**Propensity for Online Community Contribution Scale (POCCS)**

This questionnaire intends to find out more about your behaviour within online health and social support communities. Health communities include those that have been specifically set up to provide support (health and social support and information) around specific health concerns, conditions and illnesses (including physical and mental health conditions and other types of disability). This also includes people who are providing support and care and online communities specifically for those groups. Communication within these groups can take place through forums, message boards and chat facilities. In particular, we are interested to find out the reasons why people do and do not contribute to such communities. Focussing on the health condition that you most regularly seek support/ information for, please read through the following questions and answer them as quickly and as honestly as you can.

The following questions are about your participation in the online community you visit most regularly for the health-related concern that you have. Please answer each question from the perspective of your behaviour in this online community rather than in relation to your general online behavior. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that the statements below represent factors affecting your online community participation behaviour (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Disagree or Agree, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. There is a real sense of community in online group I visited. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. When visiting the online community, I feel that others have typically asked the questions or made the contribution I would have made. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I felt uncomfortable posting. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I feel too unwell to contribute. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I often find I am too busy to post to the online community. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. The online community is not as active as I would like. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I am comfortable posting to this community even if I don’t know the other members very well. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I don’t feel that it is possible to get the emotional support I need online. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I’ve visited online communities in the past and I’ve witnessed others receiving abuse in response to their post. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. If my health wasn’t such a problem, I would spend more time in this community. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I have concerns about privacy. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I only post when I feel that I have something worthwhile to contribute. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I/Others have posted to online communities in the past but the responses to my/others post/s were upsetting. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. This online community does not make me feel welcome. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I/Others have posted to online communities in the past but the responses to my/others’ post/s were unpleasant. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I don’t want to share my problems with the rest of the world. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I am not worried about people reading about my personal problems. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I find it hard to say what I mean in writing. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I use this online community solely to gather information I need | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I feel that my thoughts would not be of interest to others. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I contribute posts only when I know a lot about the topic. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I don’t have the time to post. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I contribute posts only when I know the community well. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. Content in this community tends to be of low quality. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I just check posts on the online community to see if I’m on the right track/doing the right things. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. My needs were satisfied from reading others’ posts. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I prefer to observe the way people treat each other in online communities before posting myself. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. My illness sometimes gets in the way of me being able to go online. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I’m concerned that I will disclose more than I intended to. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I don’t know enough about the topic to contribute. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. It is difficult to get the emotional impact of my message across. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. This online community did not seem to work well together. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I don’t think you can connect with people online. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. I feel less inhibited about sharing parts of my life in an online forum. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. Generally online communities are very intuitive and user friendly. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. The online community is easy to access. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. The online community is easy to use. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree |

**Scoring**

For each of the factors below, take the average score for the items listed, making sure to reverse score items which are indicated with ‘(R)’.

Factor 1: Poor sense of community – 1(R), 8, 14, 24, 32, 33.

Factor 2: Struggles with self-expression – 18, 20, 29, 30, 31.

Factor 3: Inhibited disclosure and privacy – 3, 7(R), 11, 16, 17(R), 34(R).

Factor 4: Negative online interactions – 9, 13, 15.

Factor 5: Ease of access and use – 6(R), 35, 36, 37.

Factor 6: Health preventing contribution – 4, 10, 28.

Factor 7: Delayed and selective contribution – 12, 21, 23, 27.

Factor 8: Goals met without contribution – 2, 19, 25, 26.

Factor 9: Lack of time – 5, 22.

**Cronbach’s alphas**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **F1** | **F2** | **F3** | **F4** | **F5** | **F6** | **F7** | **F8** | **F9** |
| .778 | .720 | .709 | .762 | .644 | .757 | .666 | .615 | .714 |

**Reference**

Fullwood, C., Chadwick, D., Keep, M., Attrill-Smith, A., Asbury, T., & Kirwan, G. (2019). Lurking towards empowerment: Explaining propensity to engage with online health support groups and its association with positive outcomes. *Computers in Human Behavior,* 90, 131-140.