

# **Quality Evaluation of Health Answers in Social Q&A:** Socio-Emotional Support and Evaluation Criteria



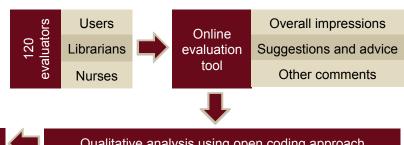
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## Introduction

- Little is known about the quality of health information in community contexts and socio-emotional factors impacting its evaluation
- · We explored the socioemotional reactions of and evaluation criteria discussed by evaluators of the quality of health answers in Yahoo! Answers, a social Q&A site

What socio-emotional reactions do librarians, nurses, and users have to evaluating health answers from social Q&A sites?

How does socio-emotional support relate to the evaluation criteria and indicators used by librarians, nurses, and users in such evaluation?



#### Fear or concern

"People really think they are getting reliable health information this way?? YIKES!" (L22)

### **Emotions**

**Trust** 

Take "with a grain of salt" (N12)

Surprise

(N14)

#### Confidence

Site "has helped me greatly over the years" (U25)

#### **Empathy**

Users "inherently want to help people" (L11)

Qualitative analysis using open coding approach



#### **Evaluation Criteria and Indicators**

## Sources

itself'(U12)

"that people "most were individual's really turn to ... [and] trust" other opinions" (N11) Internet users Personal experience "a source in

# Subjectivity

opinionated" (N01) "no credentials other than [their] experiences" (L14)

"heavily

#### Style

"not very scientific" (U02) "more like friends responding to email than... useful information" (L09) "informative" (U14)

## Completeness

"most people were trying to be helpful ... [but] few put in a lot of effort" (L18) "very slack, lazy, and not helpful" (N37)

#### **Accuracy**

"only one gave the most accurate answer" (N14) "not always the necessary ingredient" (L24)

# **Key Findings**

- Social and emotional support are important criteria on social Q&A sites
- Users focused on social and emotional support; librarians and nurses believed in need for objectivity, completeness
- Nurses also concerned with accuracy
- Trust / mistrust felt most by nurses and librarians, less by users

#### **Conclusions**

- Social Q&A sites must balance providing objective information and offering socio-emotional support to users in a comfotable context
- Users must also be educated in balanced quality evaluation of health information, incorporating subjective and objective evaluation criteria
- We will explore perceptions, advice, design implications, and the potential of balanced, collaborative educational efforts and information services