Abstract

This study aims to examine, using a late modern perspective, the anti-vaccination discourse in Sweden. The study contributes to a better understanding of what is communicated in the discourse, the truths that are presented and how legitimacy is created. Through a broadened understanding of the way this resistance operates in digital media, we are given a better understanding of how authorities can respond to the increased vaccination resistance on these platforms. The theories used in this study is Ulrich Beck’s theories of the late modern risk society, Henry Jenkins theory of participatory culture and media convergence and Michel Foucault’s theory of power/knowledge and truth effects. The method used for this study is a discourse analysis inspired by Michel Foucault. The premise regarding the choice of material for the study was to adopt a position of a person seeking information regarding vaccine. Thus, a search at Google.com was made. The result showed that the authorities were under-represented in the hit lists in all the searches, and sometimes even completely absent. The results also show that the anti-vaccination discourse is characterized by a strong distrust of authorities, science and pharmaceutical companies. Further, truths about societal actors systematic cover-up of the vaccine's actual content and effects is revealed in the discourse. Moreover, there is a focus on the truths about vaccines. The vaccines are said to be ineffective, dangerous because of its toxic content and causing serious side effects. Furthermore, the diseases that we are vaccinated against is said to be harmless and natural. Overall, the anti-vaccination discourse presents a very critical view of the entire vaccine industry. Finally, this resistance must be faced and dealt with by the authorities to prevent serious social consequences due to decreased vaccination coverage.