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Title: **Coverage comparison of homeopathy and acupuncture stories in Spanish digital media**

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Theme: Stories

Area of interest: Investigating science communication practices

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According to the report of the Observatory of Natural Therapies in Spain (2008), acupuncture is better known and used than homeopathy, however, news production in this respect slightly reverses this correlation. Wide coverage on homeopathy in the Spanish context is justified by the closure of two widely known master studies on the matter and several skeptical driven campaigns. This research analyzes and compares the evolution of the coverage of homeopathy and acupuncture in the Spanish digital press in order to verify if the media production have different approaches for both complementary therapies. To this end, it is performed a content analysis of the informative treatment, classified as 1) *favorable* (for those considering homeopathy/acupuncture as a cure), 2) *neutral* (for aseptic or institutional treatment), 3) *skeptical* (for critical) or 4) *equidistant* (when it approaches the controversy without a predefined position).

The corpus, gathered through *MyNews*, includes all the headlines of all the news published in 391 digital media platforms during 2015-2016 that mentioned homeopathy or acupuncture. This is in gross 2,513 stories. The results show that despite the acceptance and extensive recognition of acupuncture as a complementary therapy in Spain, the campaign against alternative therapies that has occurred in recent months has not damaged the its image, in contrast to what happened with homeopathy. The difference in treatment between one therapy and the other is abysmal; while articles during the study period that mention homeopathy in the holder are mostly skeptical (57%), those mentioning acupuncture have a predominantly favorable tendency (77%). We can affirm then that the Spanish digital press has taken homeopathy as the standard-bearer of complementary therapies, focusing the controversy between conventional and alternative medicine on the homeopathy case and mostly ignoring others, such as acupuncture.