**VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY**

**Informed consent form for participants of Research Involving Human Subject**

**Title of the Project:** A Study of Multiple Topic Assignment to Disaster Webpage Content and Inter-Indexer Consistency Computation

**Investigators**: **Seungwon Yang**

**Faculty investigators: Dr. Edward A. Fox**

**Participant number:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I. PURPOSE OF THIS RESEARCH**

The investigators of this study are working on developing an automatic topic identification method, which assigns topics given an electronic textual document. The first purpose of this research is to develop a ‘golden standard’ test set, which includes documents tagged (i.e., topic-assigned) by multiple human indexers. This ‘golden standard’ set is used to evaluate our automatic method by comparing results from both approaches.

The second purpose is to investigate inter-indexer consistency. It is well known that human indexers may assign topics differently from each other due to their different background knowledge in the domain of the document, vocabulary size, language proficiency, education level, etc. We would like to measure the consistency among human indexers, and also the consistency between the highest performing human indexers and our automatic approach. It is our hope that our automatic approach will help reduce the human intervention of assigning meaningful topics/tags to textual documents in the era of information inundation.

**II. PROCEDURES**

Since you were recruited online using the JESSE listserv discussion group, all the communications, sending (links of) forms are conducted by email. Your answers for the demographic questionnaire and the main task form are collected using an online survey system.

Upon receiving your signed informed consent (this form) by FAX/scanned PDF/images/mail, a link to an online demographic survey form is sent to you by email. Once the researchers receive completed demographic survey forms, we will send you a link to an online main task form. The main task form consists of instructions and 30 textual documents, each of which has an empty text box for adding topics.

You will get familiarized with the steps of doing the task by reading the instructions, which is in the top portion of the main task form. Then, you read each of the 30 text documents, find topics that may contribute to the main theme of the document, and add those into an empty text box under each document link. There is an optional question at the bottom of the online task form, which you may answer. In total, the task will take approximately 3 hours. You can stop and resume work anytime during your participation. There is no time limit in the task completion, but we encourage you to finish the tasks in 2 days at most. When you complete the task, you will receive a $30 gift card by online (e.g., Amazon gift card) for compensation.

**III. RISKS**

You are involved with reading textual documents on a computer screen and typing in several words/phrases as topics for each document. The physical components of the task previously described may result in eye, wrist, or finger fatigue.

If you experience any fatigue during the task, you are free to rest and may continue when you are ready. If the fatigue becomes uncomfortable, you will be allowed to leave the study with no penalty.

**IV. BENEFITS OF THIS RESEARCH**

You will experience the task of topic assignment, which is relevant to the field of Library and Information Sciences. In addition, you will receive a gift card of $30 upon completion of the study.

**V. EXTENT OF ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

This research will assure your confidentiality. We will have your signatures on the Informed Consent document. Faxed, scanned PDFs, images of the signed document, or a paper form are all acceptable. This document will be kept in the computer of a researcher, Seungwon Yang, until his dissertation and related publications are published. Your name will not be released in any publications. After publishing the dissertation and acceptance of related papers, Seungwon Yang will destroy the documents (in electronic forms) from his computer.

Only the researcher, Seungwon Yang, will collect the data. No one other than the researchers will have access to the data. All responses will be coded so as not to include the name of the participant. Your two-digit participant number will only identify you during analysis and any written reports of the research.

This study is being conducted solely for research and development purposes, and the resulting data and interpretations also will be the part of the researcher’s academic work. Consistent with these academic purposes, any results would be freely publishable. Again, to protect your identity, personal names will not be used in any published works. We are willing to share drafts of reports with you before submitting them for publication.

**VI. COMPENSATION**

A $30 gift card is provided upon completion of the study.

**VII. FREEDOM TO WITHDRAW**

Your participation is voluntary and the decision on whether you wish to participate or not is strictly your own. You may discontinue participation at any time. However, the compensation will be given to those who complete the experiment.

**VIII. APPROVAL OF RESEARCH**

This research project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and by the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering (College of Engineering).

**IX. PARTICIPANT’S RESPONSIBILITIES**

Upon signing this form, I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have no restrictions to my participation in this study. As a participant, I may withdraw from this experiment at any time without penalty. I agree to abide by the rules of this project.

**X. PARTICIPANT’S PERMISSION**

I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this study. All of my questions have been answered. I agree to participate in this experiment.

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Participant’s Signature Date

Should I have any questions about the research or its conduct, I may contact:

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Chair, IRB