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**Advocacy Campaign for Women's Reproductive Health and Access on Social Media**

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Advocacy Campaign for Women's Reproductive Health and Access on Social Media

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Background

- Advocacy organizations increasingly rely on social media (e.g. Twitter hashtags) to foster issue awareness as social media platforms can be promising communication channels to reach diverse audiences.
- This study examines the #BirthControlHelpedMe campaign in order to better understand the response to an advocacy campaign promoted through social media via hashtag.
- Diffusion of innovations process:
  - Knowledge
  - Persuasion
  - Decision
  - Implementation
  - Confirmation
  
Rogers, 2003

Original tweet sourced from Planned Parenthood:

“Attacks on birth control are heating up, so it’s time to shout our stories from the rooftops. Fill in the tweet: #BirthControlHelpedMe ___.”

Methods

Participants

- Participants consisted of 16 undergraduate communication students, separated by gender into 2 focus groups with 8 participants each.

Procedure

- Focus groups were conducted separately for men and women. The moderators led participants in a semi-structured discussion on perceptions of birth control.
- Participants were then shown example tweets that used the #BirthControlHelpedMe hashtag, and asked about their response to the campaign.
- The discussion ended with whether the campaign would cause participants to talk more openly with their peers about birth control.

Billboards

Example Tweets

“Like, condoms are their own little category, and then birth control the default mode is the pill.”

Women’s Focus Group Participant

“I could have [shared the BCHM hashtag] but it would have required the right person to coerce me to do it. You need to take part in this dude. I know you believe in it, and this is something important to me. I’d be like okay.”

Men’s Focus Group Participant

I think that this would just be really difficult to bring into a stereotypical male conversation.”

Men’s Focus Group Participant

Conclusions

- By effectively only targeting women, the #BirthControlHelpedMe campaign reinforces the perception that birth control is women’s responsibility.
- Both women and men should be targeted by health promotion campaigns and policies involving birth control & family planning.
- Messages design is critical for taboo topics.
- Social judgment and peer influence can affect behavior and limit the spread of awareness campaigns.
- Important for men to be educated about reproductive health & share responsibility.

Acknowledgements

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