies. This approach facilitates the identification of continuities, disruptions, similarities, and differences among the selected cases under analysis.

2.2. Criteria of Case Selection and Analytical Process

Concerning the selection process, the geographical location and use of language are considered. This approach facilitates smoother dialogue and comparison across cases. To be specific concerning the analysis process, with the racially stereotyped situation and association with ethnic Chinese communities worldwide being considered, the selection criteria for the cases in this study are delineated as follows in Table 1:

Table 1. Criteria of case selection.

Criteria	Definition
Chinese diaspora in diverse settings	The study prioritizes the overseas Chinese diaspora residing in varied social and cultural environments. The research scope is initially concentrated on those who have departed from the native social and cultural fabric of China and have integrated into foreign contexts.
Acknowledging heterogeneity	Careful consideration is given to the diversity within the overseas Chinese diaspora, including first-generation immigrants who have relocated from China to their host nations, as well as second-generation individuals born in host countries, who are offspring of the first-generation Chinese migrants and hold local citizenship.
Influential figures	In accordance with the categorization of influential individuals from the literature review, a range of opinion leaders are considered. Social media influencers and public figures in entertainment television are specifically targeted for this research.
Comparative analysis across cultures	With the objective of conducting a comparative analysis across distinct social and cultural landscapes, the study concentrates on English-speaking and Spanish-speaking domains. Given the prominence of these two languages in web content, the social and cultural contexts they represent are deemed highly representative.
Regional diversity	From the vantage point of ensuring regional diversity in scholarly contributions, Europe and Latin America are selected. This choice aims to comprehensively include case samples that exhibit unique regional characteristics.

Source: Own creation.

By synthesizing these criteria and combining the search result on the Internet with the keywords "COVID-19" OR "coronavirus" OR "pandemic" AND "Chinese influencer", this research ultimately selected the following cases: a British Chinese influencer of a second-generation Chinese diaspora background in the travel and lifestyle sector in the UK, a first-generation Chinese diaspora celebrity in Spanish entertainment television, and a first-generation Chinese diaspora opinion leader in the language and culture sphere in Argentina. The selection considers the cultural differences between the UK, Spain, and Argentina, where the UK is characterized as more individualistic, Spain is characterized as more collectivist (González-Nuevo et al., 2023), and Argentina has different incidental news exposure in the digital media environment from Spain (Serrano-Puche et al., 2018), where it also shares a collectivist character in culture.

To start the study, data of the profile of each influencer are recorded for observation. Considering the content analysis of the cases studied, their videos on YouTube will be analysed by using the keywords "COVID-19", "coronavirus", and "pandemic" to locate the content about the coronavirus from 2020 to 2022 as the next step. To specify the selection, videos that do not focus on COVID-19 in the content, even though they are shown in the search results, are not selected as studied objects to ensure the coverage of the theme. Then, the two videos with the highest number of views and/or comments are chosen to subsequently conduct the content analysis. The content was collected from transcripts of the selected videos, which were then manually coded and classified to extract key elements for qualitative analysis. The code book is shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Code book of selected content.

First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Topic mentioned	COVID-19-related social issues	Epidemic situation and information updates
		Denial and politicalization of COVID-19 by some Western governments
		COVID-19 hate crimes and discrimination
		Critiques of the irresponsibility of the governments of Western countries and recognition of the Argentina government
	Health information and prevention	Mask use
		Vaccination in China
		Prevention and travel policies in China
	Non-COVID-19 topics	Personal experiences and stories
		Cultural curiosity and exchanges
		Encounters of micro-aggression in everyday life
Sentiments	Positive	Humour
	Neutral	Seriousness
		Responsibility
	Negative	Anger
		Disheartenment
		Fear
		Worry
		Anguish

Table 2. *Cont*.

First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Narrative styles	Dialogue	Talk show conversation
	Monologue	Question answering to followers
		Storytelling of personal stories and experiences
		Raising awareness of antiracism
		Commentating on media coverage from official media of other countries and social media viral posts from netizens
		Truth sharing and interpreting of the COVID-19 and epidemic data
Language	Common language	Informative
		Commentating
		Self-presenting
Tone	Casual	
	Angry	
	Humorous and entertaining	
	Serious	
	Emotional	
	Fearing and worrying	
	Advocating	
Cultural characteristics	Cultural identity	Chinese in the host country
		Asian-born in other countries
	Intercultural communication	Chinese cultural sharing
		Non-Chinese cultural experience sharing
		Culture exchanges with local cultures
		Racism and discrimination target group

Source: Own creation.

All data and contents collected are available to the public based on the setting of the authors, without private information included. Neither intervention that may violate the copyright nor reutilization of the content for reposting are adopted in this research. Thus, according to the YouTube copyright policies, copyright permission is not required.

Indicators encompassing the analysis are the profiles of each case, the aesthetic of videos, structure and characterization of the content, adopted communication strategy (language, tones, sentiments, and narratives), any presented user interactions, and the feedback from the audience (views, likes, and comments). The cultural elements and their perception of COVID-19 as a common citizen from the perspective of the first person during the pandemic are considered. Any observation concerning the citizens' participation and solidarity communication is given particular attention.

3. Results

Based on the methodological design, we collected data from selected content and conducted a comparison of characterization and strategies between the three cases. The basic information of the analysed videos is demonstrated in Tables 3 and 4 below:

Table 3. Basic information of each video.

Case	Date of Publication	Title and Source	Length (min)	Views	Likes	Comments
AR1	03/02/2021	Te CONTAGIASTE de COVID?? Vivirías en ARGENTINA para SIEMPRE?? PREGUNTAS y RESPUESTAS ☆ Eva Chinita	5:51	4285	288	48
AR2	20/04/2020	CHINA MINTIÓ?—La verdad sobre el CORONAVIRUS! ☆ Eva Chinita	6:44	3329	255	55
UK1	13/10/2020	Enough is enough.	17:07	17,485	1400	319
UK2	18/03/2021	Stop Asian Hate. We're humans too.	7:18	77,775	4000	1311
ES1	05/02/2020	Yibing explica cómo se está viviendo el coronavirus en China	6:55	450,028	7500	614
ES2	27/01/2021	Yibing revela el motivo por el que sigue enfadada con Pablo Motos	8:32	114,542	693	40

Source: Own creation.

Table 4. Comparison of cases.

Comparison Elements	AR	ES	UK
Type of influencer	YouTuber	TV show actress	YouTuber
Scene setting	Casual home setting	Entertainment TV show	Casual home setting
Title setting	Attention drawing with keywords in capital letters and form of questions	Informative title of clips extracted from the show	Descriptive and Informative
Description setting	Introduction of the content with invitation of interaction to her audience and self-advertising of her social media account	TV show information with hashtags of names and hosts of the show	Call for antiracist actions with social support resources, details of production of video and self-advertising of her social media account
Content design	Q&A and comments of COVID-19-related social issues and politicalization of the pandemic	Conversation with hosts of the show about life during the pandemic in China and culture talks with jokes	Personal experience sharing before and during the pandemic and raising awareness of antiracism
Content structure	Personal stories in general, intercultural experiences, COVID-19-related comments, and truth sharing	COVID-19-related information in China, intercultural experiences, and Chinese culture sharing	Personal experiences on racist suffering, sincere self-feeling exposing, raising awareness, and calling for responsibility
Narrative styles	Casual question answering and commentary monologue	Descriptive, informative, and humorous dialogue	Storytelling, condemning, and advocating monologue
Language	Common and accessible	Common and accessible	Common and accessible
Tone	Relax (non-COVID-19-related topics), serious (COVID-19-related topics)	Humorous and entertaining	Serious, disheartening, anguish, and advocating
Sentiments	Positive (non-COVID-19-related topics), neutral to negative (COVID-19-related topics)	Neutral (COVID-19-related topics), positive (non-COVID-19-related topics)	Neutral to negative
Cultural characteristics	Cultural identity of home country, representation of Chinese culture, close link with home country, and high cultural assimilation in the host country	Cultural identity of Chinese people, representation of Chinese culture, close link with home country, and high cultural assimilation in the host country	Cultural identity of the birth country, representation of Asian community, less link with Chinese origin

Source: Own creation.

3.1. Argentina Case: @Evahablaespañol

@Evahablaespañol, Qiaoling Ma (Eva, hereinafter) is a Chinese YouTuber who originally came to Argentina to study and has since established her residence there. With a YouTube channel created in July 2017, Eva has garnered a substantial following of 435,000 subscribers as of now. Her active presence extends to various social media platforms,

including Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok, with YouTube being the most prominent and engaged among her audience. Her content predominantly centres on her personal experiences, Chinese and Asian cultures, and her assimilation into Latin American customs, with a particular focus on those specific to Argentina. Topics of her productions span a wide array of subjects, ranging from tasting local foods and beverages to exploring cultural nuances and language differences. Four videos are filtered regarding COVID-19.

The two studied videos both feature home settings. They commence with a straightforward cartoon motion effect depicting her journey from China to Argentina as an introductory image. The videos conclude with end images displaying recommended links for further viewing and an invitation for viewer interaction. Both videos incorporate the same upbeat music, contributing to a cheerful overall effect.

Concerning the content, AR1 is organized as a Q&A session where Eva is seated on a sofa, responding to comments from her followers. The content exudes a casual ambiance that aligns closely with the video's aesthetics. She addresses a total of 13 questions, the majority of which delve into personal matters and her experiences in Argentina. Notably, only two questions pertain to COVID-19, discussing her life during quarantine and whether she has contracted the virus. The questions are posed in a friendly manner, and Eva provides well-articulated responses, fostering a space for cultural exchange through insights into her daily life as an influencer in a Spanish-speaking foreign country.

AR2 is organized around her reactions to events and instances of discrimination against Asian individuals. She addresses comments unfairly blaming exclusively Chinese people for COVID-19, critiques related to the denial of the pandemic, and situations reflecting arrogance and economic motives behind such denialism. Additionally, she discusses the overall situation in Argentina, expressing affirmation for the successful health protection measures implemented.

In the title of AR1, the Spanish word contagiaste (meaning "infected" in English) and COVID are written in capital letters to emphasize the content. However, the content does not strongly correlate with the title, as most of the questions she addresses are more related to her personal life. No COVID-19-related topic is mentioned in the description either, other than saying she would respond to questions collected in her old videos and leaving information to follow her on other social media platforms. She uses capital letters to emphasize the topic such as the words China and mentió (meaning lied in English) in AR2 and coronavirus in the title of AR1, as well as interrogation and exclamation marks to capture the attention of the audience.

Unlike AR1, the title of AR2 is closely aligned with the content of the video. In the description of AR2, in addition to providing information for viewers to follow her, she poses two intriguing questions—whom to blame and whether China has not told the truth—to create suspense and entice her audience to continue watching the video.

In AR1, indirect interaction is maintained throughout the video, and the comment section serves as another avenue for ongoing engagement with her subscribers. The comments predominantly focus on her personality, physical appearance, manner of speaking, and her as an individual. Notably, Eva does not actively respond to the comments, but there is a noticeable diversity in the types of comments received compared to other videos. While the majority express positivism and encouragement towards the influencer, negative comments disapproving of certain political aspects mentioned in the video, such as sanitary measures and assigning blame to China, are present, albeit in fewer numbers.

In AR2, the video draws on a variety of sources, combining evidence from both official media and social media platforms. Official media sources include the German channel DW, which details the beginnings of COVID-19 with suspenseful background music, articles from the Argentine newspaper *Clarín*, and discussions from the Argentine TV programme

Nosotros a la mañana on channel Eltrece, focusing on the use of masks. Other sources observed include news from *La Vanguardia* about the United States and Brazil regarding denial of quarantine, and campaign posts of the stay-at-home Argentine president.

Social media sources encompass clips depicting violence against people of Chinese origin, posted by Chinese users, and visual representations of changes in countries with the highest infection rates during the first wave of the pandemic. The tone and formality levels adopted by Eva in the video vary, initially presenting a serious tone that gradually becomes less formal as the video progresses.

Referring to the content design and style, the comments on AR1 primarily consist of expressions of affection for her content or greetings directed towards her. Most comments in AR2 reflect agreement and support of her analysis, as well as personal reflections on the phenomenon discussed in the video. For instance, "Very interesting analysis Eva, and what a pity about the discrimination that the Chinese (and even other Asian countries) have received because of all this. I look forward to your next video (emoji hug)"[1] [*sic*] (User A, 2020, AR2).

However, a few negative comments criticize her video as not being objective, insisting that China should be the one to blame, or satirize her for the Chinese Communist Party's administration such as: "What a nice clickbait you never said if China lied, but I don't blame you my waifu, you have family there and the communists could retaliate. But I still leave you my like: 3"[2] [*sic*] (User B, 2020, AR2), "Hi Eva, so according to your video it's the West's fault for not wearing a mask and not abiding by what they did in China? Anyway, I still support you. I still support you but it is a video that has no objectivity whatsoever."[3] [*sic*] (User C, 2020, AR2).

3.2. UK Cases: @dejashu

@dejashu, Shu Lin (referred to as Shu hereafter), is a British-born Chinese vlogger who specializes in lifestyle, food, and travel content. Since joining YouTube in January 2011, she has amassed 72,300 subscribers to date. Shu is also active on other major social media platforms such as Instagram, X, and Facebook. Notably, her YouTube channel boasts a larger and more engaged audience compared to her presence on other platforms. It is worth mentioning that Shu actively promotes the significance of representation in the media.

As the coronavirus pandemic tightened its grip, Shu collaborated with the programme *Inside Out* on BBC One to investigate the impact on the Chinese community in London during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, she represented the Chinese community in an episode of the documentary series *A Very British History* on BBC Four. A total of 13 videos were filtered with relevant keywords, with nine directly related to COVID-19.

The two studied videos of hers are filmed at home in a casual setting. Both videos aim to raise awareness and advocate for social justice and responsibility, particularly regarding issues of anti-Asian hate and racism exacerbated by the pandemic. UK1 starts with a clip emphasizing her experience and opinions on the suffering of racism experienced by others, followed by a simple slide effect to commence. UK2 goes straight to the topic without any special image or music effect.

Both videos are structured with her experiences and the sufferings of other Chinese people living overseas during the pandemic and in normal times without the coronavirus, because of stereotypes. She expresses her worry and fear about racism and hate crimes, not only directed towards herself but also towards East and Southeast Asian people, leading to stigma and physical attacks. Additionally, she criticizes and expresses disheartenment towards the media for failing to give visibility to the Asian community. Most importantly, she does not merely advocate for awareness and solidarity but also takes actions to raise

awareness and help the Asian community in the UK. This includes contacting journalists to cover their stories before the first debate on the increase in racism and hate crimes towards East Asians and Southeast Asians by the Member of Parliament (MP) for Luton North, Sarah Owen. She also shares resources and social media accounts that aid the Asian community against racism.

The titles contain simple and regular sentences without elements to draw attention, or the words COVID or pandemic. However, they closely respond to the content as the central idea of the video and aim at a broader dimension beyond COVID-19, advocating for actions against racism. In the descriptions, a summary of the content in a serious tone is composed in the beginning, followed by a list of resources to support people with similar identities as being British but of other origins. This includes links to relevant organizations and their social media accounts, information about the debate by MP Owen, and a petition to her speaking out for this community. Hashtags regarding anti-racism are found in UK2 to enhance visibility in relevant topics.

Unlike the communicative strategies adopted by Eva, Shu shares personal experiences in her everyday life when encountering racism and injustice, expressing strong emotions. In UK1, she emphasizes that she covers the story on her platform not only out of her responsibility to support her community and people like her but also because of the lack of voice from the media in response to the increase in hate crimes against East and Southeast Asians in the UK. In UK2, apart from her authentic feelings of being worried, panicked, and helpless in the situation, she includes her own analysis of the Atlanta Spa shootings, pointing out critical issues such as stigma and stereotypes. She condemns Asian hate and the silence and indifference of people about it, emphasizing the importance of solidarity actions instead of only sympathy and verbal support. Empathy, anguish, and advocacy for anti-racism and diversity constitute the primary tones of her narrative.

Other than her sincerity and critical analysis of racist behaviour and hate crimes, her caring thought for the global Asian community, humble attitude, and apologies for being emotional and feeling as though she has not contributed enough to anti-racism have won her positive responses in the comments, with many expressing solidarity and sharing their own feelings. It is noticeable that she has responded to much of the supporting feedback. Comments are also found from users of other races in different languages, and hashtags of the Stop Asian Hate slogan are used to promote solidarity. Although debates and criticism are generated regarding Asians discriminating against African races overseas, support and empathetic feedback outweigh the negative and opposing comments. This also implies a greater opportunity for social groups sharing similar identities to hers to promote social movements and encourage participation in solidarity through social media. For example:

> "Please don't cry lovely! As a Black British female I can relate to so many of the things you have mentioned in this video. 'But where are you really from?' is a question that has plagued my 29 years of life. The way that Chinese and South-East Asian people have been treated during this pandemic is absolutely awful. Back in February I was speaking to a Chinese lady at my workplace who said I was the first person to actually speak to her for longer than 5 s that day. So upsetting. So sorry to hear that the story has been pulled, it really is an important issue that needs to be aired!" (User D, 2020, UK1)

In UK2, she also made a clear stance of rejection to the racist users and solidarity with all AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) and ESEA (East and South East Asian) individuals. Interaction and support from a celebrity of Asian origin in the UK, composer Sam Yung, has been observed too, which helped gain a positive response from the netizens.

3.3. Spanish Case: Yibing

Yibing Cao, a Chinese native born in Qinhuangdao, currently resides in Spain and is recognized as a public figure for her profession as an actress. She has gained popularity through her television collaborations, notably for her participation in the renowned entertainment programme *El Hormiguero* on Antena 3. This programme entertains the audience with a distinct cultural perspective represented by the mentioned Chinese guest. While private accounts or public figure accounts on mainstream social media platforms were not found, her official YouTube channel on Antena 3 is considered a reference, boasting eight million subscribers to date. A total of 26 videos were located using the keywords, with 23 directly related to COVID-19.

Both of the studied videos feature a talk show dynamic between Yibing and the programme hosts. The content is constructed with COVID-19-related updates in China introduced at the beginning (34% in the content of ES1 and 17% of ES2). There are occasional mentions of situations in Spain or worldwide, often in brief, serving as a connection to the cultural content. This is presented with jokes or Yibing's personal stories about both China and Spain from her unique perspective, constituting the primary entertaining content.

When addressing COVID-19-related topics in China, Yibing delves into details such as updates on epidemic control, the everyday life of Chinese citizens, and vaccination efforts during the pandemic. Simultaneously, she showcases Chinese cultures or her personal experiences in China and Spain that are relevant or introduced by the topic they are discussing. This approach offers a first-person perspective and positions Yibing as an eyewitness to the cultural dynamics and experiences related to the pandemic. Official news clips from Chinese television channels are presented as supplementary information and evidence of facts, displayed on the screen for the audience. The objective is to provide an accurate understanding of the real situation in China. However, it is notable that in both clips, neither the hosts nor Yibing are wearing masks as a protective measure, even after it became officially obligatory to wear protection and keep social distance in Spain.

The titles feature highlights extracted from the topics discussed in her show to captivate attention. Both titles present descriptive information in regular sentences, including the name of the programme, without the use of capital letters to emphasize keywords, exclamation or interrogation marks, or hashtags for specific topics. In the descriptions, aside from information and links related to the programme and hashtags for the guest, the programme, and the TV channel, no COVID-19-related resources or hashtags are included.

In terms of communicative strategy, given that it is an entertainment TV programme, the tone and narratives maintain an easy and humorous approach, even when discussing COVID-19-related topics. Yibing conveys information and data related to the pandemic through jokes and interactions with the hosts. This is combined with insights into Chinese culture and traditions, along with lively performances, all intended to entertain the audience.

These clips have garnered significant visibility. In the comments, we observed the appeal that actress Yibing holds due to her humour and her skill in communicating cultures. There are also discussions related to the coronavirus topic, expressing appreciation for the information provided about COVID-19 in China from her perspective:

> "I love this girl, she's super nice. By the way... When the virus is over and everything is fixed, send Chinese workers and electricians to Malaga, let's see if they finish the fucking works hahaha porq still have more in mind, I think I'm dying and I don't even see it. It took them 10 days to build an incredible hospital in China."[4] [*sic*] (User E, 2020, ES1)

However, there are also irrelevant discussions about the content, mocking comments about her accent, and dissenting voices: "I never thought that our death would also be

'Made In China'."[5] [*sic*] (User F, 2020, ES2). In summary, most comments primarily focus more on the humour and charm of the programme and the actress rather than these specific details. In the limited discussions about coronavirus, it is mainly about the numbers of infected cases. Only two comments criticize their improper way of greeting and not wearing masks for protection. One viewer addresses that there is a lot of disinformation in the content, leading to a small discussion under this thread about the number of infected cases.

4. Discussion

4.1. Comparison of the Cases

The studied cases illustrate diverse communicative strategies influenced by the distinct types and identities of influencers. In the cases of Argentina and the UK, the influencers are established YouTubers with years of activity on the platform, providing them with a substantial audience to convey COVID-19-related messages addressing the health crisis and its ramifications in various dimensions. In contrast, the case of Spain involves a public figure from entertainment TV programmes who leverages the channel to communicate about COVID-19 to the extensive audience of the programme. Despite these differences, a common ground is identified: the impact of influencers on their respective audiences serves as a bridge facilitating efficient communication between them and their communities.

Simultaneously, the distinctive characteristics of each case are highlighted. For instance, the influencers from Argentina and Spain make a deliberate effort to capture attention from their audiences by using emphasis on keywords or crafting curiosity-triggering sentences in the titles. In contrast, the UK case employs simple sentences but delves into serious topics. The nature of the Spanish case, being an entertainment TV show, influences the content, following the script of the programme. ES1 was filmed before the official announcement of quarantine in Spain, with a significant portion focusing on the everyday life of the pandemic in China. ES2, recorded in the beginning of 2021, reflects the normalization of pandemic precautions in Spain and the implementation of vaccination strategies. The show incorporates interaction between the influencer and the host in the title, joking that she is still upset with him without providing an explanation, creating curiosity, and encouraging viewers to click the link to discover more.

In the descriptions of the analysed videos, the cases of Argentina and Spain share a similarity, as they contain primarily self-advertisement, including links to their personal social media accounts or those of the programme and TV channel to follow. In contrast, the case of the UK has made more effort in advocating for social justice and responsibility in this section. Not only does she compose a summary of the social issue that she addressed to help raise awareness among her audience, but she also puts it into real action by sharing resources to promote solidarity.

In terms of content, various types of COVID-19-related information are delivered from different perspectives, highly related to the identity and character of each profile. In the case of Argentina, being a permanent resident in Argentina, she does not delve into the topic or its relationship with Argentina, considering her Chinese origin. When she comments on the pandemic, her role is more of a commentator, particularly regarding the mentality and political responses to the coronavirus in the West and concerns about the economy. In the case of Spain, COVID-19-related conversations serve as an introduction to the rest of the cultural content delivered by the Chinese guest, considering the nature of the TV programme focused on entertainment. In the case of the UK, where her identity is British-born Chinese, she strongly focuses on racism and hate crimes exacerbated by the pandemic, drawing from her encounters and experiences with stigma and suffering of people sharing her situation.

Regarding health information in the content, in the case of Argentina, emphasis is placed on the use of masks for protection. Beyond the necessity of their use, she also mentions that although she had prepared all the protective products, she refrained from abusing their use out of fear of social retaliation due to her Asian heritage, and she is not afraid of using them for fear of racist attacks. In the case of Spain, updates on the pandemic and the vaccination process are demonstrated for informative purposes, but she has not provided her own comments on these measures nor motivated the audience to follow specific actions. In the case of the UK, as mentioned earlier, the focus is specifically on raising awareness of anti-racism. Although she does mention the taxi driver wearing a mask and gloves as protection when serving her in her personal experience, she addresses this from the perspective of racism towards the East Asian community.

In comparing their strategies, all three cases utilize information from third parties as evidence to debunk disinformation and misinformation and support their arguments. As for their differences, entertainment is clearly a key aspect in the case of Spain due to the nature of the TV programme. In the cases of Argentina and the UK as YouTubers, although they both address discrimination and racism against Chinese individuals overseas, the case of Argentina primarily demonstrates cases of other people with her indignation. On the other hand, the case of the UK condemns discriminators and attackers through her own life experiences and those of others. Additionally, it reflects her sincere concern for the Asian community worldwide and her feelings of helplessness towards the situation and the silence of the public about it.

The initial epicentre of the pandemic in China particularly mobilized its citizens to transmit information that aimed to demystify narratives of discrimination and xenophobia towards them. Therefore, in the digital space, a place was found where creating, transmitting, and reconfiguring content proposed in an entertainment format could simultaneously provide adequate information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. As Navarro-Nicoletti (2021) stresses, "the COVID-19 pandemic has led us to rethink spaces, practices, dialogues, encounters, and disconnections, which as a society we have had to reconfigure in order to respect social distance measures while trying to live as viably as possible". The studied cases have a profile clearly aimed at entertainment and interaction with their users, which requires them to readapt or generate content that could contribute to understanding what was happening in terms of healthcare, policies, and sociocultural repercussions. Nevertheless, due to the logic of digital capitalism, the "attention" of the public is an essential part of the entertainment strategy on social media, which carries its disadvantage on the other side of the coin.

For instance, in the case of Spain, whose main goal is to entertain the audience, there is no focus on promoting solidarity actions but only the COVID-19-related topics as introductions under the background of the COVID-19 pandemic to transfer to other entertaining topics related to the identity of the guest actress. In the cases of Argentina and the UK, although they have discussed social issues such as racism related to groups with a similar identity and origin to themselves, there has not been a trend to delve deeper into topics that could drive social movements, considering that they define themselves as lifestyle or cultural Youtubers. To them, personal life and shared experiences continue to hold a prominent place compared to discussions on social issues.

The use of social media and EE holds significant potential for fostering social movement and encouraging citizen participation, providing an alternative space for promoting social change in the digital realm. It underscores the power of individuals and influencers to address social issues that lack visibility and representation and may be overlooked by mainstream media. As it is voiced in the case of the UK, "If the news won't cover this, I'll cover it on my platform" (Description, UK1).

Nevertheless, both the possibilities and inherent risks associated with initiatives on social media need to be carefully considered. It is important not to idealize these platforms, recognizing that their ambivalence to entertainment strategies can potentially reduce the gravity of the issues being addressed. Improper appropriation and partial representation, as well as biased framing, can lead to increased noise and polarization of public opinions. The diversified feedback from the audience of the case of Spain highlights the complexities and challenges associated with using social media for impacting communication.

Moreover, while influencer strategies may effectively convey messages to their audience, such success demands unwavering passion and dedication to the specific social issue. In the studied cases of Argentina and the UK, the primary focus of the influencers is not initially centred on addressing social issues. Rather, their engagement with such topics is prompted by a sense of obligation, spurred by the challenging situations and adversity they encountered. This is particularly pronounced in the case of the UK, where a profound sense of social responsibility and a feeling of helplessness in the face of escalating hate crimes against those sharing her identity during the pandemic motivated the influencer to take a more active stance on social issues.

Concerning the audience perspective, the ability to relate to influencers and interpret their messages varies based on individual identities and life experiences. This observation prompts a consideration of how these tools can be effectively employed to raise awareness and drive social transformation without undermining critical issues. For instance, in the cases of Argentina and Spain, the audience tends to focus more on personal charisma, cultural aspects, and narratives of the influencers, rather than the specific social issues they discuss. Conversely, in the case of the UK, the influencer's identity and experiences resonate widely, garnering support from individuals with similar identities across different races and countries. This broad support is not solely attributed to her sincerity and personal encounters but also stems from her advocacy for a diverse range of Asian communities, extending beyond those of Chinese origin.

4.2. Possibilities of the Role of Influencers and EE from Participatory Perspective

Participation emerges as a crucial factor in digital communication. The cases under discussion exemplify a thriving participatory process, fostering interactive, dynamic, and extended modes of communication. Despite the potentially negative aspects of narratives related to the pandemic or discriminatory discourses, it is noteworthy how prosumers adeptly appropriate these discourses to transform them into positive and inclusive narratives. Therefore, participation is recognized as a fundamental variable not only in understanding the feedback of digital content but also in the "growth" of images of influencers.

The new era invites us to consider new ways of relating and communicating. While the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the exploration of alternative modes of communication, it also emphasized the importance of considering what is communicated, how it is expressed, and the channels through which it is conveyed. Digital communication practices are not unprecedented, and their existence predates the pandemic. Nevertheless, there is a specific imperative to closely scrutinize the discourses and narratives being disseminated. These narratives not only address globally significant information but also illuminate other narratives that were present but might not have garnered the desired visibility.

As evident in the analysed cases, influencers play a multifaceted role by not only disseminating content but also interpreting official communications on health practices. However, their role surpasses mere transmission; it involves a nuanced exploration of racism and xenophobia, warranting elucidation. Drawing on the proposition of Martín-Barbero (1987) that advocates focusing on mediation rather than the media itself, influencers adeptly reshape discourses to spotlight instances of discrimination and proactively address them.

Scolari et al. (2019) encourage a shift moving from the pedagogy of enunciation to the pedagogy of participation, from a mono-media (centred on the book, a single speaker, and a passive learner) to a transmedia approach (circularity and active learner–producer), where educational processes are open, massive, online, and sometimes creative. Though not an educational process per se, it serves a certain pedagogical purpose, be it in the health-related content transmitted or in confronting discourses of discrimination. This prompts an exploration of similar narratives linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, encompassing instances of discrimination against individuals of Chinese origin, informative discourses, care methods, and more. These are addressed by diverse influencers, platforms, and modes of transmission, contributing to the evolution and expansion of the initial narrative.

Put succinctly, this research has delved into the communicative practices and strategies employed by influencers, examining their engagement with social issues and tensions within the context of COVID-19 across three distinct countries. This study enriches our understanding of the role influencers play in navigating crises, particularly through the lens of their identity and its interaction with the crisis in diverse local contexts.

In the limited COVID-19-related content filtered in the cases, a diverse range of alternative solutions for communicating information about the pandemic can be discerned. These alternatives encompass the form of content, narrative style, and the channels utilized for message dissemination, including collaborations with television programmes and voluntary actions on social media. While particular narratives or content types might conventionally be associated with specific platforms, like health-related information on official channels, we observe an adaptation of such content for dissemination in ways that actively engage audiences.

The adoption of strategies involving the citation of news and official information to address the situation and counter disinformation is evident in the Argentina case. In the UK case, the utilization of genuine emotion is acknowledged, while in the case of Spain, humour and playful jokes are employed. The content takes various forms, including data updates, audience interactions, and appearances on television programmes. Furthermore, themes related to the discrimination against Asians based on their ethnic identity are identified in this content. The demonstrated sense of responsibility and advocacy for awareness and justice also provides insights into addressing social issues exacerbated by this health crisis.

Nevertheless, it is crucial not to overlook the limitations in the strategies employed by influencers on social media. While their influence holds the potential for promoting social transformation, their personal focus and orientation towards specific topics may not always align with social issues, as discussed earlier. This divergence relates to their ongoing efforts to mobilize such topics on social media. Consequently, there remains ample room for exploration in terms of citizen participation through social media, particularly for influencers with an identity and origin in other countries connecting with a local audience that may differ from their own.

5. Conclusions

This work sheds light on the importance of supplemental functions and alternative solutions when compared to institutional communication by social media influencers of different origins in their respective social contexts, and it contributes to citizens' engagement in the digital space during crisis response, such as the recent COVID-19 health crisis. It is not only limited to health communication related to the pandemic as a public health emergency of international significance, but it also helps in raising awareness of social issues affecting minorities and marginalized social groups, such as stigma and Asian hate, as well as voicing solidarity and social justice through the identity they share with the audience and personal experience sharing to link with them, to promote the advocated social change

with the attention and support from the social and institutional dimensions instead of only personal behaviour change. It also implies the potential of this strategy that favours citizens participating in social topics to provide more perspectives and discourses other than the frame and agenda set by established institutions and media organizations to promote democracy in an extended dimension of more fields such as peace and humanitarian aid. Last but not least, this study contributes to the field development of social media and influencer studies regarding identities, such as the studied cases, and serves as an experience for future crisis responses.

Notes

[1] The original text in Spanish of this comment is as below:
Muy interesante tu análisis Eva, y que lástima la discriminación que han recibido los chinos (e incluso los de otros países asiáticos) a causa de todo esto. Espero con ansías tu próximo video.

[2] The original text in Spanish of this comment is as below:
Que rico clickbait nunca dijiste si China mintió, pero no te culpo mi waifu, tienes familia allá y los comunistas te podrían dar represalias. Pero igual te dejo mi like.

[3] The original text in Spanish of this comment is as below:
Hola Eva, entonces según tu vídeo la culpa es de occidente por no usar barbijo y no acatar lo que hicieron en China?. En fin. Igual te banco pero es un vídeo que no tiene objetividad alguna.

[4] The original text in Spanish of this comment is as below:
Me encanta ésta chica, es super simpática. Por cierto. . . Cuando se acabe esto del virus y se arregle todo mandar chinos obreros y electricistas a Malaga, aver si terminan ya la putas obras ellos jajaja porq todavia tienen más en mente, esa ya me muero creo yni la veo. 10dias tardaron en crear un hospital en china increíble

[5] The original text in Spanish of this comment is as below:
Nunca pensé que nuestra muerte tambien sería "Made In China".

References

Abidin, C. (2021). Mapping internet celebrity on TikTok: Exploring attention economies and visibility labours. *Cultural Science Journal*, *12*(1), 77–103. [CrossRef]

Abidin, C., Lee, J., Barbetta, T., & Miao, W. S. (2021). Influencers and COVID-19: Reviewing key issues in press coverage across Australia, China, Japan, and South Korea. *Media International Australia*, *178*(1), 114–135. [CrossRef]

Alassani, R., & Göretz, J. (2019). Product placements by micro and macro influencers on Instagram. In G. Meiselwitz (Ed.), *Social computing and social media* (pp. 251–267). Springer.

Andréu-Abela, J. (2002). *Las técnicas de análisis de contenido: Una revisión actualizada*. UG.

Aran-Ramspott, S., Fedele, M., & Tarragó, A. (2018). Funciones sociales de los Youtubers y su influencia en la preadolescencia. *Comunicar*, *57*, 71–80. [CrossRef]

Ardévol, E., & Gómez-Cruz, E. (2013). Digital ethnography and media practices. In A. N. Valdivia (Ed.), *The international encyclopedia of media studies*. Wiley. [CrossRef]

Bernete, F. (2013). Análisis de contenido (cuantitativo y cualitativo). In *Conocer lo social: Estrategias y técnicas de construcción y análisis de datos* (pp. 221–263). A. L. Marín, & A. Noboa (Coords.). Fragua.

Bhabha, H. (2011). Culture's in-between. In *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 53–60). SAGE Publications Ltd. [CrossRef]

Burgess, J., & Green, J. (2009). *YouTube—Online Video and Participatory Culture*. Polity Press.

Cogo, D., Perez Neto, L., & Huertas Bailén, A. (2024). #IamNotAVirus—Transnational activism of chinese diaspora on social media during COVID-19. *index.Comunicación*, *14*(2), 321–345. [CrossRef]

Costello, M., Cheng, L., Luo, F., Hu, H., Liao, S., Vishwamitra, N., Li, M., & Okpala, E. (2021). COVID-19: A pandemic of anti-Asian cyberhate. *Journal of Hate Studies*, *17*(1), 108–118. [CrossRef]

Dutta, M. J. (2007). Communicating about culture and health: Theorizing culture-centered and cultural sensitivity approaches. *Communication Theory*, *17*(3), 304–328. [CrossRef]

Dutta, M. J. (2008). *Communicating health: A culture-centered approach*. Polity.

Dutta, M. J. (2017a). Migration and health in the construction industry: Culturally centering voices of Bangladeshi workers in Singapore. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *14*(2), 132. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Dutta, M. J. (2017b). Negotiating health on dirty jobs: Culture-centered constructions of health among migrant construction workers in Singapore. In M. Yuping, & A. Rukhsana (Eds.), *Culture, migration, and health communication in a global context* (pp. 45–59). Routledge. [CrossRef]

Dutta, M. J. (2020). COVID-19, authoritarian neoliberalism, and precarious migrant work in Singapore: Structural violence and communicative inequality. *Frontiers in Communication*, *5*, 58. [CrossRef]

Dutta, M. J., & Basu, A. (2008). Meanings of health: Interrogating structure and culture. *Health Communication*, *23*(6), 560–572. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Dutta, M. J., & Elers, S. (2020). Public relations, indigeneity and colonization: Indigenous resistance as dialogic anchor. *Public Relations Review*, *46*(1), 101852. [CrossRef]

Dutta, M. J., & Jamil, R. (2013). Health at the margins of migration: Culture-centered co-constructions among Bangladeshi immigrants. *Health Communication*, *28*(2), 170–182. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building Theories from Case Study Research. *Academy of Management Review*, *14*(4), 532–550. [CrossRef]

Fuchs, C. (2021). *Communicating COVID-19: Everyday life, digital capitalism, and conspiracy theories in pandemic times*. Emerald Publishing Limited.

Galetti, M., & Costa-Pereira, R. (2017). Scientists need social media influencers. *Science*, *357*(6354), 880–881. [CrossRef]

González-Nuevo, C., Johnston, M., Ryding, F. C., Postigo, Á., Cuesta Izquierdo, M., & Kuss, D. J. (2023). *Concern about appearance on social networking sites: Validation and cross-cultural comparison between UK and Spain*. [CrossRef]

Guerrero-Pico, M., Masanet, M.-J., & Scolari, C. A. (2018). Toward a typology of young produsers: Teenagers' transmedia skills, media production, and narrative and aesthetic appreciation. *New Media & Society*, *21*(2), 336–353. [CrossRef]

Gumucio-Dragón, A. (2001). Comunicación para la salud: El reto de la participación. *Agujero Negro*. Available online: https://www.academia.edu/1365096/Comunicaci%C3%B3n_para_la_salud_el_reto_de_la_participaci%C3%B3n (accessed on 22 January 2020).

Gupta, A., Tyagi, M., & Sharma, D. (2013). Use of social media marketing in healthcare. *Journal of Health Management*, *15*(2), 293–302. [CrossRef]

Hall, S. (2011). Introduction: Who needs 'identity'? In *Questions of cultural identity* (pp. 1–17). SAGE Publications Ltd. [CrossRef]

Hine, C. (2015). *Ethnography for the internet: Embedded, embodied and everyday* (1st ed.). Routledge. [CrossRef]

Kalocsányiová, E., Essex, R., & Fortune, V. (2022). Inequalities in COVID-19 Messaging: A Systematic Scoping Review. *Health Communication*, *38*(12), 2549–2558. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Kar, S., Alcalay, R., & Alex, S. (2001). Changing health needs: The imperative for a multicultural paradigm. In *Health communication: A multicultural perspective* (pp. 3–20). SAGE Publications, Inc. [CrossRef]

Kostygina, G., Tran, H., Binns, S., Szczypka, G., Emery, S., Vallone, D., & Hair, E. (2020). Boosting Health Campaign Reach and Engagement Through Use of Social Media Influencers and Memes. *Social Media+Society*, *6*(2). [CrossRef]

Lee, Y. J., Haley, E., & Shang, Y. (2023). Exploring anti-Asian racism activism on Twitter during the early era of COVID-19 hate crimes: Implications for marketers' social purpose communication strategy. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, *45*(1), 88–111. [CrossRef]

Lewis, R. (2020). "This is what the news won't show you": YouTube creators and the reactionary politics of micro-celebrity. *Television & New Media*, *21*(2), 201–217. [CrossRef]

Li, X., & Feng, J. (2022). Influenced or to be influenced: Engaging social media influencers in nation branding through the lens of authenticity. *Global Media and China*, *7*(2), 219–240. [CrossRef]

Marí-Sáez, V. M. (2020). Institutionalization and implosion of communication for development and social change in Spain: A case study. In J. Servaes (Ed.), *Handbook of communication for development and social change*. Springer. [CrossRef]

Marí-Sáez, V. M. (2022). NGO-ization of solidarity in the digital age. In G. Gonçalves, & E. Oliveira (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of nonprofit communication* (pp. 39–45). Routledge.

Marí Sáez, V. M. (2023). Comunicação, solidariedade e cooperação na era digital. *Comunicação E Sociedade*, *44*, e023026. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Martín-Barbero, J. (1987). *De los medios a las mediaciones. Comunicación, cultura y hegemonía*. Gustavo Gilli.

Navarro-Nicoletti, F. (2021). La comunicación alternativa, comunitaria y popular en clave interdisciplinar: El caso de la radio comunitaria en contexto de COVID-19. *Revista Latinoamericana de Comunicación*. Educación e Historia, *2*(2), 19–37.

Navarro-Nicoletti, F., & Wang, Y. (2022). Educación transmedia y Educomunicación/Eduentretenimiento en contexto de pandemia de COVID-19. In S. L. Dykinson (Ed.), *Retos y experiencias de la renovación pedagógica y la innovación en las ciencias sociales* (pp. 280–297). M. A. Martín-López, & C. S. Rodríguez (Coords.).

Onuora, C., Torti Obasi, N., Ezeah, G. H., & Gever, V. C. (2021). Effect of dramatized health messages: Modelling predictors of the impact of COVID-19 YouTube animated cartoons on health behaviour of social media users in Nigeria. *International Sociology*, *36*(1), 124–140. [CrossRef]

Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos. (2015). Transmedia y Educación. Carlos A. Scolari. Youtube. Available online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPbDUBiEnWA (accessed on 22 January 2020).

Pink, S., Horst, H., Postill, J., Hjorth, L., Lewis, T., & Tacchi, J. (2016). Ethnography in a digital world. In *Digital ethnography: Principles and practices*. Sage.

Riley, A. H., Sangalang, A., Critchlow, E., Brown, N., Mitra, R., & Campos Nesme, B. (2021). Entertainment-education campaigns and COVID-19: How three global organizations adapted the health communication strategy for pandemic response and takeaways for the future. *Health Communication*, *36*(1), 42–49. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

Riley, A. H., Sood, S., & Robichaud, M. (2017). Participatory Methods for Entertainment–Education: Analysis of Best Practices. *Journal of Creative Communications*, *12*(1), 62–76. [CrossRef]

Rodrigo-Martín, L., Rodrigo-Martín, I., & Muñoz-Sastre, D. (2021). Los Influencers Virtuales como herramienta publicitaria en la promoción de marcas y productos. Estudio de la actividad comercial de Lil Miquela. *Revista latina de comunicación social*, *79*(1), 69–90. [CrossRef]

Sastry, S., Stephenson, M., Dillon, P., & Carter, A. (2021). A meta-theoretical systematic review of the culture-centered approach to health communication: Toward a refined, "nested" model. *Communication Theory*, *31*(3), 380–421. [CrossRef]

Schiavo, R. (2014). *Health communication: From theory to practice* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Schmuck, D., & Harff, D. (2023). Popular among distrustful youth? Social media influencers' communication about COVID-19 and young people's risk perceptions and vaccination intentions. *Health Communication*, *39*(12), 2730–2743. [CrossRef]

Scolari, C., Lugo-Rodriguez, N., & Masanet, M. (2019). Educación transmedia: De los contenidos generados por los usuarios a los contenidos generados por los estudiantes. *Revista latina de comunicación social*, *74*, 116–132. [CrossRef]

Seçilmiş, C., Özdemir, C., & Kılıç, İ. (2022). How travel influencers affect visit intention? The roles of cognitive response, trust, COVID-19 fear and confidence in vaccine. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *25*(17), 2789–2804. [CrossRef]

Serrano-Puche, J., Fernández, C. B., & Rodríguez-Virgili, J. (2018). Political information and incidental exposure in social media: The cases of Argentina, Chile, Spain, and Mexico. *Doxa Comunicación*, *27*, 19–42. [CrossRef]

Servaes, J. (2003). *Approaches to development communication*. UNESCO.

Singhal, A., & Rogers, E. (2012). *Entertainment-education: A communication strategy for social change*. Routledge.

Snow, D., & Trom, D. (2002). The case study and the study of social movements. In B. Klandermans, & S. Staggenborg (Eds.), *Methods of social movement research* (pp. 146–72). University of Minnesota Press.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage.

Thomas, G. (2021). *How to do your case study*. Sage.

Wang, Y., & Marí-Sáez, V. M. (2021). The COVID-19 pandemic in China and the entertainment education as communicative strategy against the misinformation. In *Cosmovisión de la comunicación en redes sociales en la era postdigital* (pp. 675–698). J. Sierra-Sánchez, & A. Barrientos-Báez (Coords.). McGraw Hill.

Wang, Y., & Navarro-Nicoletti, F. (2023). Entertainment education and citizens' participation in COVID-19 pandemic response: A case study of Chinese citizens on social media. *Social Sciences*, *12*(10), 1–17. [CrossRef]

Yan, R. (2022). Wanghong as social media entertainment in China: By David Craig, Jian Lin and Stuart Cunningham, Cham, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 197 pp., £74.99. ISBN 978-3-030-65375-0. *Information, Communication & Society*, *26*(3), 658–661. [CrossRef]

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Sage.

Yue, Z., Wang, H., & Singhal, A. (2019). Using television drama as entertainment-education to tackle domestic violence in China. *Journal of Development Communication*, *30*, 30–44.

Zhang, L., & Zhao, S. (2020). Diaspora micro-influencers and COVID-19 communication on social media: The case of Chinese-speaking YouTube vloggers. *Multilingua*, *39*(5), 553–563. [CrossRef]