

Factors Affecting Online Health Seeking Behaviors in Middle-Income Class Filipino Adults

Authors : Reinzo Vittorio B. Cardenas, Heather Venice L. Abogado, Andrea Therese V. Afable, Rhea D. Avillanoza, Marie Abegail P. Ayagan, Catherine D. Bantayan

Abstract : As the Internet provides fast and reliable health-related information, the tendency to self-diagnose increases to further understand medical jargon in a diagnosis with a physician and decreases costly consultation fees. The study aimed to explore and understand the factors affecting online health-seeking behaviors in middle-income class adults in Metro Manila. The study was conducted from March to April of 2021 with a sample size of 200 individuals aged 20 to 49 years old. The study was delivered via an online survey that used a questionnaire adapted from the research of Lee et al. (2015). Specifically, the survey consisted of three sections: assessing web-based health-seeking behaviors, consultation with health professionals, and participants' hesitancy to consult with physicians, which used a mix of a 5-point Likert-type scale with multiple responses and multiple-choice options. The results showed that the age and educational attainment of the respondents had a negative effect while presenting a positive effect of socio-economic status on health-seeking behavior. Lastly, there was a significant effect of participant's hesitancy for professional consultation on their health-seeking behavior. The results gleaned from the study indicated that various individual and socio-economic factors might significantly affect one's health-seeking behaviors. Although hesitancy had a significant effect on the spectrum of health-seeking behaviors, this does not imply that certain factors are specifically related to an individual's tendency to seek health information. This information instead becomes essential in understanding the patient-physician relationship and giving patients a more holistic treatment.

Keywords : health-seeking behavior, health information, Internet, physician consultation

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