INTRODUCTION

Two websites, which discuss Schizophrenia are reviewed in this paper. The first website is the one with the URL http://www.schizophrenia.com/family/sz.overview.htm#schiz1. The second one is at URL http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/09/15/the-voices-of-schizophrenia/. Such elements as Presentation (format) and the lessons, were also analyzed in this paper. As part of the analysis process, I was guided by concepts elucidated in various websites on how to analyze a website. The concepts I came across include authority, technical elements, accuracy, objectivity, design, currency, value, and coverage.

As Ithaca College Library hold, authority relates to answering the questions on “who are the authors” of the work as well as “who is responsible” for the work’s maintenance. In the view of Ithaca College Library, such also relates to “authority or expertise”, as factors relating to the author. According to Beck, authority refers to answers to questions such as “is the page signed”, “who is the sponsor”, “is the sponsor of the page reputable” and “is there a link to information about the author or sponsor”. In the view of Beck, positive answers to these questions would mean increased validity of the website. In the view of Landsberger, the
“credentials” as well as “title” of the author are key components in analyzing authority.

According to Ithaca College Library, objectivity means answers to the question on “the purpose of the site” as well as how the author presents his or her “point of view”. In the view of Beck, a high objectivity entails fact that “information show a minimum of bias”. As Ithaca College Library hold, currency refers to “when the information on the page was originally written” as well as an answer to the question “has the site been kept up-to-date?” Coverage is described by Ithaca College Library to relate to “information” presented and how such is “detailed”. Value is defined by Ithaca College Library as how “informative” the website is. Design on the other hand is defined by Payton to be on how the author has employed “use of graphics and color”. According to Payton, design also refers to how one “can move from page to page easily”. According to Payton, technical elements refer to availability of links as well as how one is able to easily “see meaningful information.”

Currency, as pertains to this website, is a factor on which it scores poorly. This website contains data which was published in the year 1999. Its updating thus maintenance is identified to have been done in the year 2002. The development of the website in the year 1999 identifies it as not so current. This is because from this time of authorship, more than ten years have passed. Ten years in a scientific field are many. In this span, many things usually happen in a scientific field. Researches could easily have come out which discount the information on Schizophrenia which is exposed in the website. The meaning of this is that validity in this website is low because of the fact that it is old and thus misses some points on the current trends.
The solution to the problem of currency would have been the authors constantly updating the contents of the website. There is evidence of updating being done by the authors. Update thus maintenance is identified to have been done in the year 2002. The article authors seem to have had the interest in the article a long time ago but lost this interest. This is why they updated it only in the past and never recently. More than ten years have passed since it was revised. This means it is an old article both in terms of when it written as well as when it was updated. On this dimension, I hold that the use of this website alone for information on schizophrenia may leave out many gaps in the understanding of the disorder. This is because the authors have not made an effort to fill the gaps with new information from new researches.

The contents displayed on this website tell a lot about its objectivity. There are advertisements on this web page. The authors devote a portion on the website to those interested in advertising here. The meaning of this is that the website may have been created for economic gain. Because the website still exists while currency of advertisements is the case, the suggestion to economic gain is strong. It could be the sole motivation for creating this website. This decreases the validity of this website. The author however maintains a high degree of objectivity. She simply states and discusses the scientific facts as they are. There is no point where she infuses her own views. This status identifies the website as a good choice for anyone who wishes to have an unbiased analysis of schizophrenia as a disorder.

Besides the details of the website and this webpage, the authorship and it maintenance are elements which need to be focused on. Authority is the term here. Overall, this websites can be trusted to have been written by a
reputable person and sponsored by a reputable organization. **National Institute of Mental Health** or NIMH is the sponsor. It is thus the organization responsible for maintenance of the website. This is a reputable institution which can be trusted to produce informative articles of mental health issues such as schizophrenia that they tackle here. The author, **Melissa Spearing** is a person of seniority in the organization. She can thus be trusted to communicate well as researched data. The fact that she holds the post of communications in the organization indicates that she can be trusted to communicate effectively the scientific data on the topic because such communications are her profession. The site can also be trusted because it gives contact information. The contact information even contains email addresses of the author and the one who maintains (NIH). These contacts are working. This means the authors and those who maintain can be traced for more information. In the URL, the word “family” appears. This reduces the credibility of the website as “family” identifies that it is a website by an individual. Overall, with the existence of the contact information, the credibility of this website is high.

Another area of important emphasis is on the **presentation**. This relates to the **format** in which the article appears thus its **design** and **technical elements**. This article has technical elements which help in easy maneuver through the content. The topics are provided as links. One can easily move to the desired content by clicking on the link of the topic of interest. This helps in reading because it enables one to use the least time possible in reaching an area or the topic which he or she wishes to concentrate on. The design of the website also help is a faster reading of the content. This website is only one page. There are no icons to move from page to page though there are those for moving to content within the same page. This design enables view of all data at the same place. Such
evidently saves one time spent in accessing the data. On this the website is a good choice for someone who wants to obtain information quickly or has less time to search further.

Another area which needs concentration is the lessons learnt from the website. This in essence relates to the **coverage** of the website and its relevance or **value**. In terms of coverage, this articles covers schizophrenia from the dimension of its definition, the factors which bring it about, its treatment, the help which other people can offer and the general trends of the disorder. On **value**, this website brings various insights in the understanding of schizophrenia. From it I learnt that schizophrenia may as well be referred to as a disease. I also learnt that its full treatment is never possible as mild exposure of symptoms will always tend to be elicited. Another lesson I learnt is that schizophrenia may easily be confused with many other disorders.

This Website is identified to have been created on September 15th 2010. The time of its creation is stated as 12:19 PM. This creation identifies the article as relatively current. This means its **currency** degree can be rated as high. Compared to the other website, this one becomes a better choice in terms of an article that is more able to present the situation of Schizophrenia knowledge as it is today. Like the first website, this too has advertisements on the page. This becomes a factor which reduces the **objectivity** of the article. The objectivity measurement in this website is decreased further from the active voice that the author maintains throughout. The author seeks to convince not by use of scientific facts but by use of logic and personal statements. This makes this website's objectivity hence validity to decrease. On objectivity as influence to validity, I would rate the first website to be scoring better than this.
The two websites are not so different in relation to who authored and who maintains the website. Just like the first website, this one has an individual as the author and an organization as one which maintains it. The author of this website is said to be **Tara Parker-Pope**. The sponsoring organization thus one which maintains it is identified to be the New York Times. That the New York Times is the sponsoring organization is confirmed on the URL where the term “nytimes” exists as a component part. Overall, this URL composition makes this article to be trusted to have been sponsored and maintained by the New York Times than the first one is trusted to have been sponsored and maintained by NIMH. Here, this one scores higher on **authority** compared to the first one. The authority of this website is increased by having the author’s details linked to the page. One can access details of the author by clicking on this link. This is a better way to ensure validity of the author’s information. It increases the authority measure of this website compared to the first.

The **presentation** in this website differs from the way it was done in the fist website. They differ in the **technical elements**. As an example, unlike the fist website, there are no links within the page to help easy access to relevant content. The meaning of this is that unlike the first one where one could simply skim to the data he or she wants, one will have to move there by going through data from top to bottom or bottom to top without any help. This is not a problem in reading however since the website has content which is short. It is possible the author saw no need in having links on a single and very short page. The absence of links however makes the first better on access.

On **design**, this article scores higher compared to the first one because of the pictorial object which is placed at the top. This picture captures the
theme of schizophrenia. It goes a long way in explaining what cannot be seen. The picture is colored and attractive making it an important technical element. The technical details of this website provide a rich experience. For those not interest in reading or who wish to get more than what they read, there is a link to an audio explanation. This link is thus a source for more details on the subject at hand.

The coverage of this website, unlike the first one, does not highlight the scientific facts. Instead, it identifies cases of schizophrenia and the factors which rise from such. This dimension of discussion presents value to my understanding of the topic. One lesson I learn from the site is that schizophrenia is not a double personality disorder. Another lesson I learn is that schizophrenics work well on artistic compositions. I also learn that besides thinking, schizophrenia also impacts the mood of the person.

CONCLUSION

In summary there are mixed scores for the two website on validity and credibility. On credibility, the first article comes from a reputable institution (NHM). There is however no surety of that since the URL shows a “family” thus individual as source. The second website has greater credibility since it is authored by New York Times and this is confirmed in the URL which identified nytimes. But for this one, the New York Times is not a reputable body to write on Schizophrenia as NIH is. The meaning of this is that the second website scores very low on validity compared to the first one. Taking note of these scores by both websites, my opinion would be that they are not credible and valid enough for use in a psychological study. For
the first website, the failure on credibility measure cannot be ignored as such can lead to one using information which is not proven. It can lead to a research which captures personal statements as opposed to scientific facts. This is unacceptable in psychological research. For the second one, the failure on validity measure cannot be ignored because such can easily lead to one being fed with incorrect information. This too is unacceptable in psychological research.