Infodemic Among Students: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

This study conducts a systematic review of literature on the infodemic phenomenon among students. The review analyzes 34 peer-reviewed papers and identifies four main analytical axes: informational behavior of the students, the consequences of the infodemic, coping strategies, and the interplay of digital culture and structural inequalities that shape students' informational vulnerabilities. The results reveal that students' digital information practices are strongly influenced by speed and accessibility, often at the expense of reliability and critical assessment. This behavior leads to frequent exposure to misinformation, with significant implications for mental health, academic performance, and institutional trust. The results also show that informational inequalities are more evident in regions with poor digital infrastructure. Strategies to mitigate this phenomenon include educational interventions, digital tools, and institutional communication policies, but these remain fragmented and context-specific. This review suggests that the infodemic should be understood not only as a crisis of information overload but also as a manifestation of systemic inequities and insufficient media literacy. The findings call for integrated policies and educational practices to promote critical and emotional competencies to navigate in the digital environment.

Keywords: Infodemic, Students, Misinformation, COVID-19, Information Behavior

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1. Introduction

As society advances into the digital age, it undergoes a significant transformation in the nature and circulation of information (Anthonysamy & Sivakumar, 2024). Information technologies have revolutionized the way individuals interact and play a key role in knowledge sharing (Maiolini et al., 2016; Ortiz Gonzalez & Machucho Cadena, 2025). However, the availability of a vast volume of online information presents challenges related to its control and verification, resulting in the widespread dissemination of misinformation and its harmful effects on political and social aspects (Gallagher, 2016; Fiordelli et al., 2023; Moretti et al., 2023; Anthonysamy & Sivakumar, 2024).

During the COVID-19 lockdown, the reliance on social media as a source of entertainment increased, as did the spread of misinformation (Adekoya & Fasae, 2022). This phenomenon, known as the 'infodemic,' describes the flow of false information related to the virus, causing harm and establishing public distrust (WHO, 2020; United Nations, 2020; Zeng & Chan, 2021).

The proliferation of misinformation on social media presents a concerning challenge, as it can intentionally distort information and undermine public trust (Yesmin & Ahmed, 2022). The term 'fake news,' although widely used, has limitations and can be manipulated by politicians to discredit independent media (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2018; Pérez-Escolar & Aramburu, 2022). Therefore, terms such as disinformation, misinformation, and mal-information are preferable to describe different types of misleading content (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2018).

During crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, people seek information from different sources—traditional media, social media, and non-journalistic organizations—based on their goals and needs (Ahmed & Sivakumar, 2021; Michelot et al., 2022). The ability to discern between these sources and assess their reliability is crucial in an environment of information overload (Alwreikat, 2021; Yesmin & Ahmed, 2022). Thus, information literacy—which involves skills such as identifying information needs, accessing reliable sources, and evaluating information—becomes essential to counter the effects of the infodemic and distinguish fake news from accurate information (Anthonysamy & Sivakumar, 2024).

In light of the infodemic, the issue of information literacy and critical thinking skills has become even more relevant (Puig et al., 2021). Research shows that education plays a fundamental role in combating the spread of conspiracy theories and developing students' critical evaluation skills (van Prooijen, 2017; Blair, 2012). Maintaining official, updated, and responsive communication channels was associated with reducing informational insecurity and strengthening the bond between students and institutions (Dadaczynski et al., 2022; Omaña Ávila et al., 2021).

Improving health literacy and developing critical thinking skills are crucial to ensuring online safety (Paakkari & Okan, 2020; Herrero-Curiel & La-Rosa, 2022). The World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted the importance of health literacy as a key part of the global pandemic response strategy (Bao et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2020; Naveed & Shaukat, 2020). Studies show that poor health literacy is associated with increased vulnerability to COVID-19 infection, fear of COVID-19, anxiety, depression, lower adoption of protective health behaviors, and

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greater susceptibility to conspiracy theories related to the virus (Abel & McQueen, 2020; Demuyakor et al., 2021; Frings et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2021; Bas-Sarmiento et al., 2022; Quansah et al., 2022). Low digital health literacy can be a challenge, especially in developing countries, where many individuals lack the skills to use digital technologies in an effective way (Nuraini, Chaniago & Efawati, 2024).

Considering the importance of education, the promotion of information health, and the development of critical skills to deal with the infodemic, this paper aims to conduct a systematic literature review on the infodemic phenomenon among students.

Through this literature review, the objective is to deepen the understanding of factors that influence information-seeking behavior and digital health literacy among students, providing guidance for future efforts in preparation for health crises.

2. Method

The Proknow-C method (Ensslin et al., 2022), was used as a methodology for building the bibliographic portfolio of this research. The search was conducted in the Scopus database. In the first stage, the combination of the terms 'infodemic' and 'students' was used to search in titles, abstracts, and keywords, resulting in 133 documents. Next, conference papers, books, book chapters, and literature reviews were excluded, leaving 109 documents. This search took place in February 2025. All identified articles were published between 2020 and 2025, so there was no need to apply a temporal filter.

Each article was read and analyzed to eliminate those that did not include students as the main research participants. After analyzing the abstracts and methodologies, 57 articles were excluded. Then, the most cited articles were prioritized, collectively representing over 70% of all citations, followed by the most recent ones, and finally those with the most relevant authors. These criteria aim to ensure that the bibliographic portfolio reflects the studies with the greatest scientific impact and relevance to the investigated topic, maintaining a balance between representativeness and the analytical feasibility. After full reading of the texts, those misaligned with the research or without full access were eliminated. As a result, the final portfolio consisted of 34 articles.

Table 1 details the portfolio selection process for this analysis using the Proknow-C method. The selection began with 133 articles retrieved from the database and resulted in a consistent bibliographic portfolio composed of 34 relevant scientific papers aligned with the research topic.

The analysis of the selected articles was carried out based on four main analytical axes that will be discussed in the next section: (i) information behavior; (ii) consequences of the infodemic; (iii) coping strategies (iv) the interplay of digital culture and structural inequalities.

Table 1. Portfolio selection process

Selection Stage	Number of Papers
Articles found in the SCOPUS database	133
SELECTION STAGE 1 COMPLETED	133
Exclusion of documents not published in scientific journals	(-) 31
SELECTION STAGE 2 COMPLETED	109
Exclusion of articles based on title/abstract not aligned with the research objectives	(-) 57
SELECTION STAGE 3 COMPLETED	52
Most cited papers (29 to 102 citations), representing approx. 72% of total citations. These 11 papers account for 508 out of 711 citations	11
Recent papers published in the last 3 years that are not among the most cited.	37
Selected based on author relevance. Although older and less cited, these articles were included due to their authors appearing in the most cited group.	1
SELECTION STAGE 4 COMPLETED	49
Exclusion due to lack of full-text availability	(-) 4
Exclusion due to misalignment with the research objectives upon full-text analysis	(-) 11
SELECTION STAGE 5 COMPLETED	34

Source: prepared by the authors

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Students' Information Behavior

During the COVID-19 pandemic, students' information behavior was marked by an intense search for data in digital environments, especially using social media and search engines as primary sources (Vrdelja et al., 2021; Sambah et al., 2023). This pattern revealed a prioritization of speed and accessibility over information reliability (Tran et al., 2022; Glodici et al., 2024), which in turn contributed to recurring exposure to misinformation and contradictory content.

The analyzed literature suggests that this preference was not due to a lack of alternatives, but rather a combination of factors such as anxiety, information overload, and limited digital health literacy (Chen et

al., 2023; Tran et al., 2022). The influence of social platforms, especially Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp, was identified as a central factor in shaping students' perceptions, contributing to a superficial critical evaluation of received content (Bouclaous et al., 2023; Lin et al., 2020).

There is a significant difference in information behavior between students of different fields. In a general way, health sciences students exhibit more structured search routines grounded in scientific evidence compared to students from other disciplines (Bak et al., 2022; Tran et al., 2022), suggesting that academic training directly influences the quality of information search and evaluation. However, Klevor et al. (2022) did not identify a significant difference regarding the disseminations of misinformation between medical and non-medical students and the study of Cabreja-Castillo et al. (2023) with nursing and medical students points the need of continuous professional education to increase scientific literacy among these students.

Another recurring factor identified in the research was informational self-efficacy. Chen et al. (2022) and Gies et al. (2024) highlight that students who report greater confidence in their digital skills tend to show lower vulnerability to misinformation. However, this self-perception does not always reflect actual competence, raising concerns about a false sense of informational mastery.

The study by Lorini et al. (2022) reinforces that the level of digital health literacy directly influences students' ability to identify reliable content, even in countries with high levels of formal education. According to Vo et al., (2021), students who reported greater digital autonomy paradoxically demonstrate lower inclination to verify sources, revealing a false sense of digital competence.

Therefore, it is observed that university students' information behavior during the infodemic was guided more by convenience and urgency than by critical thinking and discernment. This finding highlights the need for educational policies that promote both technical and reflective skills for navigating information in crisis contexts. Table 2 summarizes the analysis of student patterns from the infodemic.

Table 2. Students Information Behavior

Analytical Category	Main Empirical Evidence	Authors	Implications
Preferred sources	Social media and search engines (Google, TikTok, Instagram)	Vrdelja et al. (2021); Lin et al. (2020); Bouclaous et al. (2023)	Weakness in fact-checking
Search criteria	Speed and convenience over reliability	Tran et al. (2022); Glodici et al. (2024)	Increased exposure to misinformation
Influence of the academic field	Students in the health field show higher critical thinking	Bak et al. (2022); Tran et al. (2022)	Need to expand literacy in all academic areas
Perceived informational self-efficacy	High confidence does not always reflect real competence	Chen et al. (2022); Gies et al. (2024)	False sense of security may worsen the infodemic
Deficiencies in digital and informational literacy	Difficulty in evaluating sources and distinguishing fake news	Chen et al. (2023); Naveed et al. (2023)	High risk of adopting inadequate health protective

Source: Prepared by the authors

The systematization presented in Table 2 shows that students' information behavior during the pandemic was strongly conditioned by structural factors, such as unequal access to information education, and by subjective factors, such as the perception of self-efficacy and the habitual use of social networks. These findings reveal an important educational gap: although students are immersed in digital environments, this does not guarantee the ability to navigate them critically. In this sense, the infodemic has forcefully exposed the fragility of information skills in the face of crisis contexts, indicating the need for more integrated and interdisciplinary educational policies aimed at critical training for information consumption. Next, we analyze the main consequences of this scenario on students' mental health, behavior, and academic life.

3.2. Consequences of the Infodemic Among Students

The consequences of the infodemic for students, during and after the most critical periods of the COVID-19 pandemic, were multiple and affected emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and academic dimensions. The analyzed literature reveals that constant exposure to false, contradictory, or sensationalist information intensified feelings of anxiety, fear, and informational disorientation (Xie et al., 2023; Nour et al., 2022). This scenario was often described as a state of "information overload" or "digital fatigue," resulting in mental exhaustion and loss of trust in institutional sources (Nguyen et al., 2021; Ning et al., 2024).

In cognitive and attitudinal terms, several studies indicated that the infodemic contributed to vaccine hesitancy and the spread of conspiracy theories, even among higher education students (Buturoiu et al., 2021; Naveed et al., 2023). This influence reinforces the idea that formal education alone is not sufficient to protect against pseudoscientific content, especially when there is no critical mediation or reliable institutional support.

Academically, difficulties in filtering and validating information directly affected students' performance in research activities, academic work, and decision-making processes (Bahl et al., 2022; Tarazona et al., 2023). Additionally, experiences of digital loneliness and feelings

of institutional alienation were reported, especially among students who did not feel represented or supported by their universities' communication strategies (Hála et al., 2024).

Radwan et al. (2020) emphasize that prolonged exposure to alarming content on social media negatively impacted students' emotional well-being, contributing to continuous fear and informational fatigue. Furthermore, Nour et al. (2021) identified a correlation between high exposure to fake news and increased impulsive and anxious behavior among high school and university students. Beyond immediate psychological harm, Ning et al. (2023) observed that the infodemic compromised students' self-confidence in conducting research and making evidence-based decisions.

These effects show that the infodemic not only impacted students' relationship with information but also compromised their mental health, institutional trust, and academic engagement, requiring more integrated responses from educational institutions and public policy. Table 3 summarizes the main consequences of the infodemic.

Table 3. Consequences of the infodemic

Dimension	Consequences	Authors	Implications
Emotional/psychological	Anxiety; fear; stress; depressive symptoms; fatigue	Xie et al. (2023); Nour et al. (2022); Ning et al. (2024)	Worsening of mental health
Cognitive/attitudinal	Belief in conspiracy theories; vaccine hesitancy	Buturoiu et al. (2021); Demuyakor et al. (2021); Naveed et al. (2023)	Vulnerability to risky behaviors
Academic	Difficulty in validating sources and applying reliable content	Bahl et al. (2022); Tarazona et al. (2023)	Decline in performance and quality of academic output
Institutional/social	Mistrust in authorities; negative impact on people's willingness to support CSR; conflicts between different groups of society	Demuyakor et al. (2021); Dercon et al. (2023); Hála et al. (2024)	Less sustainable consumption; panic among the population; deprivation of social life

Source: Prepared by the authors

Table 3 shows that the impacts of the infodemic transcend the traditional academic space and affect students at different educational levels. The overload of information, combined with the difficulty of critical discernment, triggered a cycle of cognitive and emotional insecurity that affected study routines, mental health, and trust in institutions. These consequences were especially serious among students with less access to educational resources or institutional support, which reinforces the informational inequalities that already existed before the pandemic. The literature therefore shows that the phenomenon of the infodemic needs to be understood as a structural risk to the education of students and requires interventions that consider the social, psychological, and pedagogical context. The strategies that seek to mitigate these effects and promote informational resilience are discussed below.

3.3. Coping Strategies

Strategies identified in the literature to address the effects of the infodemic among students involve a combination of educational, technological, and institutional actions. In general, studies indicate that developing critical information evaluation skills along with strengthening digital health literacy can reduce vulnerability to misleading content (Scheibenzuber et al., 2021; Estigarribia et al., 2022). The analyzed studies also point to the importance of everyday informational mediation: family members, peers, and teachers play a fundamental role in how students interpret and validate information (Lin et al., 2020). However, when these networks are absent or equally misinformed, they become channels that amplify misleading content, perpetuating misinformation cycles (Tran et al., 2022).

In the educational field, several initiatives stood out for their active and formative approaches. Training programs aimed at teaching fact-checking, lateral reading, and source verification were developed in the form of online courses, didactic sequences, and interactive activities, targeted at both K–12 and university students (Brodsky et al., 2021; Moretti et al., 2023). These interventions showed a positive impact on reducing adherence to rumors and strengthening students' trust in reliable sources (Rosário et al., 2022).

Digital tools and platforms supporting informational discernment were also reported as effective means of promoting digital literacy and critical thinking (Brodsky et al., 2021; Bouclaous et al., 2023; Hassan & Sabry, 2024). These technologies can be useful in engaging students in more autonomous and interactive learning contexts (Brodsky et al., 2021; Moretti et al., 2023).

In response to the identified challenges, Gias et al. (2024) proposed integrating digital literacy workshops into school curricula, focusing on source validation practices and understanding recommendation

algorithms. Tsybulsky et al. (2021) suggest that interdisciplinary approaches—combining health education, information science, and technology—enhance the effects of actions to combat the infodemic among adolescents.

Institutional action is also noteworthy, especially from schools and universities. However, studies warn that isolated actions are insufficient given the complexity and persistence of the phenomenon. Combating the infodemic requires continuous, integrated, and multisectoral policies involving the fields of education, health, media, and public policy (Glodici et al., 2022; 2022; Pérez-Escoda, 2022). Table 4 presents the main strategies to mitigate infodemic.

Table 4. Coping Strategies

Type of Strategy	Description and Examples	Authors	Impact
Educational	Courses, didactic sequences, and workshops on fake news and trustworthy sources	Scheibenzuber et al. (2021); Estigarribia et al. (2022)	Improved critical thinking and autonomy
Technological	Digital educational tools; lateral reading platforms	Brodsky et al. (2021); Bouclaous et al. (2023); Moretti et al. (2023)	Greater engagement and content retention
Institutional	Official, transparent, and continuous communication channels	Vrdelja et al. (2021); Glodici et al. (2024)	Reduction in misinformation
Multisectoral	Integration of education, health, and media	Glodici et al. (2022); Pérez-Escoda (2022)	More sustainable and comprehensive actions

Source: Prepared by the authors

The strategies described in Table 4 show that combating the infodemic among students requires coordinated and sustained actions that go beyond specific or emergency interventions. The combination of educational approaches, technological tools, and institutional policies is essential to educate critical individuals who are able to navigate safely in digital environments saturated with information. More than a response to the pandemic, these initiatives should be understood as structuring elements of education for informational citizenship both in times of crisis and in times of normality. However, the literature review suggests that, although effective proposals exist, their implementation is still fragmented and concentrated in specific contexts, which reinforces the urgency of public policies that expand access and continuity of these practices at different levels of education.

3.4. Digital culture and structural inequalities

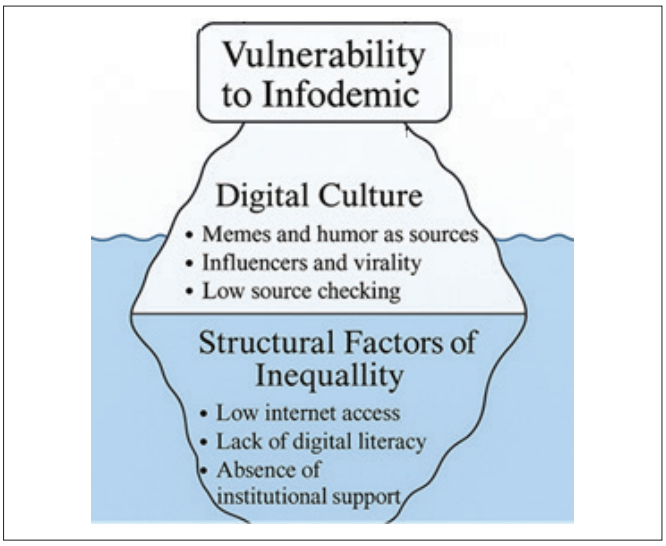
In addition to behavioral patterns, direct impacts, and coping strategies, the literature analyzed reveals two underlying aspects that profoundly affect students' experience related to the infodemic: informational inequalities and the cultural codes inherent to the digital environment.

Students with less stable internet access, with little familiarity with digital tools, or in more fragile educational contexts were more exposed to misinformation, especially when they do not receive adequate support from schools or their families (Sambah et al., 2023). Regional and socioeconomic disparities have accentuated this vulnerability, as indicated by studies carried out in Ghana and Central European countries, where variables such as class, gender, and location were directly associated with digital health literacy (Hála et al., 2024; Vrdelja et al., 2021). This scenario is aggravated by the role of digital culture, which shapes the ways in which information is accessed and understood. Among students, especially younger ones, memes, short videos, "trending" and entertainment content often serve as primary sources of health information, which compromises the critical understanding of facts and makes it more difficult to distinguish between science and opinion (Pérez-Escoda, 2022). In many cases, humor overrides content, making misinformation more palatable and less questionable (Xie et al., 2023).

These trends reveal a paradox: highly connected students are not necessarily better prepared to deal with information overload since uncritically mediated "hyperaccess" can reinforce false certainties and cognitive insecurities (Chen et al., 2023). The iceberg model Figure 1 visually and conceptually represents the invisible structure that underlies students' vulnerability to the infodemic.

At the visible tip of the iceberg is the observable outcome—frequent exposure to misinformation and difficulty discerning reliable content. Below the surface, two hidden layers reveal deep and intertwined causes: digital culture, characterized by informal, humorous, and viral content consumption, and structural inequality factors, such as limited internet access, lack of integrated educational policies, and inadequate critical training for students. This graphical metaphor illustrates how the manifestations of the infodemic are just the tip of a more complex and structural problem, requiring an intersectional and systemic reading of the contemporary educational reality.

Figure 1. Iceberg Model of Information Vulnerabilities in the Face of Infodemic



Source: Prepared by the authors

The reviewed literature also draws attention to invisible mechanisms influencing students' informational experience, such as recommendation algorithms used by digital platforms. These systems personalize content based on prior interactions, which can reinforce informational bubbles and limit access to reliable sources (Tsybulsky et al., 2021). In contexts of low digital literacy, users do not critically perceive this algorithmic logic, increasing passivity in the face of misinformation (Lorini et al., 2022). At the same time, students with little familiarity with complex digital environments such as those from rural or peripheral areas face additional difficulties in escaping these cycles. These elements reinforce that combating the infodemic cannot be limited to visible content but must include a critical reading of platform structures and patterns shaping the circulation of information.

The infodemic, although emerging in crisis contexts, must be understood as a symptom of a broader and more structural educational problem. Studies such as those by Ning et al. (2023), Nour et al. (2021), and Radwan et al. (2020) reveal that the informational insecurity felt by students is anchored in earlier failures of school education, which has historically neglected the critical teaching of information and media. The scenario worsens when students internalize the idea that they are natively competent in the digital environment but, in practice, lack the foundations to assess the truthfulness and intentionality of consumed content. These findings indicate the urgent need for educational policies that not only teach how to search for information but also how to understand, contextualize, and challenge it.

3.5 Methodological Approaches

Of the 34 papers included in this research, approximately 79,4% adopted quantitative methodologies, 17,6% qualitative and only 2,9% used mixed approaches. This distribution confirms the predominance of studies aimed at measuring behavioral patterns, mostly centered on cross-sectional designs and the application of structured questionnaires during the pandemic.

The quantitative studies made it possible to understand the relation between digital health literacy and variables such as well-being, mental health, and fear of COVID-19, for example (Tran et al., 2022; Chen et al., 2023; Ning et al., 2024). However, the lack of longitudinal studies limits the understanding of infodemic as a dynamic process.
Qualitative studies, although fewer in number, have used in-depth interviews, autoethnographies and discourse analysis to explore subjective dimensions of the information experience, such as affective mediations, inequalities of access and the meanings attributed to digital practices (Dercon, 2023; Bahl, 2022; Puig, 2021). These works offer valuable interpretative contributions, especially in revealing how students negotiate trust, agency and belonging in contexts of information overload. They offer deeper interpretations, but with less capacity for generalization.

Mixed approaches, represented by only one article in the sample (Perez-Escoda, 2022), are still incipient but promising. By integrating statistical data with qualitative analysis, this type of study allows for a methodological triangulation that increases the interpretative density of the findings and helps to capture contradictions and complexities. Even so, its occasional presence points to a field which, although essentially interdisciplinary, remains methodologically low explored.
The methodological segmentation of the articles has relevant implications for the interpretation of the results. For example, quantitative studies show that students with a higher perception of digital self-confidence tend to report less exposure to disinformation (Rosario et al., 2022; Lorini, 2022). Qualitative research, on the other hand, suggests that this self-perception can mask excessive trust, leading to reduced checking criteria and greater information vulnerability (Estigarribia, 2022; Puig, 2021).

While quantitative analyses highlight the importance of institutional channels in reducing anxiety (Tran, 2022; Nour, 2021), qualitative studies such as Dercon's (2023) indicate that many students turn to informal information networks, even if they are less reliable, driven by emotional ties, a sense of belonging and institutional distrust. These contradictory findings suggest that combining quantitative and qualitative approaches - which is still rare - could significantly enrich the understanding of the infodemic phenomenon, by simultaneously capturing measurable patterns and subjective and contextual dynamics.

Despite these limitations, the methodological diversity of the selected papers has contributed to a multifaceted understanding of the infodemic among students. Quantitative studies have made it possible to identify population trends regarding the effects of the infodemic on mental health and trust in sources of information (Bahl et al., 2022; Naveed et al., 2023), while qualitative studies have brought to light elements such as humor, digital culture and symbolic exclusion (Xie et al., 2023; Sambah et al., 2023).

However, few studies have critically analyzed the algorithmic mechanisms that structure the circulation of disinformation. There is also a lack of studies using structural equation modeling, which could contribute to identify the determinants of the infodemic. The lack of research combining sensitive listening, socio-technical analysis and

articulation between different types of data highlights the need for more critical, intersectional and integrative approaches - capable of treating infodemic not just as informational noise, but as an expression of political, technological and epistemic disputes.

4. Conclusion

This study conducted a systematic literature review on the infodemic among university students, based on the Proknow-C method, highlighting the nuances of the phenomenon through four main analytical axes: (i) information behavior; (ii) consequences of the infodemic; (iii) coping strategies; (iv) the interplay between structural inequalities and digital culture.

The findings indicate that students' information behavior is strongly influenced by the accessibility and speed of digital sources, especially social media, often at the expense of reliability and critical depth. This preference, combined with an illusory perception of digital competence, contributes to recurring exposure to misinformation and contradictory content.

The observed consequences go beyond the informational domain, affecting students' mental health, academic performance, institutional trust, and critical thinking, particularly among those who are socioeconomically and educationally vulnerable. Thus, the infodemic should not be understood merely as a phenomenon of information excess, but as an expression of structural inequalities amplified by a superficial and poorly mediated digital culture.

The identified coping strategies in the literature point to promising but still fragmented paths. Educational initiatives, technological tools, and institutional actions showed positive impacts on promoting digital health literacy but lack systemic articulation and continuity. The combination of these fronts, together with intersectoral public policies, emerges as imperative to mitigate the effects of the infodemic and strengthen students' informational resilience.

By highlighting that the infodemic stems not only from the abundance of information but also from the absence of critical mediation, this study contributes to expanding the theoretical debate on information literacy in the context of digital culture. More than teaching how to recognize fake news, it is necessary to promote a literacy that considers algorithms and the cultural ways of understanding and sharing content.

In this regard, as a practical implication, the findings of this research should serve as a warning to public managers, educators, and educational policymakers. Addressing the infodemic requires strengthening a school culture that values doubt, debate, and critical analysis as fundamental skills for social life. This implies not only updating curricula but also training teachers, revising digital access policies, and democratizing the dialogue between science and everyday life. As long as education remains distant from students' real information practices, the fight against misinformation will remain partial and limited.

As a theoretical contribution, this article reinforces the importance of considering intersectional and contextual dimensions in analyzing the infodemic, proposing an approach that incorporates social, cultural, and educational elements in understanding the phenomenon. For practice, the results point to the urgency of digital literacy actions at all levels of education, with special attention to student populations in situations of greater vulnerability.

This study has methodological limitations such as the use of a single database (Scopus) and restrictive search terms ("infodemic" AND "students"), which could limit the access to other relevant papers on infodemic. Another limitation of this study is the absence of a formal qualitative methodology for the assessment of the 34 included papers. Just as organizations develop strategies for knowledge management, schools and universities must develop systems for managing reliable information that consider social media dynamics, students' habits, and the invisible structures of digital exclusion. This suggests that future research could explore the infodemic as part of a broader phenomenon: informational disorganization in crisis contexts, which requires transdisciplinary approaches among education, communication, administration, and information science. Furthermore, few studies conducted with students from Latin American countries were identified. So, future studies could investigate the infodemic in these countries. Finally, larger studies including other databases and search terms are recommended to broaden understanding of the infodemic phenomenon.

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