

Critical Reflection 1 – Gabriel Diniz (20781837)

This article investigates how storytelling as a research tool can be effectively used to source information or to change the public knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour (KAB) with regards to public health complications. The article analyzes the narrative of published literature on their use of storytelling as a research tool to show how storytelling can present information while engaging the reader by connecting with them and possibly validating their experiences.

The significance behind using storytelling as a research tool is to communicate information to the audiences who are unfamiliar with the science. It also bridges the gap between the science and why it affects the public. Storytelling sets out to motivate and inform the public in a way that they can relate to. Personally, I agree that storytelling effectively informs me while persuading my attitude and behaviour to change towards a subject. I feel that I am more likely to change my opinions/feeling if I hear a story that I strongly relate to or if I can emotionally connect with the story. I know that changing opinions can be challenging, especially in relation to public health issues. During the pandemic I often changed my beliefs because of things I heard from social media, the news, etc. However, reflecting back I now realize that the stories influenced me the most because it conveys an experience that feels real.

This is not something that I had recognized until I read this article. Storytelling is truly powerful because of the emotional connection that it creates with the audience. That connection is what sticks with us, allowing us to obtain the information easier, and change our behaviour and thoughts. This article has changed my thought process when it comes to obtaining new information and changing my opinions by showing me that I can learn and be influenced through stories. Moving forward, I will look for how storytelling affects my attitude and stance on health-related issues. I realized I may learn more from stories than I do from scientific information.

Source/Reading:

McCall, Becky, Shallcross, Laura, Wilson, Michael, Fuller, Christopher, Hayward, Andrew. 2019. Storytelling as a research tool and intervention around public health perceptions and behaviour: a protocol for a systematic narrative review. *BMJ Open*, 9(12) (Course Reserves)