Indoor Tanning and the Risk of Cancer

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***Introduction***

While looking for the authenticity of an article, certain elements are necessarily checked. With the advancement of technology, the internet has been a vital source of information in each field. Information on one topic floats on the internet when searched. Sometimes, it becomes difficult for an individual to identify whether it is authentic or not. However, most of the information found on the internet is not always reliable due to lack of its authenticity. There are a few elements which can help in evaluating the quality of online information. Likewise, this paper aims to evaluate the quality of information taken from two different sources for the same topic from the medical field. Relying on a comparative study, the paper will also find out which is a good source of information in comparison to the second source.

Melanoma is a scientific term used for skin cancer. Skin cancer is one of the sensitive health issues, thus, researchers need to take greater care while informing about medical concerns. According to the research findings, there are various causes of Melanoma and indoor tanning can be one of them. However, informing about such a complex problem depends upon the factual and evidence-based information. It will be examined in the paper whether two of the articles are able to prove it.

***Discussion***

Ghiasvand et al. (2017) aim to find out the reasons for an increasing number of casualties by melanoma during the last few years. According to the report, in 2012 55,000 people died of melanoma1. There are claims that indoor tanning increases the risks of skin cancer, therefore Ghiasvand et al. (2017) investigate to find out the relationship between indoor tanning and melanoma based on several case studies1. On the other side, a blog from Penn State (2015) also informs about indoor tanning as a cause of Melanoma or not. Although both articles are talking about the same topic, the introduction of the topic in each article varies. For instance, the article by Ghiasvand et al. (2017) use data from different authentic sources for presenting melanoma as an increasing health threat. At the same time, it uses facts and figures from a report published by one of the leading research centers and informs about the severity of melanoma. It shows that the facts and figures provided in the introduction part are based on proper scientific research. On the other side, PSU Blog written by Lau (2015) makes a statement based on information informed by unknown. The source of information is unknown and the author openly accepting it in the blog. A blog about a medical issue is opinion-based. On the basis of random information from unknown sources, it is directly claimed that indoor tanning is not harmful2. However, an older research source by Schulman and Fisher (2009) identified that indoor tanning as a risk factor for melanoma. It shows that the blog lacks proper research.

Furthermore, based on the evidence-based data from a secondary source, Ghiasvand et al. (2017) conduct research to find out more specific details related to the topic. The researchers have investigated whether the age factor is related to indoor tanning risks for melanoma or not. For that, about 300,000 female of age 30-75 is taken as a sample size for the research. It is a larger sample size and the inferential statistics from a larger sample size is easily generalized. The larger sample size is, lesser will be chances of standard deviation and the results based on it will be more reliable4. Likewise, the sample size of 300,000 women is nearly equal to the population size. However, Lau (2015) doubtfully informs about a research methodology of another researcher that aims to collect the data from individuals through self-questionnaires and telephonic interviews. The secondary source used in the blog is based on multiple variables and it does not discuss other variables that are equally important like heredity traits. Likewise, the arguments made by Lau (2015) entirely rely on other researches that are already facing some authenticity related issues.

General public mostly depends on the articles and blogs that are easily accessible on the internet. They do not go for authentic sources like scholar articles because these sources are difficult to access most of the time. Therefore, it is important that blogs and articles must be more authentic and reliable. The information provided by the blogs need to be based on experimentally or medically proved findings. Inaccurate and misleading information can cause serious problems in the medical field.

Moreover, Ghiasvand et al. (2017) use quantitative method to analyze the data and extract results by using different quantitative tools like Poisson regression. Based on findings, this group of researchers successfully notifies that there is a strong relationship between indoor tanning and melanoma threats. In addition, the age before 35 years can be a contributing factor to increase the risks for skin cancer1. On the contrary, the organization of information is missing in the second source from the PSU website. Based on information from an unknown source, Lau (2015) pulls the results and claims that it is not proved that indoor tanning can be dangerous. On the basis of only one source, the writer has presented the results. There are no other sources mentioned in the blog that could support the argument of the writer.

***Conclusion***

Based on the above discussion, it is identified that Ghiasvand et al. (2017) is a well-developed and good quality research article that connects the previous researches with the new findings through a quantitative study. On the other side, the blog by Lau (2015) lacks authenticity and accurate results. A good article provides information based on a proper research and test conducted scientifically.

End Notes

1. Ghiasvand, Reza, Corina S. Rueegg, Elisabete Weiderpass, Adele C. Green, Eiliv Lund, and Marit B. Veierød. "Indoor tanning and melanoma risk: long-term evidence from a prospective population-based cohort study." American journal of epidemiology 185, no. 3 (2017): 147-156.

2. Lau, Nicolas. "Does Indoor Tanning Cause Melanoma (Skin Cancer)”. Siowfa15: Science In Our World: Certainty and Controversy. Sites.Psu.Edu. (2015) Accessed April 23, 2019. https://sites.psu.edu/siowfa15/2015/12/04/does-indoor-tanning-cause-melanoma-skin-cancer/#comments.

3. Altman, Douglas G., and J. Martin Bland. "Standard deviations and standard errors." BMJ 331, no. 7521 (2005): 903.

4. Schulman, Joshua M., and David E. Fisher. "Indoor UV tanning and skin cancer: health risks and opportunities." Current opinion in oncology 21, no. 2 (2009): 144.