

INDICATORS OF QUALITY OF LIFE IN DIFFERENT DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES IN THE SOCIETY-NET

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BACKGROUND

Health Psychology relies on the relation between professionals and users. As we have entered into the information and knowledge society (Society-Net), this relationship is now facing new challenges and communication channels are shifting from being face-to-face to be web mediated. Psychology must accommodate this rapidly changing technological landscape and that is the focus of the work of the research group PSINET.

Nowadays, there are two emergent areas of web-based communication: on-line health related research; and the accelerated development of health information networks. (Jerome et al., 2000). Thus, several digital platforms have been developed offering different health services in order to promote the quality of life of individuals. Although these platforms have a lot of visitors looking for information, indications and treatments, there are no clear evidences of their effects (Jerome et al., 2000; Rick and Petersen, 2002). So, more empirical research have to be done on efficacy, outcome measures, cost effectiveness and quality of treatments in order to determine their contribution to health and quality of life of the society.

WHO (World Health Organisation) is promoting commissioned research on the issue of quality of health information on the internet, establish consensus, adopt or adapt existing standards and make recommendations for the adoption of a resolution on quality standards on health information on the web. (Barnes et al., 2003, Eysenback et al., 2002; and Rick and Petersen, 2002).

From Developmental Psychology, one of the indicators of health information quality would be the consideration of all the life span following the Developmental Psychopathological paradigm. That means, instead of considering only adulthood or just a specific developmental stage or age, do analyse individuals adaptation to world in relation to their developmental period (Achenbach, 1990).

The present study analyses the information quality of websites focused on anxiety and stress from Developmental Psychopathology paradigm.

METHODS

Objective

Analyse how is considered the developmental dimension in webs on health psychology in Spanish-language.

Subjects/ Search universe

All the websites in Spanish-language focused on Anxiety and Stress active and available between 01/07/02 and 01/11/02. N=24 websites; 2.176 documents.

Websites were obtained using a specific internet search Protocol (Meneses et al 2003.). This is a combined search strategy that:

- Selects the point to study combining a topic on health psychology following WHO terminology (ex: anxiety and stress) x the word "psychology", and x 10 intervention levels (diagnosis, treatment, prevention.
- uses 5 internet searchers (Lycos, Terra, MSN, Altivista and Google) following popularity and offered services' type criteria (Valiente et al., in press).
- explores All the documents included in 30 first search results.

Anxiety and Stress topic was selected for the present work because it is the topic which includes the major amount of specific websites in Spanish-language (Valiente et al., 2003). (ex: Anxiety and Stress= 24 web Sites; aids= 15 web Sites; pregnancy =13 web Sites; cancer= 11 web Sites).

Materials

Websites were downloaded and recorded in a specific on-line work directory from wich we did the analysis of all the documents.

Procedure

Analysis

A 19 items category system was designed combining:

- categories for describing content
 - Obtained from the content analysis (using Atlast/ti program) of 23 websites on health psychology in Catalan-language found following the same internet search protocol. (Valiente et al. 2003)
- categories for developmental dimension analysis
 - Defined specially for this work.
- categories for the quality content analysis
 - Obtained from the internet quality content categories (IQUA and PSINET, in press).

Data were coded separately by two judges (interrater reliability, $k=0,87$).

DESCRIBING CONTENT

Kind of professional: Institutional or individual
Legal character: public/private
Information about professionals
Intervention area: local/general
Web Purposes
Associated content
Services and Activities Offered
Services quality: presential/virtual
Audience: who is addressed the information to.

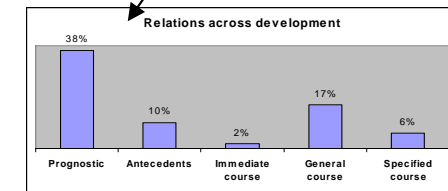
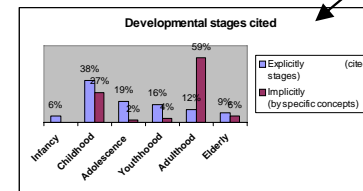
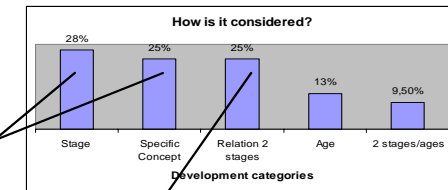
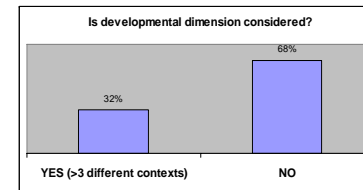
DEVELOPMENTAL DIMENSION

Age: considering specific ages.
Stage: considering specific developmental stages (infancy, adolescence, youth, adulthood, elderly)
Age/Stage specific concept: ex: menopause, acne juvenil, school...
2 ages/stages: just mention 2 different ages or developmental stages.
Relation between 2 ages/stages: putting in relation information from 2 different age groups or 2 different developmental stages.

QUALITY CONTENT

Web updating date
Bibliography and references
Interaction (discussion forums, suggestions box, databases, information or consult services, newsgroups, faps...)
Links to other webs
Accuracy of information (being possible to identify information sources as individual opinions, research results, expert comments...).

RESULTS



High quality content Websites consider Developmental dimension?

A chi-square analysis is done between developmental dimension and web characteristics.

$\chi^2 = n.s.$

There's no relation between any website feature and consideration of developmental dimension (quality, objectives, offered services, private or public status...).

CONCLUSIONS

- ❖ Developmental dimension is low considered in web sites on Anxiety and Stress in Spanish-language. When it is considered, it is implicitly (by citing the stage) or implicitly (by an specific concept like menopause, separation anxiety, work stress, parenthood relations, retirement...).
- ❖ When developmental dimension is actually considered is when information establishes relations among stages or ages. Most of this relations are prognosis (childhood→adulthood; childhood→ adolescence; childhood→youth). Antecedents relates adulthood with childhood in 90% of the cases, and immediate course of a feature or situation is also related to adulthood. General course of a feature describes a developmental change but doesn't makes reference to any age or stage.
- ❖ The majority of web sites are addressed to adults. It is related to the idea of developmental psychopathology about health information is inferred from adult data. Nevertheless, adults in Spain are the least likely to use internet to get information about health in the UE (13.5%), despite their positive attitude (Spadaro, 2003).
- ❖ Half of Websites, don't make explicit references to any developmental stage or age. It makes difficult to people to perceive relevance and quality of information (Barnes et al, 2003) and also impedes them to feel identified with information.
- ❖ There's no relation between quality of content of websites and consideration of developmental dimension. That means developmental dimension is not considered in creation and evaluation of quality content websites. **We suggest to introduce indicators of quality content related to every discipline. In our case, developmental psychology and developmental psychopathology.**

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