

# Erratum to “A Literature Review of Bullshit Receptivity: Perspectives for an Informed Policy Making Against Misinformation”

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## Erratum

Our manuscript (Iacobucci and De Cicco, 2022) incorrectly stated that Turpin and colleagues' findings (2021) contradicted those from Littrell et al. (2021a; 2021b).

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## Erratum

Our claim was inaccurate as the papers investigate two different constructs, namely bullshit (BS) quality (Turpin et al. 2021) versus BS frequency or quantity (Littrell et al., 2021a; 2021b).

Indeed, Turpin et al. (2021) find that more intelligent people produced more satisfying, more convincing BS, which in turn was judged as a sign of intelligence. Littrell and colleagues (2021a; 2021b) report that less intelligent people produced more BS, without examining the quality of such BS statements. Certainly, quality and quantity are different constructs – as the authors also pointed out (Littrell et al., 2021b, p. 1502) – and bigger bullshitters are not necessarily better ones. Therefore, the mentioned findings can in fact be interpreted as theoretically consistent and complimentary. Less intelligent individuals may find themselves in situations where they feel intellectually underprepared more frequently, but still desire to use attitudes and impressions to their advantage.

In those cases, their persuasive bullshitting may be more frequent, but not necessarily more convincing nor intellectually refined. Conversely, individuals of higher intelligence are able to produce higher quality, persuasive bullshit and thus may engage in such behavior less frequently, as they are less likely to feel intellectually challenged. Further (although indirect) evidence can be found in Brown et al. (2020) reporting that individuals that perceive themselves to be at a lower status will use unnecessary jargon more frequently than those positioned higher in the social hierarchy. While the authors did not directly measure intelligence, those results are in line with the idea that feeling intellectually challenged while still in need to impress an audience increases the quantity of the bullshit produced, but not its quality.

The (ab)use of jargon, i.e. expressions and buzzwords with little or no meaning at all (McCarthy et al., 2020), is in fact a typical example of bullshitting language (Ferreira et al., 2020, McCarthy et al., 2020, Spicer, 2020) and it may certainly increase BS quantity, but not necessarily quality.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Shane Littrell for pointing out the inaccuracy and supporting us in elaborating a correct interpretation.

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