

## Searching for Health-Related Information on the Internet: A Case Study on Young Adults

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**Abstract :** This study aimed to examine the use of the internet as a source of health-related information (HRI), as well as the change in attitudes following the online search for HRI. The current study sample included 88 participants, randomly divided into two experimental groups. One was given the name of an unfamiliar disease and told to search for information about it using various search engines, and the second was given a text about the disease from a credible scientific source. The study findings show a large percentage of participants used the internet as a source of HRI. Likewise, no differences were found in the extent to which the internet was used as a source of HRI when demographics were compared. Those who searched for the HRI on the internet had more negative opinions and believed symptoms of the disease were worse than the average opinion among those who obtained the information about the disease from a credible scientific source. The Internet clearly influences the participants' beliefs, regardless of demographic differences.

**Keywords :** health-related information, internet, young adults, HRI

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