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Jizhi Hou
Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, China, 363762959@qq.com

Yuehuan Tang
Xi'an Jiaotong University, China, 2641289809@qq.com

Qinghong Shuai
Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, China, 707104807@qq.com

Lu Xie
Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, China, 846717636@qq.com

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Yuehuan Tang,Xi'an Jiaotong University,China 2641289809@qq.com
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Lu Xie,Southwestern University of Finance and Economics,China,846717636 @qq.com

ABSTRACT

We set "zhihu.com" as an example and integrate a new model to study the user's intention to continuously using the network Q & A community platform based on traditional S-O-R model, Information System (IS) success model, the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) model and Error Correction Model (ECM). In the social dimension, technological dimension, service quality dimension, we carried out an empirical research on the important factors affecting the user's continually using the network Q & A community platform. Finally, we put forward suggestions and Countermeasures on how to manage the network innovation community and encourage users to participate it effectively.

Keywords: the network Q & A community; the intention to continue using; continuously use;

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the network Q & A community platform represented by "zhihu.com" is becoming more and more popular, proved to be one of the main fields of the Internet users access to information and online activities, called "the best Chinese Q & A community". However, the research based on user participation or continuous to participate in online Q & A community behavior is still in the blank. This paper takes S-O-R model as the main theoretical framework, integrates IS success model, UTAUT model and ECM model, uses "zhihu.com" as example, and establishes the theoretical model of influencing factors of the user's intention to continuously using the network Q & A community platform.

This paper mainly discusses three questions. Firstly, what are the influencing factors of the user's intention to continuously using the network Q & A community platform? Secondly, which variables play the role of organic variable between stimulus and response variables? Thirdly, what kind of relationship is there between organic variables?

THEORETICAL RESEARCH

At present, a lot of research is based on the user's initial use, but some studies of users continuous use intention shows that the behavior after receiving information system is also the important factors that affect its success [1-2]. Even some studies have shown that information system's long-term success depends on the continuous use of the target information system [3].

Theory of Reasoned Action[4], Theory of Planned Behavior[5], Technology Acceptance Model[6], UTAUT[7]and especially ECM[3] have already been widely applied to explore the influencing factors of information system's continuous use . At the same time, Limayem et al. 's research confirmed that began to use and with the continuation of behavior are determined by the different purpose [8].

IS success model[9] integrates a large number of external variables or models to it, in order to find out the factors of information's continuous use, which also applied to mining the determinant of continuous use of "zhihu" platform. In addition, although the DeLone and McLean[10] shows that determinant influencing the success of information system has 3 points: information quality, system quality and service quality, Petter et al[11] hold that success factors can be divided into five categories: task characteristics, user characteristics, social characteristics, project characteristics and organizational characteristics. Additional studies are needed to confirm some of these features, especially the social characteristics. Therefore, these factors should be considered in the study of continuous use.

This article takes S-O-R model[12,13] as the basic theoretical framework, which firstly is applied to environmental psychology. Stimulus variable (S) is possible the driving force to affect the user's cognitive and emotional process ; Organic variable (O) involves "between stimulus and final action , reaction between the individual internal process and structure", which is made up of perceived, psychology, feeling and thinking; Response variable (R) is the final behavior to producing results or consumer reaction , including psychological reaction such as reaction of attitude and behavior. Some scholars extend this behavior model in the virtual community, studying outside stimulation from web page hint, interactive and social signals[14]. Based on S-O-R model, Bai et al[15] established a model contains information system success model to explore the effect of site quality on satisfaction and purchase intention. In addition, in the field of information system, S-O-R model was used to explore how online shopping environment affect consumer

behavior[16]. Therefore, it shows that S-O-R model is a right choice about confirming the factors that affect consumers' continuous use to zhihu platform.

<div align="center">**THEORETICAL MODEL AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**</div>

Theoretical model

This paper based on the S-O-R model, IS success model, the UTAUT model, the TTF model and ECM model, build a portfolio model to explore the determinants of zhihu platform users continuous using intention. Figure 1 summarizes our research model.
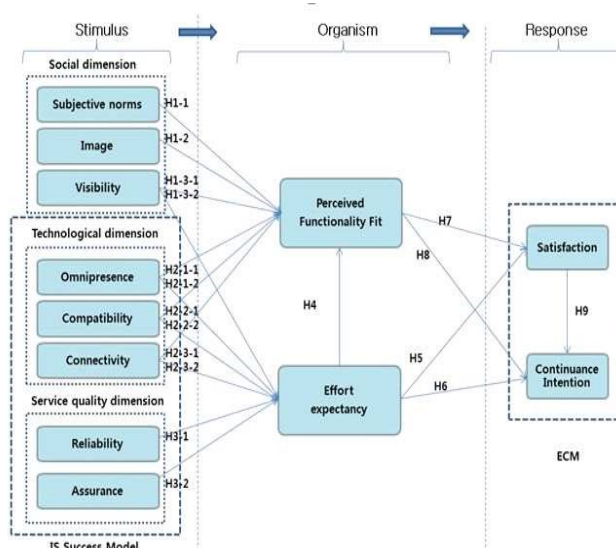

Figure 1: Research model.

In this model, stimulate stage includes three dimensions: social dimension (subjective norm, image and popularity), technical dimensions (universality, compatibility and connectivity) and dimension of service quality (reliability, ensure degrees), in the three dimensions, the service quality and technical structure adopted by the information system success model. From the social dimension, this paper adopted subjective norms, image and popularity as an determinant of information system's success[13]. Individual psychological characteristic stage includes two dimensions: pay expectations and cognitive function. These mediation variables are adopted respectively from UAUT and TTF model, as a process of user's response to stimulation of the cognitive [17]. Finally, on the "reaction stage", this paper studies the function relationship of the mediation variables with platform satisfaction and continuous intention.

Reasearch hypotheses

Social dimension

According to the TRA and TAM2, the concept of subjective norm is defined as somebody hold that most people who are important to him think he or she should use the new system or technology[4]. Previous studies have confirmed that the subjective norms have significantly influence on perceived attitude[17,18]. On zhihu platform, support online collaboration is one of the most important features, for online collaboration and document sharing, users often consider the views or demand of the colleagues or peers. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H1-1 Subjective norms will have positive effects on cognitive function's accommodation.

Image refers to enhancing a person's perception of the image or status with innovation in the social system. It emerged from relative advantage and was regarded as a social approval. New technology has been considered as a symbol of social value, which can then be used to prompt the user to adopt it. Previous research has empirically demonstrated that the image is one of antecedents on behavior intention to continued usage of IT. In term of new technology, the Zhihu platform can be seen as a symbol of a new fashion (like the latest smart phone or application) and it can be used to improve his or her self-esteem in the social environment. This status will increase the communication and collaboration with other colleagues or friends, and improve working efficiency. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H1-2 Image will have a positive effect on cognitive function.

Visibility refers to the context in which the innovation is visible. It implies that if a person finds many benefits of a service before the subscription, he or she can establish a positive view and attitude on the technology. Some articles use this innovative feature to predict the continued use of behavior. Although visibility is often used to explain the behavioral beliefs in the field of IT, recent empirical evidence suggests that it also has a positive effect on behavioral attitudes. Active exploration of experience will help individuals to gain more efficient use of knowledge from the platform. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H1-3-1 Visibility will have a positive impact on perceived functionality fit.

H1-3-2 Visibility will have a positive effect on effort expectancy.

Technological dimension
Generally, refers to that as long as users access to the Internet, they can visit the website. It is defined as a unique property of the platform. Using the platform will help users overcome the limitations of location and time, and through the usage of different computing devices and applications. Universality can help users understand and use the platform more easily. It can also improve the efficiency of users by constantly using information and applications. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H2-1-1   Universality will have a positive impact on cognitive function.

H2-1-2   Universal will have a positive effect on effort expectancy.

Compatibility is the degree to which an IT innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, needs, and past experiences of potential adopters. New system compatible with existing IT can lead to be understood and adopted more quickly. This is because users need not to change and learn new behaviors to fit new target system. If you know that the platform can be compatible with the current system, it will be more easily to learn and also more useful. Previous studies have indicated that compatibility also indirectly affects people's behavioral intentions through objective beliefs. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H2-2-1   Compatibility will have a positive impact on cognitive function adaptation.

H2-2-2   Compatibility will have a positive impact on pay expectations.

Connectivity is user's perception that to what extent a connection is speedy and stabile. It is regarded as an important factor of internet's service quality in the context of mobile game. In case of zhihu, stable connection will enhance collaboration thereby result in a higher completion of task, which means the more efficient connectivity it owes, the better assignments performance it will be aligned. And collaborating with friends or colleagues frequently lead to he or she can receive more assistance, by which the consumers will believe zhihu is ease to use. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H2-3-1   Connectivity will have a positive impact on cognitive functioning.

H2-3-2   Connectivity will have a positive impact on the expectations of the pay.

Service quality dimension
Reliability refers to the extent to which ability to perform and maintain the promised service timely, dependably and accurately. Van Gorder suggested that reliability is the most important factor in determining service quality. Customers may be especially concerned about the reliability of service delivery on the basis of a new technology, because they may consider some performance in that service may not work well. However, in the context of the zhihu services, providers perform software update and fix system vulnerabilities timely, and resolve questions accurately. Users may have perceptions of benefits from these conception, whereby users can learn instructions of zhihu with less effort and time, and accomplish task more efficiently on the zhihu's environment. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H3-1 Reliability will have a positive impact on cognitive function.

Assurance refers to the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their abilities to inspire trust and confidence. Although zhihu's environment differs from the traditional service, it still offers professional assistance to users for helping them accomplish tasks. For instance, even if a person is not familiar with Google Docs, he or she might handle the problems though accessing the "help center" to acquire help or send feedback to the company. This approach may precipitate consumer to understand and experience the zhihu service instead of face-to-face. At the same time, knowledge-based familiarity with zhihu vendors will positively affect perceptions of ease to use. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H4   Effort expectancy will have a positive effect on perceived functionality fit.

H5   Effort expectancy will have a positive effect on user satisfaction.

H6 Effort expectancy will have a positive effect on continuance intention to use the zhihu services.

Perceived functionality fit refers to the extent to which an individual believes that functionalities of the system will match his or her needs. This construct is adapted from task-technology Fit (TTF) model. Although previous research discovered that TTF can be combined into other models (e.g., TAM, UTAUT) for exploring the IT adoption in different context, they only tested its effects on perceived IT beliefs. Negahban and Chung conducted an empirical research and proposed that objective beliefs can also affect user's perception of device functionality fit. Based on the TTF, they developed a new construct, namely perceived functionality fit, and tested its validity as well. Owing to focusing on functionality perspective, this present study adopts this construct as a prominent mediating variable which influence on continuance intention directly. Perceived fit can be used to test the satisfaction in term of adopting technology to fulfill the needs of tasks. If the zhihu services match consumers' requirement, users will perceive satisfaction and continue towards using the services. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H7 Perceived functional compliance will have a positive impact on the user's satisfaction.

H8 The perception of functional compliance will have a positive impact on the willingness to continue to use the knowledge on the platform.

Satisfaction refers to the degree of individual's pleasure or disappointment of using target systems. According to ECM theory, IS continuance intention is primarily determined by users' satisfaction with prior IS use. Previous studies have proved this significant relationship in several contexts. For the zhihu services, this study posit users' satisfaction is linked with continuance intention. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

H9 Satisfaction will have a positive impact on the intention of the service of the platform.

Finally, the relations between model variables are as shown in table 1.

Table 1: THEORETICAL MODEL AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Construct	Definition	Sources
Subjective norm	The person's perception that most people who are important to him think he or she should use the new system or technology	Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) Taylor and Todd (1995)
Visibility	The degree to which the innovation is visible in the organization	Rogers (1983) Moore and Benbasat (1991)
Image	The degree to which use of an innovation is perceived to enhance one's image or status in one's social system	Rogers (1983) Moore and Benbasat (1991)
Omnipresence	The extent to which subjects expected anytime/anywhere access to the zhihu services, given their access to the Internet	Buttel (2010) Bhattacherjee(2013)
Compatibility	The degree to which an IT innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, needs, and past experiences of potential adopters	Rogers (1983) Moore and Benbasat (1991) Kim et al. (2010)
Connectivity	The person's perception that to what extent a connection is speedy and stabile	Kim and Hwang (2012)
Reliability	The extent to which ability to perform and maintain the promised service timely, dependably and accurately	Parasuraman (1988) Van Gorder (1990) Xu et al. (2013)
Assurance	The knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence	Parasuraman (1988) Xu et al. (2013)
Effort expectancy	The extent to which a person believes that using a system is free of effort.	Venkatesh et al. (2003, 2012)
Perceived functionality fit	The extent to which an individual believes that functionalities of the system will match his or her needs	Negahban and Chung(2014)
Satisfaction	The degree of individual's pleasure or disappointment of using target systems	Bhattacherjee (2001)

Continuance intention	Intention to continue using the technology	Bhattacherjee (2001)

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

All measurement items were adapted from previous literature, with minor modifications in wording to make them relevant in the context of internet financial sales platforms. The measurement items were formulated by a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 7 "strongly agree". Before posting formal survey, the survey was examined by bachelor's degree students (n=20) in a MIS program who have experience of internet financial sales platform to reduce possible ambiguity in the questions. Respondents were asked about any problems they may have encountered in the survey. Comments and suggestions on the items' contents were solicited.

Most of the respondents are undergraduates at the age of 18 to 22 years old, coming from different positions. The survey results show that young people are keener on new technology. Zhihu is a relatively new technology, 78.8% of respondents use zhihu.

MODEL ANALYSIS

Measurement Model

The measurement model is evaluated based on its reliability and validity. We assessed the reliability with Cronbach's α, composite reliability (CR) and the average variance extracted (AVE). For a construct with good reliability, Cronbach's α should be at least 0.7, CR should exceed 0.5, and the AVE should be larger than 0.7 (Hair et al. 1998). As shown in Table 2, all values are larger than the generally accepted values, representing good reliability.

Table 2: CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY AND CONVERGENT VALIDITY.

	Item	factor loading	CR	AVE	Cronbach's a
Subjective norm	Those people who influence my behavior think that I should use the zhihu platform.	0.879	0.9129	0.7774	0.908
	Those people who are important to me think that I should use the zhihu platform.	0.875			
	Those people whose opinions that I value prefer that I use the zhihu platform.	0.891			
Image	People who use the zhihu platform have a high profile in my department .	0.850	0.8658	0.7636	0.928
	Using the zhihu platform is a status symbol in my department.	0.897			
Visibility	In my department one sees the zhihu platform a lot.	0.835	0.886	0.7215	0.890
	The zhihu platform is very visible in my department .	0.851			
	In my department one sees lots of people is using the zhihu platform.	0.862			
Omnipresence	I can use the zhihu platform anytime and anywhere, given that I have access to Internet.	0.881	0.8718	0.6952	0.874
	I find the zhihu platform easy to accessible, given that I have access to Internet.	0.872			
	I find the zhihu platform is available to use whenever I need it.	0.741			
Compatibility	I believe the zhihu platform is compatible with existing technology.	0.841	0.8863	0.7221	0.921
	I believe the zhihu platform is compatible with my previous experience.	0.870			
	I believe the zhihu platform is compatible with my daily routine tasks.	0.838			
Connectivity	The zhihu platform has a rapid initial connection speed	0.900	0.9335	0.8239	0.911
	The zhihu platform has a rapid synchronization speed	0.911			
	The zhihu platform has a stable connection.	0.912			
Reliability	The zhihu platform provider's service is dependable	0.795	0.8116	0.5897	0.829
	When the zhihu platform provider promises to do something, it does so.	0.746			
	The provider performed services right during my task	0.762			

Assurance	The provider of the zhihu platform has a good reputation.	0.845	0.8952	0.7401	0.836
	My personal information feels secure on the zhihu platform.	0.893			
	I can trust the provider of the zhihu platform	0.842			
Effort expectancy	Skillfully using the zhihu platform is easy for me.	0.732	0.8217	0.538	0.845
	My interaction with the zhihu platform is clear and understandable.	0.765			
	I find the zhihu platform easy to use.	0.607			
	Learning the zhihu platform need not so much time	0.814			
Perceived functionality fit	The functionality of the zhihu platform meets my needs	0.868	0.8707	0.692	0.914
	The zhihu platform has all the functionality that I find necessary	0.832			
	I am satisfied with the functionality of the zhihu platform.	0.794			
Satisfaction	Technical things considered, I am very satisfied with the zhihu services.	0.743	0.8681	0.6225	0.931
	I am very pleased with using the interface of the zhihu platform.	0.835			
	I am very content with using the interface of the zhihu platform.	0.818			
	Overall, my interaction with the zhihu platform is very satisfying.	0.756			
Continuance intention	I intend to continue using the zhihu platform rather than discontinue its use.	0.746	0.8229	0.6079	0.896
	My intentions are to continue using the zhihu platform rather than use any alternative technology.	0.791			
	If I could, I would continue my use of the zhihu platform.	0.801			

Discriminant validity was examined using criteria suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981): the square root of AVE from each construct should be greater than the correlations between the construct and the other constructs. Each construct in our research model has a higher loading on its corresponding construct than its cross-loadings on other constructs, thus providing evidence of discriminant validity (Table).

Table 3: DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY: THE SQUARE ROOT OF AVE AND CORRELATION

Items	SN	IM	Vis	Com	Om	Con	RE	AS	EE	PFF	Sat	SN
SN	0.881											
Im	0.483	0.874										
Vis	0.366	0.364	0.849									
Com	0.138	0.172	0.314	0.834								
Om	0.143	0.140	0.308	0.453	0.850							
Con	0.061	-0.188	-0.021	0.014	-0.004	0.908						
RE	0.266	0.266	0.311	0.355	0.431	0.051	0.768					
AS	0.029	0.043	0.129	0.053	0.155	0.106	0.089	0.860				
EE	0.270	0.225	0.210	0.373	0.292	0.182	0.426	0.149	0.733			
PFF	0.283	0.170	0.205	0.266	0.319	0.106	0.380	0.043	0.619	0.832		
Sat	0.232	0.258	0.355	0.378	0.497	0.048	0.588	0.128	0.449	0.467	0.789	
CI	0.215	0.273	0.396	0.394	0.444	-0.039	0.478	0.135	0.440	0.340	0.641	0.780

It shows that measurement model has already passed the validity test, so we can discuss the structural model.

Structural Model

To assess how well the model represents the data, this paper employed AMOS 6.0 to evaluate' Goodness-of-Fit Indexes. We found that most of the model fit indices ($\chi2/df$=1.932, RMSEA=0.051, GFI=0.852, AGFI=0.810, CFI =0.941, NFI=0.887 and IFI=0.942) are within the commonly accepted thresholds suggested in the literature (Fornell & Larcker 1981; Hair et al. 1998). The fit indices indicate that the model provides a relatively good fit.

Table 4: MODEL FIT INDICES.

Fit index	Observed value	Recommended value	References

χ^2/d.f.	1.932	Good fit (should be less than 3)	Fornell and Larcker 1981
GFI	0.852	Good fit (should be greater than 0.80)	Hair *et al.* 1981
AGFI	0.810	Good fit (should be greater than 0.80)	Hair *et al.* 1981
NFI	0.887	Good fit (should be greater than 0.80)	Fornell and Larcker 1981
IFI	0.942	Good fit (should be greater than 0.90)	Hair *et al.* 1981
CFI	0.941	Good fit (should be greater than 0.90)	Fornell and Larcker 1981
RMSEA	0.051	Good fit (should be less than 0.80)	Hair *et al.* 1981

The structural model's test result of each hypothesis is shown in table 5.

Table 5: Hypothesis testing results

假设路径			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Subjective norm	-->	Functionality fit	.130	.032	4.002	***
Image	-->	Functionality fit	.160	.047	3.416	***
Visibility	-->	Functionality fit	-.026	.030	-0.854	.393
Visibility	-->	Effort expectancy	.150	.034	4.455	***
Omnipresence	-->	Functionality fit	.049	.025	1.990	.047*
Omnipresence	-->	Effort expectancy	.083	.029	2.850	.004**
Compatibility	-->	Functionality fit	.069	.033	2.101	.036*
Compatibility	-->	Effort expectancy	.178	.040	4.428	***
Connectivity	-->	Functionality fit	.055	.022	2.537	.011*
Connectivity	-->	Effort expectancy	.029	.029	.983	.325
Reliability	-->	Effort expectancy	.186	.036	5.224	***
Assurance	-->	Effort expectancy	.059	.025	2.031	.042*
Effort expectancy	-->	Functionality fit	.406	.056	7.257	***
Effort expectancy	-->	Satisfaction	.837	.122	6.885	***
Effort expectancy	-->	Continuance Intention	.298	.069	4.310	***
Functionality fit	-->	Satisfaction	.614	.102	6.020	***
Functionality fit	-->	Continuance Intention	.393	.093	4.211	***
Satisfaction	-->	Continuance Intention	.187	.060	3.105	.002**

Notes: *** represents $p<0.001$; ** represents $p<0.005$; * represents $p<0.01$

Results show that 16 of the 18 hypotheses are significant, which suggests that the pay expectations, cognitive function, and satisfaction have significant effects on continuous intention. Therefore, they all have a positive influence on the continuous use of zhihu. If zhihu's service disappoint users, many of them will give up using it. In addition, easy operation and better connectivity will promote users continue to use zhihu.

Both pay expectations and cognitive functions provide active user satisfaction, which shows that those two variables are determinant. Therefore, zhihu team can focus on simplifying the operating process, adding more appropriate function to increase satisfaction.
The hypothesis of positive influence is significant to pay expectations and cognitive function. This suggests that when users realize zhihu is easy to use, they will think zhihu can meet their needs, so more easy zhihu is , more frequently user use it.
Overall, the test results are as follows: H1-1, H1-2, H1-3-1, H1-3-2, H3-1, H4, H5, H6, H7 and H8 are significant (p<0.001), H2-2-2 is positively associated with H9 (p<0.001), H2-1-1, H2-2-1, H2-3-1 and H3-2 are supported (p<0.05), H1-3-1 and H2-3-2 are not supported (p<0.05).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions and contributions

First of all, online Q & A community is a relatively new concept, related research is still in the early stage. This paper integrate a new model to do research on continuous use of Q & A community , compared with the traditional information system success model, in addition to technical dimensions and service quality dimensions, also pay attention to the social dimension.

Secondly, S-O-R framework has already been widely used in market research, but less in the field of information systems. Studies have confirmed that S-O-R can be used as theoretical framework about structural information technology adoption behavior, and its application in the field of information systems are appropriate.

Finally, the model defined a series of factors that have positive influence on behavior, and inspect the mediation effect and its influence on information systems continuous use intention, these variables can also be used in other places.

The results of the study has a certain practical significance, it can do good help for online Q & A community to maintain existing users.

From social dimension, Q & A community should pay more attention to those who have social status, easy operation can improve user satisfaction, for the user, using a Q & A community can also raise users' profile in the social system.

From technology dimensions, Q & A needs to consider how to improve connectivity performance brings more convenient network access service to users, considering compatibility at the same time, which will enhance the user satisfaction.

From service quality dimensions, Q & A community's Stability is very important. Regularity of product updates, prompt reply to the question and rapid leak repairment will help the user use the community more easily and efficiently.

Limitations and futural research direction

Firstly, this paper emphasizes three important dimensions of continuous use intention of the network Q & A community . At the same time, there are also some other factors need to be confirmed. For example, surveys show that most users prefer to use free Q & A community, therefore, we need to study the relationship between cost and adoption. Thus, other factors are recommended to study in the future.

Secondly, with the support of the research results, this paper highlights the intermediary variable cognitive function but ignored the exogenous variables' direct impact on the satisfaction and intention of continuous use. Therefore, we suggest explore the relationship between them.

Thirdly, this paper only constructs one model, therefore, in the future study, we can also build other suitable model.

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