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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/10v2m912>

Journal

Journal of Clinical Neuroscience, 50

ISSN

0967-5868

Authors

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Publication Date

2018-04-01

DOI

10.1016/j.jocn.2018.01.001

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Peer reviewed



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Journal of Clinical Neuroscience

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jocn

Letter to the Editor

Using YouTube analytics to evaluate a Chinese video-based lecture regarding Parkinson's disease

Dear Editor:

We read with interest the article by Kim et al. [1] and commend the authors for evaluating the accuracy of Korean videos regarding Parkinson's disease (PD) on YouTube and viewers' responses to these videos. Their study showed that 66% of the Korean YouTube videos focused on PD provided reliable information. However, YouTube users were more likely to favor and view misleading videos. Previous research found that lower quality of online geriatric health information was obtained in Asian languages (e.g. Chinese) than in English language [2,3]. As such, we believe their findings are of interest not only for Koreans, but also for other Asian population groups seeking PD knowledge. Although the study found that reliable videos were significantly longer than misleading videos, the authors had no way of knowing audience retention (e.g. average view duration) without video analytics. To expand upon the study, we provided YouTube analytics on a PD educational video in Chinese language.

The 38-min-long video in Chinese language centered on the theme of Parkinson's disease was posted on June 2, 2016. The YouTube analytics data included 1127 viewers who have watched the Chinese language video in the first 365 days. There were an average of 3.1 viewers per day. During the 12-month period, there were 564 (50.0%) female viewers and 563 (50.0%) male viewers. Older patients (e.g. 55 years or older) accounted for 608 (53.9%) of the views. 251 (22.3%) viewers performed YouTube search to find the content. The video had a total viewing time of 11,852 min and an average view duration of 10.5 (27.6%) minutes. The educational video generated 3 likes and were shared 20 times. A majority of people viewed the contents using mobile phones (59.9%, $n=675$), followed by tablets (21.1%, $n=238$) and computers (19.0%, $n=214$).

While dry facts are not always inviting, our results suggested that a YouTube educational video could be useful in outreaching to Asian older adults at risk for PD. As viewers only watched approximately 28% of our video, future studies on the educational value of YouTube should look beyond video length, but investigate video engagement and audience retention. The actual view

duration of our Chinese language PD video was approximately 11 min, which is higher than reported average view duration of 6 min found in other studies on Chinese language YouTube health videos with variable lengths [4–7]. Lastly, majority of our viewers watched the YouTube video on mobile phones. As YouTube become a mainstream method of seeking health information, future studies should also be designed to determine how to effectively promote quality mHealth information via mobile phones and other wireless devices.

Financial disclosure

The authors have no financial disclosure.

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