



FONTBONNE UNIVERSITY STUDENT ATHLETES SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE ON PANDEMIC BEHAVIOR

JARID MORTON | RESEARCH STRATEGIES IN COMMUNICATIONS



HEALTH COMMUNICATION

- What kind of impact did social media have on Fontbonne Students decision making
- When there is no singular belief on how to behave, where do people go to find that answer
- Is a future pandemic going to be handled differently

LITERATURE REVIEW

- News and health agencies rush to inform the public about ever changing and inadequate information (Goodell & Reed, 2013).
- 10% of current US population uses twitter as primary outlet for news (Andersen et al., 2019).
- Friends' online behavior can behave like peer pressure (Grace et al., 2013).
- Withholding information from the public could be just as catastrophic as the disease (Barry 2009).

METHODOLOGY

- Qualitative interviews of 18-22-year Fontbonne University student athletes
- Respondent interview process for more open-ended dialogue
- Helps determine opinion of individual
- Social constructionism: “dependent on human actors using cultural stocks of knowledge to engage with an ambiguous and reactive world and to pursue their situated, evolving interest” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2017 pp. 63)

ETHICAL COMMITMENTS

- Proper Handling of interviewee response.
- Safely kept in secured laptop folder that was password protected.
- Confidentiality of interviewee name and likeness

DATA COLLECTION

- All respondents between the age of 18-22
- Mix of male and female
- Multiple ethnic groups represented
- All participants were raised in the greater St. Louis area

FINDINGS

- Anecdotal evidence is important (knowing someone who's had it, someone having it themselves)
- Their own peers didn't have as much of an impact as other peoples post (CDC, Fauci)
- Effect that medical workers had was high

CONCLUSION

- Social media influence from peers wasn't as impactful as originally thought to be
- Further research could look into the impact of certain ideological groups
- Geographical understanding (legislation, population density, bars/restaurants open)