

OCTOBER 2020

INFORMATION LITERACY MONTH

ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS



Ebony Taylor

How does being Information Literate help you Navigate the COVID-19 Pandemic?

The COVID-19 has taken many by surprise and left many of us in a grieving state in our lives. The outbreak of the Coronavirus plunged the whole world into a crisis. We are all struggling to refine information overabundance, fake, or not. COVID-19 is not only a pandemic but also an accompanying infodemic. There has been the emergence and re-emergence of diseases, but Coronavirus has presented people with the opportunity to use technology to keep safe, connected, and informed. Unfortunately, the technology we rely on has amplified an infodemic that is slowing the global response to control the disease.

After losing my baby brother to COVID-19, being information literate is currently the best opportunity to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic. It has helped me to manage the COVID-19 infodemic by avoiding any harm through misinformation and disinformation. It has also helped me learn more about what scientists and doctors have considered “high risk”- as my brother was- who dealt with diabetes at an early age of 19 years old previous to COVID-19. The main problem during this pandemic is not the amount of information available but the ability to translate it into useful recommendations to help avoid the disease. Social media contains a lot of unverified information that is further amplified by the public.

Refinement of knowledge, filtering, and fact-checking is the second pillar of infodemic management (Eysenbach 4). I have relied on peer-reviewed, scientifically written articles for credible information; however, it was hard to find many peer-reviewed articles with the emergence of the novel virus. However, non-scientific sources of information at some time can add value to the research process. I am aware of the political leaning that newspapers take, so instead of visiting many websites; I have formed the habit of surfing according to my current information need. I conduct further research on COVID-19 by interpreting the data presented to try to make sense of them.

Having formed the habit of giving credence to raw information has helped me to avoid misinforming others. I rely on the following to fact-check information about COVID-19; Coronavirus Fact-Checking Alliance, World Health Organization, and Infotagion. Additionally, through a logic check, I have been able to analyze unverified claims through critical analysis rather than checking alone. Beyond the basic information presented, I question every bit just in case of being misled. As much pain as this worldwide virus has brought me it also made me a more informative person and a permanent historical moment in my life.

Work Cited

Eysenbach, Gunther. “How to fight an infodemic: the four pillars of infodemic management.” Journal of medical Internet research 22.6 (2020): e21820.



Collette Campbell

How does being information literate help us navigate through the Covid-19 Pandemic?

During these times of uncertainty, we all could find ourselves consuming our minds with any kind of information to give us comfort. Example being News channel updates, social media posts, or new paper ads which all of these could be either a blessing or a curse. Ever since the pandemic hit in the beginning of March, we all as a nation have been overwhelmed with the many questions and some of us have been answering these questions with “real news” or “fake news” of what’s going on with the newly unknown Covid- 19 pandemic. I have realized as the months have gone by how very important it is for us to be literate with the information and to find the answers to all our lingering questions. I have found comfort with turning off the news when it starts to overwhelm with many ifs and butts, I learned to deactivate my Facebook when to many opinions are yelling at me telling me what they think is the cure or what they think is real or a hoax about this pandemic. Misinformation is everywhere and in the beginning I let it mentally exhaust me. I decided to do real research when I was starting to question what was right and what was wrong, this is when I found comfort in this pandemic and I let it not consume my happiness after I learned to be smarter than the social media post. It’s important to pick and choose which post you believe, do your research. I found many answers to my questions by watching one news channel, talking to close friends who work in the medical industry who might know more than I do about patients being admitted with Covid, I also follow doctors on social medias that have been doing hard research on cures, or what could prevent this from spreading or what could help us if we happened to be in contact or infected with the virus. If we all took a deep breath and sat down and informed yourself of the truth then I think it would make us all a lot healthier, physically and mentally while we all get through this pandemic together.

6 FT, Please!!

Not in a million years could anyone imagine or even predict that the year 2020 would hit us this hard. You may have heard about it in a story, or seen it in a movie, but no one would have thought we would be faced with a pandemic. Coronavirus is the name better known as Rona!! A disease that many of us had never heard of in our lifetime.

March 16, 2020 I will never forget, I was sitting at home packing getting ready to fly to Florida for spring break when the president of the United States shut the world down. When I say shut down, I mean NO school, NO jobs, NO shopping, NO restaurants, NO bars, Nowhere to go. We had to quarantine in our homes until further notice. Sitting at home with no place to go, just board games and learning new hobbies. People learning talents that you didn’t even know you had. After a few months went by, in late June, the quarantine was lifted phase by phase. Everywhere you go, you have to practice social distancing, our new phrase. You have be six feet apart from the next person with a mask around your nose and mouth, making it hard to breath. People wearing glasses I know it is a struggle with the fogging up when entering a place! Every day consists of washing your hands every five minutes, pumping hand sanitizer like it’s a lotion. You can’t kiss your loved ones and this is the hard part about learning to live in a socially distanced world.

There are no family gatherings, or going to parties because if one person has coronavirus and you hug them or kiss them you may get it and spread it to someone at home. It’s a chain reaction, that spreading from person to person, and millions are dying from this disease every day.

Learning to adjust to a new way of living can be stressful. The process will take awhile because it is something that we have never experienced. Learning to live in a socially distanced world means we have to change the way we go to school. Remote learning by computer at home can be challenging, especially for the older generation, but for the elementary and high schoolers, and college students, it should be an easy transition. Our days of going to church have changed as it’s either outside or on television. The hardest transition is doctor appointments it’s an experience within itself, because now it’s on zoom. The doctor diagnoses you without even seeing you now that is something. This could be difficult for our elders if they don’t have assistance. Our days of going out for a bite to eat puts a new meaning to fast food. They are only allowing a set of six people to a table, and only fifty percent of the restaurant can be occupied and eating with a mask on now that’s a nightmare.

I don’t know about you, but I am ready for this nightmare to end. A little bit of normal life can alleviate a lot of stress in some of our lives. We’re all ready to get back to the way life used to be. Will it happen? We will never know, but what I do know for now, keep washing your hands, wear your mask and stay six feet apart. Tell your loved one’s you love them because we don’t know what the future holds, but I hope it’s nothing like our past. Hopefully this fall and winter season doesn’t bring on a second round of frustration. With the cold and flu season approaching, it’s going to be really hard to determine whether you are sick from a common cold or coronavirus. Nevertheless, take good care of yourself, and your loved ones, take plenty of vitamin c and get some sunlight when you can. Tell your loved ones you love them, and remember, a mask is like a seatbelt it doesn’t work if you don’t wear it. Bye, 2020!!!!



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