Guest editorial: COVID-19 Pandemic and Health Informatics Part 2

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With an overwhelming interest in high-quality submission (Huang *et al.*, 2021), we continue with Part II of our special issue on COVID-19 Pandemic and Health Informatics. The selection of papers for Part II of this special issue coincided with the global spread of the Omicron variant. While this variant seems less lethal, it spreads more quickly and generates more breakthrough cases than its predecessors. We anticipate more continuing and breakthrough research in informatics related to COVID-19 as the pandemic evolves. Up to December 2021, we accepted the following 15 papers for the second series of the special issue.

1. Re-engineering in learning and library services during the pandemic

Many countries and cities were locked down during the pandemic to avoid spreading the COVID-19. Most schools were closed, and students continued their studies through online training. The trend of reading habits moving from print to electronic (Wang *et al.*, 2016; Yu *et al.*, 2021) has accelerated (Sung and Chiu, 2021). While online learning is not new, it was not the major learning pathway until the pandemic. Feng *et al.* (2022) collected data from Zhihu, a Chinese website similar to Quora of the US, and conducted an emotional analysis and topic mining on "online training courses (OTC)". They noted that the Chinese public was gradually accepting OTC. In addition, due to the lockdown, most academic libraries were either closed or provided limited services. In this connection, Leung *et al.* (2022) explored the correlations of user perceptions, academic library usage and social capital during this period. They noted that library users adjusted themselves to use these facilities with social distancing in their minds. Concerning this, readers may compare the results of their findings with those done before COVID-19 under the same context (Zhou *et al.*, 2021; Chan *et al.*, 2020), as well as the study on cultural library spaces by Noh (2021). Yu *et al.* (2022) also summarized some pragmatic operation management measures of libraries in Hong Kong under COVID-19.

Readers may also be interested in some related articles in Part I of our special issue (Huang *et al.*, 2021). Fasae *et al.* (2021) reported that academic libraries in Nigeria responded to COVID-19 at the beginning of the pandemic by adjusting how they provided their services to meet user needs. Meng *et al.* (2021) used the Kano model to study the university students' health information service needs from the academic libraries in China, providing some suggestions for health information, especially in the post-COVID-19 age.

2. Public perception of COVID-19 vaccination and social distancing

In the past two years, we have seen a lot of health misinformation spread on the Internet, which makes many people feel puzzled and panic and, in some cases, directs people to make wrong health decisions (Ho *et al.*, 2022). Much misinformation is about the COVID-19 vaccination information, and we have two papers discussing this issue. Li *et al.* (2022) experimented with 36 students to examine the influence of prior attitude, perceived health threat level, and information limit on their selective exposure to and recall of COVID-19

vaccination information. They found that the prior attitude towards the COVID-19 vaccination would affect a person's attitude toward viewing information. In addition, their perceived health threat level would also affect a person to recall of the information viewed. Therefore, they suggested vaccination campaigns should focus on reaching people with a negative attitude. In addition, Mir *et al.* (2022) studied public sentiments related to COVID-19 vaccines through Twitter. They noted that most tweets expressed positive sentiments, and these positive tweets had the highest impacts in terms of likes and retweets. They suggested public health policymakers could see public reaction via Twitter messages. The last paper on this topic, written by Thanh *et al.* (2022), focused on risk communication in enhancing COVID-19 risk perceptions and adopting related preventive behaviour taken by street vendors in Vietnam. They showed that street vendors in Vietnam perceived high risks associated with COVID-19 and adopted preventive behaviour.

Readers may also be interested in some articles on related information behaviour in Part I of our special issue (Huang *et al.*, 2021). A cross-sectional survey (Naveed *et al.*, 2021) showed the prevalence of conspiracy beliefs and fear of COVID-19 among Pakistan university students and how their conspiracy beliefs could predict their fear of COVID-19. Nguyen and Le (2021) investigated how to strengthen the uptake of older people's COVID-19 behavioural outcomes due to information value and perceived threat through social media, which presented plausible reasons for behavioural disclosure, including facemask wearing, handwashing and social distancing. Li *et al.* (2021) selected the enumeration data of the early COVID-19 theme papers spread on social media networks as the research object and explored the law and characteristics of the spread of scientific papers on social media platforms. Readers may also be interested in Hasan *et al.* (2021), who examined the pros and cons of applying blockchain technology from the perspective of epidemic prevention and control using data collected from China through case studies.

3. Use of contact tracing apps and telemedicine during the pandemic

The pandemic provides opportunities for advancing contact tracing and telemedicine technology. Nguyen *et al.* (2022) explored the adoption of contact tracing apps in the US through partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) and fuzzy set/ qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA). They showed that health risk perception, health information orientation and perceived usefulness of the contact tracing apps positively affected users' adoption and actual use of these apps. On the other hand, Rahi (2022) investigated the adoption behaviour of telemedicine during the pandemic using data collected from Pakistani citizens. The result suggested that the adoption of telemedicine could be enhanced by improving user performance expectancy and effort expectancy. Readers may also be interested in Rocha *et al.* (2021), who proposed an original information system for epidemic control based on contact tracing in Part I of our special issue.

4. Research funding and bibliometric research

As we expect, many research fundings are invested, and research opportunities have been created due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Shueb *et al.* (2022) mapped the funding status of COVID-19 research using data retrieved from the Web of Science (WoS) and presented their finding. On the other hand, Loan and Shah (2022) used quantitative and visualization approaches to map coronavirus research from 1989 to 2020. Further, Riahinia *et al.* (2022) used social network analysis to study the synergistic networks for COVID-19 research. Last but not least, Zhu and Lei (2022) used a dependency-based machine learning approach to demonstrate that information retrieval methods can help researchers find the latest trends of COVID-19 research. In addition, Wu *et al.* (2022) also reviewed the existing evaluation

methods of open government health data. They proposed a tool for accurate assessment of public health data for decision-making during the pandemic.

Readers may also be interested in some related articles in Part I of our special issue. Danesh *et al.* (2021) reported the topic modelling of the global coronavirus publications in the last 50 years with applied text mining and Latent Dirichlet allocation. Saab *et al.* (2021) developed a deterministic model that quantifies previously adopted preventive measures driven by the reported number of deaths in Italy and India and used it to derive the optimal exiting policy using the inverse dynamics of the model. Feng *et al.* (2021b) found that the growth sequence of the number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases per day had a significant cluster of fluctuations. They noted that there are four inflection points in the global time series of new confirmed cases and the number of deaths per day. In addition, Feng *et al.* (2021a) also showed that open-access articles related to COVID-19 have significantly higher citation frequency and use frequency than non-open-access articles. However, Allen (2021) also pointed out that predatory journals might attempt to leverage the confusion caused by COVID-19 to publish low-quality academic work. As for other recent bibliometric and literature reviews, we have recently arranged a special selection in our recent issue (Chiu and Ho, 2021).

5. The aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic

As we move into the second year of the pandemic, some researchers focus on aftermath topics such as reopening readiness, people's cyberchondria and barriers to implementing social distancing in the workplace. First, Suh and Alhaery (2022) measured the reopening readiness in the US states and developed two indexes, i.e. COVID-19 reopening readiness and severity. They noted the states' response to COVID-19 would affect their readiness to reopen. Also, the pandemic affected our psychological well-being (Ye and Ho, 2022) and made us worried about our daily life. More importantly, parents also need to worry about their family and their kids' education. In this connection, Avçin and Can (2022) studied the relationship between stress experienced by parents and their cyberchondria. They showed a positive correlation between the two. Lastly, Abbass *et al.* (2022) found ten barriers to implementing social distancing at the workplace. Readers may also be interested in Kumar *et al.* (2021), who attempted to simulate people's interaction due to economic reopening, concerning confirmed cases at various places as per changing situation has been made using data obtained from India at the early stage of COVID-19. Their results suggested the preparedness and mitigation strategy for a threefold lockdown management scheme in all-inclusive.

We hope you will enjoy our selection for this special issue. Readers may also be interested in our recent special issue on "Data for better health" (Wu and Yu, 2020). We wish our readers and our community at large good health and safety.

Po-Sen Huang
Department of Nursing, Tajen University, Yanpu, Taiwan
Yvette C. Paulino
School of Health, University of Guam, Mangilao, Guam, USA
Stuart So and Dickson K.W. Chiu
Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam, Hong Kong, and
Kevin K.W. Ho
University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan

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