

THE USE OF LATENT SEMANTIC ANALYSIS FOR UNDERSTANDING ONLINE HEALTH INFORMATION-SEEKING BEHAVIOR

*Heng Xie, College of Business, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, CA
95819, 916-278-5439, heng.xie@csus.edu*

*Gayle Prybutok, College of Health and Public Service, University of North Texas, 1155 Union Circle,
Denton, TX 76203, 940-369-7820, gayle.prybutok@unt.edu*

*Victor Prybutok, G. Brint Ryan College of Business, University of North Texas, 1155 Union Circle,
Denton, TX 76203, 940-565-3957, prybutok@unt.edu*

ABSTRACT

Search strategies that online health information seekers use can challenge health educators. We discuss applying latent semantic analysis (LSA) to assess online health information-seeking behaviors among millennials. The findings show that LSA on the information feedback allows for an improved understanding of information-seeking behavior and a better interpretation of survey data results. The study affirms the value of LSA in explaining the substantive educational utility of social media platforms on health topics. This study provides crucial methodological input for research on how to supplement survey data with textual analysis and develop effective delivery of online health education.

Keywords: Online Health Information-seeking Behavior; Online Health Education; Latent Semantic Analysis; Text Mining.