BUILDING SOCIAL NETWORKS

Anna Mané, Silvia Rosado, Carme Masferrer, Natalia Ribas, Rosa Aceña, Paz Flores

Parc de Salut Mar, Medical Research Institute (IMIM), Department of Neurosciences and Psychiatry, Barcelona, Spain.
Centro de Investigación en Red de Salud Mental (CIBERSAM), Spain

INTRODUCTION

Times have changed and forms of communication too. The use of some Social Networks have increased significantly. Then, there appear some questions: Are our relationships stronger or weaker than before? How we communicate now? Does everybody have access to this social medias? Is there any difference between what mental health professionals and mental health users think about this? Do we know to use the information?

AIMS

- To know which is now the first way to search information.
- To know if mental health professionals use social networks or internet medias to find useful information.
- To know if mental health service users use social networks or internet medias to find useful information.
- To find out the professionals knowledge of some spanish mental health platforms.
- To find out the global feeling about social networks and internet medias.

METHOD

We passed a 8 questions survey to 50 mental health professionals (psychiatrists, nurses, psychologists, social workers) and 50 mental health service users in the Parc de Salut Mar in Barcelona, to evaluate all these unknown aspects.

RESULTS

Demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in table 1. There were not statistically significant differences in age and gender between mental health professionals and users. There were statistically significant differences in education level and marital status.

All mental health professionals and mental health service users utilize internet as the first information search (90% vs 78%, χ^2= 4.76, p=0.31). However, not many people were able to say the names of professional pages to look for faithful information, and the first searcher was "Google".

In table 2 we can see the social network usage and the opinion both groups have about it. Although the majority of the sample use social networks (the most used are Wassap, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and find them useful, approximately 1/3 of mental health professionals and service users think that these networs impoverish the relationship between people and approximately 1/4 of them think that these social nets are stressing.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of mental health professionals and service users

		Mental Health Professional	Mental Health Service User	p
Age (years)		41.44	43.96	0.30
Gender (% male)		32%	48%	0.10
Education	Low	0%	47.9%	<0.001
	Medium	12%	33%	
	High	88%	18.8%	
Marital Status	Single	16%	32%	0.01
	In a relationship	70%	42%	
	Divorced	14%	18%	
	Widowed	0%	8%	

Table 2. Social networks use in mental health professionals and service users

	Mental Health Professional	Mental Health Service User	p
Social Network Use			
Just in One	22%	18%	0.04
Between 2 and 5	50%	68%	
More than 5	14%	14%	
None	14%	0%	
Are they useful for me? (%yes)	57.1	53.1	0.68
They let me defend my ideals (%yes)	2%	12.2%	0.05
I don 't understand them properly (%yes)	2%	6%	0.31
I would like to use them more (%yes)	12.2%	4%	0.13
They stress me (%yes)	24%	20%	0.63
I don't like them at all (%yes)	6%	18%	0.06
I lose too much time (%yes)	14%	10%	0.54
They are an advance, we need to adapt (%yes)	44%	26.5%	0.07
They impoverish relationships (%yes)	34%	34.7%	0.94
Sometimes it is therapeutic (%yes)	2%	18%	0.008
I have difficulties in accessing (%yes)	2%	2%	1.0

CONCLUSION

Although many people think that internet and the social nets are very useful, there is not much knowledge about mental health resources online. The scarce knowldge could also influence the contradictory evidence relating the possible benefits and harms from online resources (1). A social net with mental health information that could be used by mental health users and also by professionals could be a very useful way to communicate and solve doubts.

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