INTRODUCTION

Social interaction is critical to psychological development and mental wellness in teenagers. Physical distancing measures can reduce overall adolescent mental wellness due to social deprivation. Additionally, adolescents are at a unique risk of mental health challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic as social interaction has played a major role in the adolescent mental health response to COVID-19.

METHOD

T-tests used to compare March and April mean linguistic index values or quantities. Statistical significance between quantities indicated by a p-value < 0.05.

Tweets represent a sample of the larger population of viral content, providing an understanding of the viral culture.

1. Demographics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>March</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Tweet Likes</td>
<td>586.34</td>
<td>358.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Tweet Likes Range</td>
<td>4 to 13900</td>
<td>2 to 2400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Account Followers</td>
<td>100103.48</td>
<td>482775.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Account Followers Range</td>
<td>264 to 100000</td>
<td>25 to 620000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Verified Accounts</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Content & Media Variables:

Figure 2.1: % March and April Tweets Referencing Social Distancing, Mental Health, & Both

3. Linguistic Variables:

Figure 3.1: March & April Tone Index

Figure 3.2: March & April Linguistic Index Scores

Man Findings

- March to April: social distancing referenced more
- March to April: increase in collective pronoun usage, decrease in singular pronoun usage
- Media Presence, Account Verification, # Followers, & # Likes had no major influence on emotions, perceptions, & pronouns

Implications:

- Pandemic stressors negatively impact mental health; potentially manifesting through social media usage
- Shift towards community-centered response

Content & Media Variables:

A). Content Analysis

- Post Selection: Advanced Twitter search
- Data: text verbatim // media type // social distancing ref // mental health ref // social media demographics
- Demographics representative of Twitter accounts (not individuals)

B). Data Analysis

- T-tests used to compare March and April mean linguistic index values
- Statistical significance between quantities indicated by a p-value < 0.05

RESULTS

Inclusion Criteria

- Demographic
- Media Presence
- Content Variables

Exclusion Criteria

- Non-English-Language
- Tweet Contains No Text
- Text (Link, Image, Video)

Demographic Variables

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Occupation

Content Variables

- Mentions
- Hashtags
- Keywords
- Sentiments

Language Variables

- Words
- Sentences
- Characters

Emotions

- Anger
- Sadness
- Joy

Perceptions

- Risk
- Security

Pronouns

- Singular (I)
- Plural (We)

Singular vs. Plural Pronouns

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Occupation

Conclusions

This study aims to explore the role of online pandemic messaging in the adolescent mental health response to COVID-19.