# Audio file

Participant 3.m4a

# Transcript

Speaker 1

Hello.

Speaker 2

Hello.

Speaker 1

First and foremost, I'd like to thank you for taking time aside out of your day for this interview. Before we begin the interview, I'd like to explain the nature of this interview and why I'm conducting the research. So I'm currently studying an infield degree in strategic communications management at the University of Pretoria, and as a communications student, I'm particularly interested in communication and how it is conducted and received, especially during times of crisis. The nature of my research is based on health crisis communication during the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeing as the pandemic affected everyone, I find that everyone has their own opinions, perceptions and on of how the health crisis communications could have been handled. I want to interview you to understand your perception. Of the implementation of this type of communication, I'd like to think I'd like you to think of this, not really as an interview, but as a conversation where two people , where one educates the other and you're the educator. Our interview is confidential and for assurance purposes I would like to ask your permission to record this conversation, if that's OK.

Speaker 2

So they.

Speaker 1

OK, let's begin. How did you respond when you first heard? About the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa.

Speaker 2

I don't know. I mean, for me it was just a. I was more concerned about my academics at the time, especially knowing that I was in my second last year of high school. I was concerned of how was I gonna do? How was I going to manage my? And I'm with my school books and knowing that I want to go to university, which I've made it as you can see, I think I was stressing more about my books on how am I going to manage because now we're home schooling from going from schooling every day. And now we're home schooling. It became a problem. But I had to adapt so so I did.

Speaker 1

OK. And what is your opinion of what? What is your opinion of the COVID-19 information shared by the South African government during the pandemic?

Speaker 2

In in Matric. They implemented it into our school program into life orientation. So I think when they did that, God, it gave me a little bit more insight about COVID-19 was. And I got to learn more about COVID-19. I'm thinking, I think for certain people they didn't get that information. Because they didn't get the chance to go to school. But then I think in my point of view, coming from school, I got the opportunity to learn more about COVID-19 and how to. To move away from getting it.

Speaker 1

Did you find the code 19 information shared by the government easy to understand and why?

Speaker 2

As a student, I'd say you made me study more things so I didn't like that, .but I guess it was. It was easy to understand. It wasn't tough and I. I think I think the more the information that I got very insightful was from other people who read about it. And so I got from word of mouth. Basically is they told me more about COVID-19 rather than education. I think education was just more of where it started, where it came about. How you can get how you can prevent yourself from getting it and but the rest like, Like we're in a mask is essential. There are people dying. It was more the people around me. So yeah.

Speaker 1

Did you find the information accurate?

Speaker 2

We can say so yeah, we can say so, I mean. I stayed in the household where it was me and my grandma and my great grandma and they both got COVID-19 and I think. It was only us three in the household. So what happened is I had to take care of their mother was sick and they were very weak. So the information that I got was that it makes you that it makes you feel very weak. You get very sick, you, you cough. You have to keep a certain distance or you have to wear masks. All that and what you had to eat, what you had to do. So I think from that information I could go out to the shops, to the market and buy all these products so that they can heal. And thankfully, because they were all, you know, COVID-19 said that it made the human, whats this the immune system, very weak. And they're all so their immune system was already weak, and today they're still alive with us. So I guess the information that I had obtained had helped throughout the process.

Speaker 1

OK. And what social media posts about COVID-19 caught your attention?

Speaker 2

I remember anything much from COVID-19 so, so social media. Things just say kids shouldn't be social media. Or should it be, it could be a post of anywhere. So I think this you know when they put it out, this thing down on the. In the streets, posters and everything, I think those have helped a lot and kept reminding us that you have to keep this kind of this things you have to keep wearing your mask because sometimes as you say, it was hard to breathe wearing that mouth and you take it off in public. So when you see that post and you.

Speaker

Aye.

Speaker 2

You remember the statistics of the people that are dying from this and the people that are getting sick from this. You get to understand that this is serious. It's not just a rumour. This is serious. So. I think it was very helpful that they put out this posters out and yeah, that's the best I could. I could have got from to advertisements and what do.

Speaker 1

what made those posts like stick to your mind?

Speaker 2

I didn't want to get sick.

Speaker 1

I get you.

Speaker 2

I didn't want to die. Something I can tell you? I'm still young. Like I said, I still wanted to study and. Thankfully, I listened to protocol and some people were ignorant and they got orders coming to them and I guess. Some of them survived and some of them passed, and they just show that you know what certain things you need to take serious and kind of like those posters where we look down on them and at a point I was looking down on them. But but eventually I realised that this is serious. Yeah.

Speaker 1

And how did you respond to the COVID-19 messages you saw during the pandemic?

Speaker 2

I don't know how I could, May I plead the fifth ? I just knew there was nothing much I could do. But just to you know, take care of myself and. You know, you know, I know I like I said, I know people that got it, so I had to learn to be strong to support those people, especially when they're telling you you should keep a certain distance from these people. It's tough because you used to your everyday life being. In contact with people and now they're saying stay away from people that I play sports and they say. And I remember. I think it was in March before we just went into. Into the covered pandemic thing and they say. You need to stop playing rugby. It's a contact sport and I received a message from the coach and they say, you know what, your Craven Week with dreams this year have to go and now and I think that made me really sad. Yeah, that made me. You said I couldn't have much to do with it. But just adapt to the situation. So the message was hard to take it.

Speaker 1

Hmm.

Speaker 2

But like you said, everything happened for a reason and here today. So I'm grateful.

Speaker 1

Can you share any examples of messages that changed how people around you thought about COVID?

Speaker 2

May you please repeat that.

Speaker 1

Can you share any examples of messages that changed how people around you thought about COVID?

Speaker 2

Get well, soon. That was the most common one. Stay safe, always wear your mask sanitised. That was the one that was kept emphasising on many times the sanitise. Before you do anything, sanitisers. If you're going to the gym, sanitise the equipment. And I think the sanitising one was very important. Because if you didn't sanitise and kills 100% germs 99.9% some so that that gave me assurance of, you know, I'm up. There’s still safety here and then that message of people kept inside and sanitise, sanitise helped a lot.

Speaker

Hmm.

Speaker 1

Did the way COVID-19 did the way COVID-19 was communicated influence you?

Speaker 2

Yeah, definitely.

Speaker 1

How?

Speaker 2

I'm turning on my toes and the minute you stop talking about this, we forget about it. Like today, we forgotten all about COVID-19, but it played such a huge role in our life and look now, now we we've forgotten all about sanitizing any disease could come up. We seen Mpox. Now MPox is very it's growing now it's growing. It's not international, but it's growing and it's something we need to be very careful about. And now there's what's happening now is that the emphasizing of of those messages we got during COVID and now we're hearing about Mpox. Is that let's start sanitising earlier. So now we're sanitising ealier. let's wear masks. I walk around even now I see. Out of 50 people, I see, three people wearing masks. So that I think that comes from COVID and they become more careful.

Speaker 1

What did you think about the governments WhatsApp Hotline group during the COVID-19?

Speaker 2

It was a bit shaky. I hadn't, I think. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know a. lot of helpful.

Speaker 1

Was it helpful?

Speaker 2

It was hopeful to an extent.

Speaker 1

Explain.

Speaker 2

I mean, you can only message so far and the rest is up to us. So you can tell us all about this prevention and the rest is up to us. And I think most people found the hotline, for example me, I found the hot line very, very like exciting.

Speaker 1

Mm-hmm.

Speaker 2

Very exciting, not exciting, very. What's that word? Very helpful because. I took that matter very serious, especially because knowing that I'm young and I and I still have a future and they say that what they are sending in that group will help and what I should get away from, what I should go towards, what I should do, staying healthy. I remember this one time.

Speaker 1

Hmm.

Speaker 2

They said if you exercise, your immune system gets stronger. If you keep drinking vitamin C things or eating vitamin C foods and then those things can help you from getting sick. And yeah, I think. That helped a lot.

Speaker 1

Do you think people in different parts of South Africa? Received COVID-19 differently based on the messages they received.

Speaker 2

Definitely some people just ignored. Some people just said if I get sick, I get sick. I'll be fine. Some people took this to heart and they actually, they were scared for their lives because their loved ones were dying. I mean, thousands. And we can say millions. I remember as a point, and I was watching this did statistics in the beginning. And it was hitting 10,000 and that and imagine just dying because. Just because of the disease that someone or that that just came out of nowhere and you know the first time when you had the information that these people are in part of the country, Limpopo, the first victims. We're like, you know what we have them in hostile places now so they can stay there and it's not going to hit. And next thing before you know it, somebody dies. So I'm guessing some people actually took it to heart. After they seeing their loved ones die, some people didn't go through any of this, so they just ignored it. So yeah, it was taken in differently different.

Speaker 1

Can you think of any events during the pandemic that made people trust health authorities more or less?

Speaker 2

Vaccination are thing when the vaccination came, some of us were very, were shaking. We're like we didn't want anything to do with it because it was too quick. It was too good to be true. But. Actually, with that, it actually showed that the vaccine actually came into handy. And I think when the vaccine came in and at that time, I think many people that had hope again that things might get normal again and that's one good friend that that I can definitely tell you that you know what? When the vaccine came and and the stats. That it works. We were like. We getting back to laugh and then we went down to Level 3. Yeah. OK. Things are getting better so yeah.

Speaker 1

And what are your thoughts on the on fake news that spread during the pandemic?

Speaker 2

They scamed us though . They they did. They did, I mean. If you look at it in a way they this sort is. An opportunity to. To advertise something that was a lie, and because it was so exaggerated that COVID-19. And obviously exaggerated according to my perspective, and it was exaggerated that you can. Make a life of it. Hmm. So it was easy to say do this and do that. All you have to do is pay this. So people were making money, but especially because some job people, some people, had to be. What's the word they had to be taken out of work because they couldn't get paid? Yeah, so I think. I think ohh no, I just think it was a bad thing. But it was not such a bad day. But it was a bad thing.

Speaker 1

Do you think the spread of false information made people trust health authorities less and why ?

Speaker 2

No. I think because when you receive, we we live in a generation where when news comes out, it has to be verified. So it's tough to be a scam. It's tough to be a skelm if or send out false advertisement. So I think because when you send out advertisement they have to be verified, they have to go through certain procedures and when they came out. I think people didn't didn't think less of anything. They had to take everything to heart. Everything that was said and firstly eventually started realizing why do we have to pay money to save our own country or to save ourselves. From a disease that we didn't even start and they know very well, we don't have money at this point. I'm talking about middle class and lower class. Environment now, so it's. So it's hard to say, you know what I'm going to take this advertisement and believe in.it , So it's just a matter of it's a matter of knowledge, but I don't think it made it hard for some people to believe because people at that point would do anything to stay safe. Yeah. And to if you, if you're willing, if you're willing to do anything to be safe, you were willing to pay anything. So that's why I think the skelms. Put to mind, and for us, we didn't even think about it, was that I needed to pay real quick so I could be safe. So yeah.

Speaker 1

Thank you very much for your meaningful responses and contributions to the study. We've ended the interview and have covered all questions. I intended to ask. Is there anything that you'd like to add to our discussion?

Speaker 2

No

Speaker 1

Thank you very much for your time. I've learned plenty from you and your experience.

Speaker 2

Thank you. Have a wonderful day.