

PORTUGUESE WEBSITES OBESITY INFORMATION

Diana Martins ¹, Joana Almendra ¹, Marta Jesus ¹, Sandra Soares ¹, Tânia Dias ¹, António Fernandes ², Vera Ferro-Lebres ¹

¹ Polytechnic Institute of Braganza - Health School

² Polytechnic Institute of Braganza - Mountain Research Center

1. INTRODUCTION

The internet is a low cost source of information, with easy and fast access. So it seems to be an important tool for finding health information for the general public. This source of information allows the access, production and dissemination of content on a large scale by a single individual or organization. The ease of production and editing documents on the Internet enables any user to be both author and write the information according to their will.¹⁻⁴

The professionals in the field of education and health, except for Dietitians, assume that their food knowledge is insufficient and they lack technique for dealing with issues related to obesity. Thus Dietitians should take the ability and responsibility to provide education and nutrition counseling, some studies revealed that even sports professionals, doctors and nurses feel that a Dietitian should assume this responsibility.^{5,6}

This suggests that websites written by other professionals than Dietitians may be significantly less accurate on Obesity information.

2. AIMS

- To characterize obesity information available in Portuguese websites.
- To evaluate the influence of technical training of the author of the text in information dedicated to the theme of Obesity the websites Portuguese.

Table 1 - Characterization of obesity information

	Information on Obesity	n (%)			
		Absent	Incorrect	Incomplete	Correct
Pathophysiology	Definition	55,9	6,3	3,9	33,9
	Etiology	47,2	5,5	5,5	41,7
	Classification	56,7	9,4	22	11,8
	Consequences	33,9	7,1	57,5	1,6
Prevention	Diet	63	3,9	27,6	5,5
	Physical activity	59,8	6,3	19,7	14,2
	Self weight control ¹	80,3	0,8	0	1,6
	Parental involvement ²	25,2	0	0	23,6
Treatment	Diet	70,9	7,9	15	6,3
	Physical activity	82,7	5,5	9,4	2,4
	Psychological	93,7	6,3	0	0
	Family involvement ³	49,6	0	0	17,3
	Drug	91,3	3,9	0,8	3,9
	Surgical	82,7	3,9	5,5	7,9

¹ In 17.3% of website did not apply to this item, since according to this Guideline applies only to adults.

² In 51.2% of website have applied for this item, since according to this Guideline applies only to children and young.

³ In 33.1% of website have applied for this item, since according to this Guideline applies only to children and young.

5. CONCLUSION

It is possible to conclude that the Portuguese websites do not make a complete approach to the obesity issue, since most of the information items were missing. On the other hand, the information, when present is mostly not correct. It was further observed that the items related to the pathophysiology of the disease, namely the definition and etiology, were the items where there was a higher percentage of correct information. The results obtained showed that the items were related to the prevention and treatment of obesity were more frequently not correct, which suggests that this information should be transmitted by a Dietitian.

It seems to be a trend to a higher average score of the obesity information in the sub-sample Dietitian author and the sub-sample Multidisciplinary team, when the target audience were children and adults. Even so the results were still far away from the maximum possible scores.

This study shows that the score of obesity information was significantly higher in the sub-sample of the Dietitian or multidisciplinary team author.

Thus, this subject should be further studied and the existing information on the websites should be written in such a way that it helps to protect the health of the website users.

3. METHODOLOGY

127 websites were evaluated in relation to obesity information, using the Google search engine in the "Advanced Search" option "pages in Portuguese," country "Portugal". Key terms used were "obesity and nutrition", "obesity and nutrition," "obesity and diet" and "obesity and weight loss." The information was evaluated according to the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network Management of Obesity a National Clinical Guideline.⁷

Each item was rated as 0 (absent/incorrect/not applicable), 1 (incomplete) or 2 (correct).

The score on obesity information showed maximum values according to different target audiences. For evaluation of the websites targeted for adults was considered an item (prevention by self-weight), which was not considered in websites whose target audience were children. In the other hand when the evaluation of the information targeted for children were assessed two items that were not considered for adults, including prevention of parent involvement and treatment by parental involvement, thus registering a maximum score of 24 and 26 for adults and children respectively. When websites targeted information for both public all the items were considered, there was a maximum score of 28.

Data analysis was performed using the statistical software PASW Statistics (Predictive and Analytics Software 18.0).

4. RESULTS

Graphic 1 - Comparison of the score as much information on Obesity with the average score obtained on the sites Portuguese

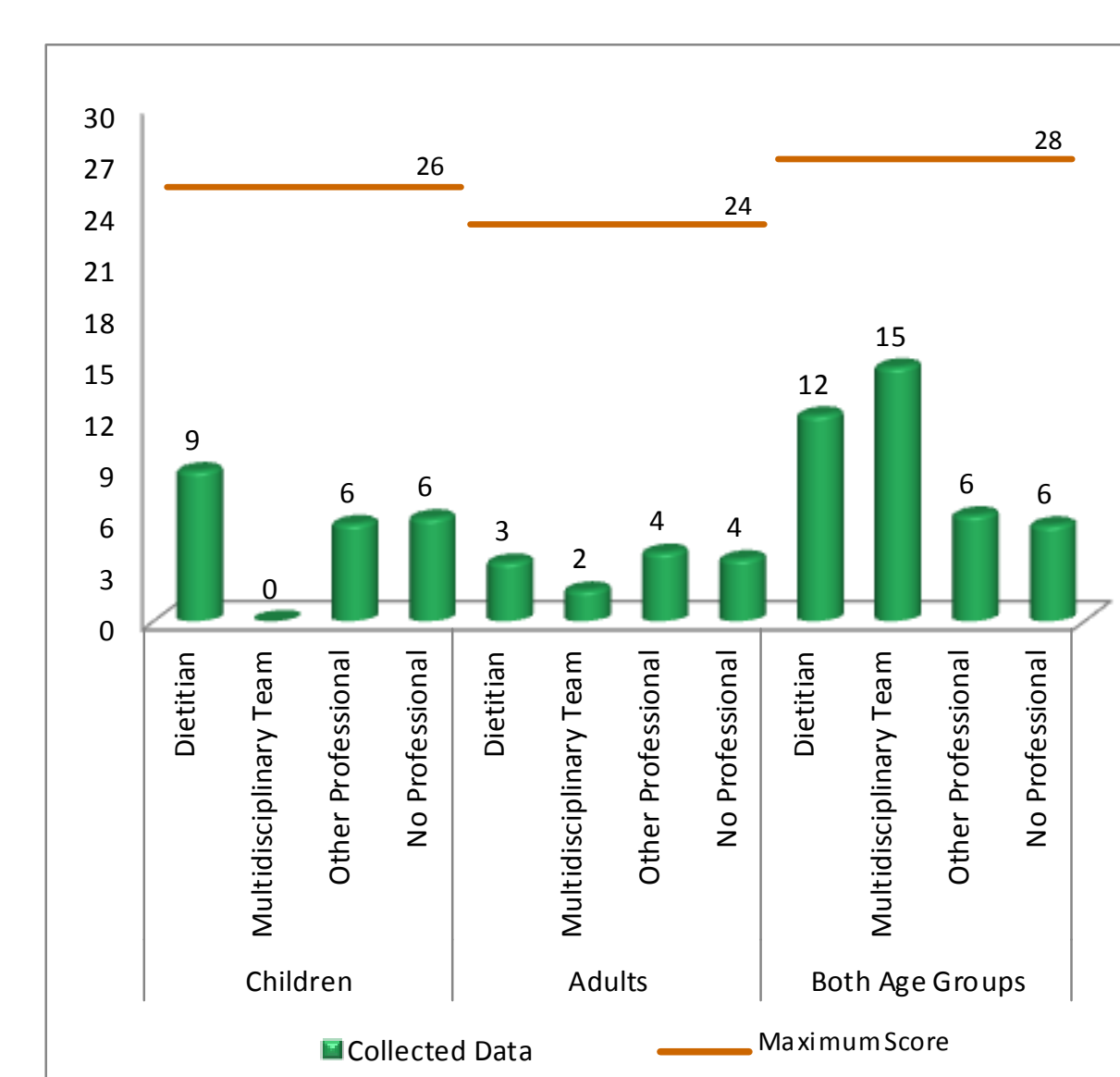


Table 2 - Influence of technical training in information on obesity according to the target audience the Portuguese sites

Technical training	Target audience	n	%	Score Information Obesity	
				\bar{x} (\pm SD)	η
Dietitian + Multidisciplinary team	Children	4	3,1	8,8 (\pm 5,5)	7,5
	Adults	12	9,4	2,8 (\pm 1,7)	3,0
	Both Age Groups	8	6,3	13,8 (\pm 5,3)	15**
Others professionals	Children	3	2,4	5,7 (\pm 2,5)	6,0
	Adults	8	6,3	4,0 (\pm 5,7)	3,6
	Both Age Groups	6	4,7	6,2 (\pm 4,0)	6,0
No professional	Children	19	15,0	6,0 (\pm 4,6)	6,0
	Adults	50	39,4	3,6 (\pm 3,3)	3,0
	Both Age Groups	17	13,4	5,6 (\pm 5,0)	4,0

Kruskal Wallis; Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon

**p<0,01

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* Contact:

Vera Ferro Lebres
Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Escola Superior de Saúde, Av. D. Afonso V, 5300-121 Bragança
Telephone contact : 273 333984
E-mail: vferrolebres@ipb.pt