

Hidradenitis Suppurativa Specialty Clinics and Instagram Usage

Lindsey Ayanruoh, BS¹; Joyce H. Park, MD²

¹SUNY Downstate College of Medicine, Brooklyn, NY; ²Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Mountain View, CA

BACKGROUND

- Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is a debilitating disease that disproportionately affects people of color and women.⁶
- Instagram is a social media platform that people use for education and communication, including dermatologists.¹
- HS patients are often of a lower socioeconomic status and seek alternative therapies for their illness due to health care costs.³

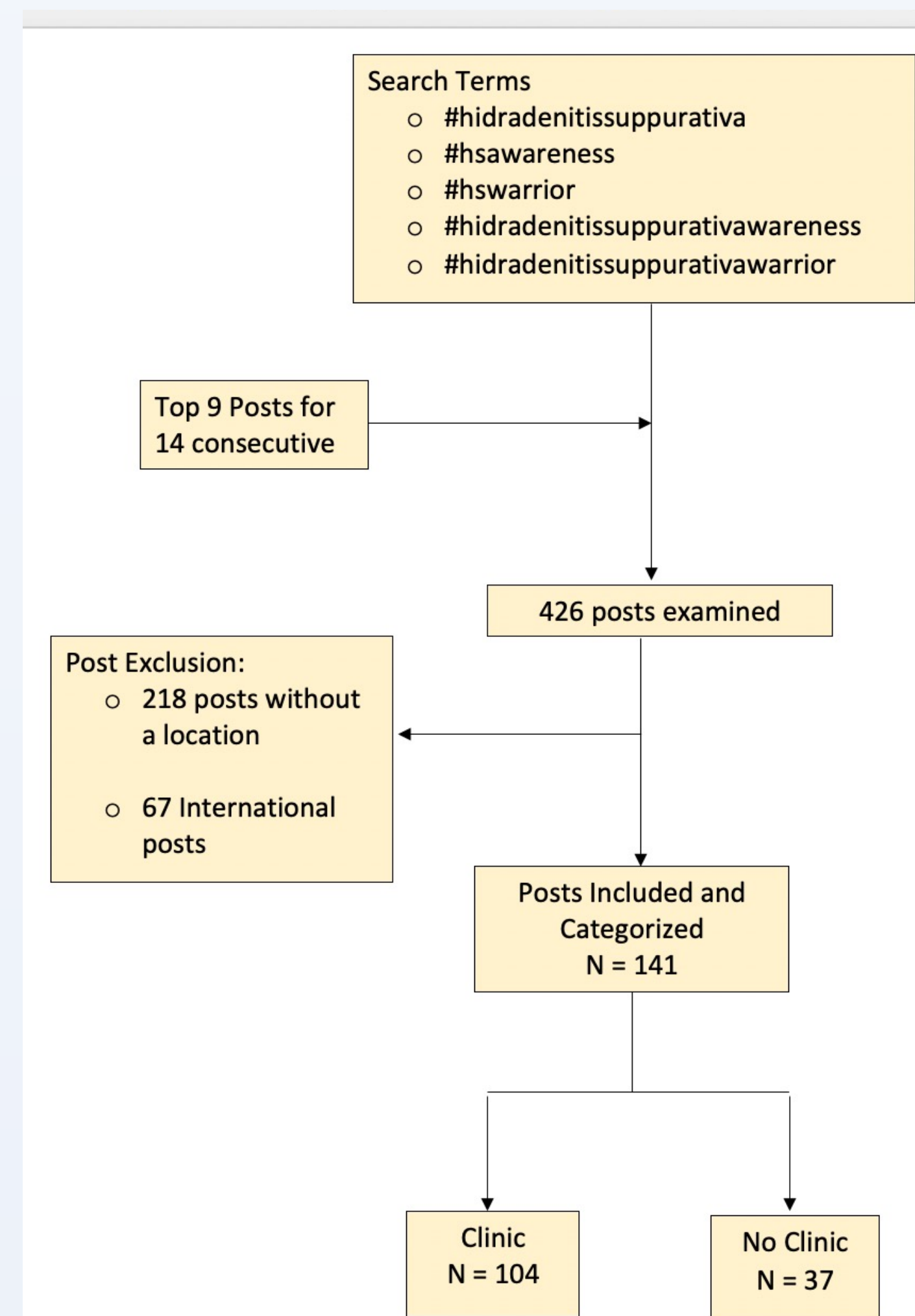
OBJECTIVE

- To discover whether the presence of an HS specialty clinic affects the types of posts made by patients.

METHODS

- Authors analyzed 141 original posts that provided location information.
- Posts were categorized by topic, location, and presence of a specialty clinic. Two-sample t-test was performed to compare post distribution for states with and without a clinic.

Figure 1. Inclusion Criteria

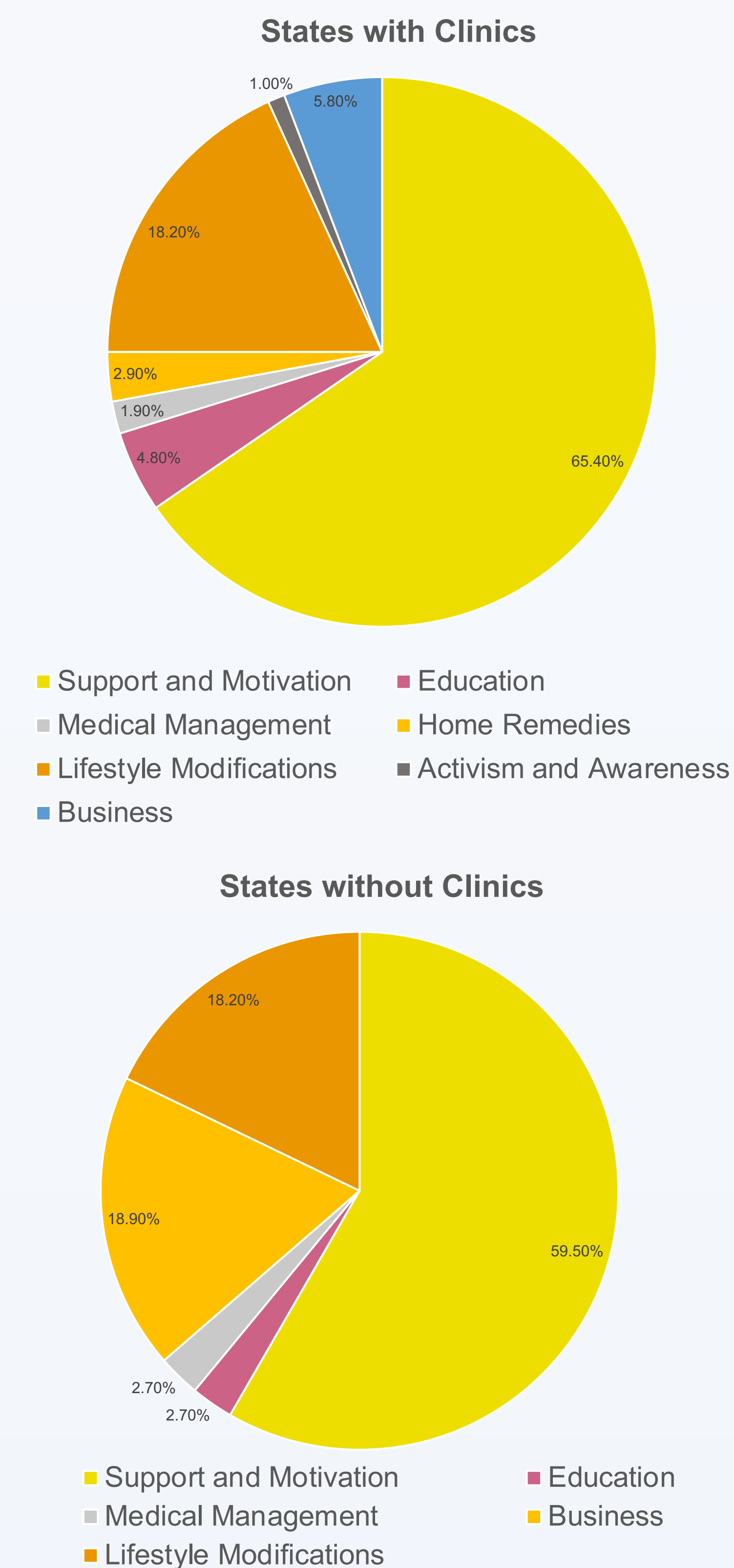


RESULTS

Table 1. States with HS Clinics

All States with HS Clinics in US	States Represented in Study
Arkansas	Arizona
California	California
Florida	Florida
Georgia	Georgia
Illinois	Illinois
Massachusetts	Indiana
Michigan	Iowa
Minnesota	Kentucky
Missouri	Louisiana
New Mexico	Maine
New York	Massachusetts
North Carolina	Minnesota
Ohio	Nevada
Pennsylvania	New Jersey
Texas	New York
Virginia	North Carolina
Washington	Oklahoma
Washington D.C	Oregon
	Pennsylvania
	South Carolina
	Texas
	Washington D.C.

Figure 2. Post Topic Distribution



- 50% of represented states (including DC) have specialty clinics.
- Location of HS clinics are not equally distributed across the United States.
- The most popular topics did not vary by presence of a specialty clinic.
- Most popular post topics included support and motivation, lifestyle modification, and business products.
- Support/motivation posts often included encouraging quotes, words of wisdom, and patient generated memes used as a form of self expression.
- Lifestyle modification often included posts about changes in eating habits and exercise routines.
- Business product posts were made by small businesses promoting alternative treatments such as message therapies and soaps as management for HS.
- Over 80% of patients were between the ages of 20 and 39 for both groups.
- There was no significant difference between post topics made by places with an HS specialty clinic and those without ($p = .798$).

CONCLUSIONS

- Our analysis illustrated no significant difference between post content in states that have a clinic when compared to states without a clinic.
- HS patients on Instagram have similar needs regardless of the presence of an HS specialty clinic.
- Improving quality of life is a concern for many patients, especially those who do not have a healthcare team helping them manage their HS.
- A lot of work still needs to be done to make medically relevant information and adequate healthcare accessible to HS patients.
- With this knowledge, dermatologists can use the appropriate hashtags to continue to raise awareness about medically relevant HS information over Instagram.

LIMITATIONS

- Our results were limited by a small sample size.
- In the future evaluating a much larger demographic will allow for better generalizability to the population.

REFERENCES

1. Braunberger, Taylor., et al. "Global skin diseases on Instagram hastags" *Dermatology Online Journal*, 2017
2. Coke, Daniel W., et al. "An Internet-Based Survey Study of Hidradenitis Suppurativa Patients: Use of the Internet for Disease-Related Information." *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, 2019, doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2019.12.024
3. Deckers IE, Janse IC, van der Zee HH, Nijsten T, Boer J, Horváth B, Prens EP. Hidradenitis suppurativa (HS) is associated with low socioeconomic status (SES): A cross-sectional reference study. *J Am Acad Dermatol*. 2016 Oct;75(4):755-759.e1. doi: 10.1016/j.jaad.2016.04.067. Epub 2016 Jul 21. PMID: 27453539.
4. Li, Wendy, et al. "Hidradenitis Suppurativa through the Lens of YouTube: a Cross-Sectional Analysis." *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, 30 May 2020, doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2020.05.148.
5. Park, Joyce H, et al. "Dermatology on Instagram: An Analysis of Hashtags." *Journal of Drugs Dermatol*, 1 Apr 2018
6. Vlassova N, Kuhn D, Okoye GA. Hidradenitis suppurativa disproportionately affects African Americans: a single-center retrospective analysis. *Acta Derm Venereol*. 2015 Nov;95(8):990-1. doi: 10.2340/00015555-2176. PMID: 26073615.

The authors have no relevant conflicts of interest.