Title: Evaluation of HIV/AIDS websites in Persian: a preliminary study

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Abstract: Introduction: HIV positive patients or individuals who are at the risk of AIDS, have a few intentions to visit a physician, hospital or other clinical centers for achieving information about AIDS because of wrong perceptions or cultural reasons in Iran. Since internet and websites create privacy for their users in order to search needed information, reliability of the information is very crucial. The aim of this study is to evaluate the structure of Persian HIV/AIDS websites.

Method: We searched for "AIDS" in Persian as a keyword in the first 15 pages of Yahoo and Google and also Linkestan website. Fifty four HIV/AIDS websites in Persian retrieved. Considering at least 2 articles about AIDS in the website was the main inclusion criteria. The checklist developed based on Silberg, NLM and MLA checklists. The data were analyzed using SPSS 14.0 and Chi-square ($\chi^2$) test was used to compare the qualitative variables.

Results: Of the selected websites, 28 were organizational and 26 were non-organizational websites. Authors were identified in 53.7% and editors in 27.8% of websites. The policy of data selection was clear only in 37% of the websites. More than 55% mentioned website creation date and 40.7% identified their content posting update. Thirty seven percent of websites had disclaimer notice. Only 8% used podcasts and 37.7% utilized images on their webpage. Less than 54% cited the reference. In 70.4% interaction was via email, 57.4% via comments and less than 10% via forums. Insite searching was possible in 70.4% and only 9.3% in other search engines. While 79.6% of websites were designed for public, only 7.4% had specific webpage for teenagers. There was no significant difference between organizational and non-organizational websites in specification of authors, editors, creation date and updating, while it was significant in mentioning goals ($\chi^2 = 5.4, df = 1, p < 0.05$) and reaching goals ($\chi^2 = 6.73, df = 2, p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Most of websites suffered from lack of fundamental evaluation indicators. Although the provided information was useful, it seems they get low credits in website evaluation because they do not follow fundamental indicators. This is true even in organizational websites which most of them are related to universities and accredited institutions. According to the essential role of teenagers’ awareness, dramatically low percentage of specific websites for them needs more attention.

Website evaluation – HIV/AIDS websites

Presentation: Oral