

Online Information Seeking: A Review of the Literature in the Health Domain

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Abstract : The development of the information technology and Internet has been transforming the healthcare industry. The internet is continuously accessed to seek for health information and there are variety of sources, including search engines, health websites, and social networking sites. Providing more and better information on health may empower individuals, however, ensuring a high quality and trusted health information could pose a challenge. Moreover, there is an ever-increasing amount of information available, but they are not necessarily accurate and up to date. Thus, this paper aims to provide an insight of the models and frameworks related to online health information seeking of consumers. It begins by exploring the definition of information behavior and information seeking to provide a better understanding of the concept of information seeking. In this study, critical factors such as performance expectancy, effort expectancy, and social influence will be studied in relation to the value of seeking health information. It also aims to analyze the effect of age, gender, and health status as the moderator on the factors that influence online health information seeking, i.e. trust and information quality. A preliminary survey will be carried out among the health professionals to clarify the research problems which exist in the real world, at the same time producing a conceptual framework. A final survey will be distributed to five states of Malaysia, to solicit the feedback on the framework. Data will be analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS 3.0 analysis tools. It is hoped that at the end of this study, a novel framework that can improve online health information seeking is developed. Finally, this paper concludes with some suggestions on the models and frameworks that could improve online health information seeking.

Keywords : information behavior, information seeking, online health information, technology acceptance model, the theory of planned behavior, UTAUT

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