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How Knowledge Characteristics and Platform Characteristics Drive Users' Purchase Intention of Online Paid Health Knowledge?

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1. INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the era of knowledge economy, knowledge payment market in China has gradually formed and grown in a few years. Numerous research in antecedent factors of purchase behavior is conducted in different contexts, exploring impacts of characteristics regarding knowledge itself, knowledge contributor and platform. Meanwhile, with the enhancement of Chinese residents' health awareness and literacy, more and more Internet users are taking the initiative to purchase needed health knowledge through various online health platforms (OHPs) such as Good Doctor (online health consultation), Keep (fitness courses), DingXiangMom (knowledge of pregnancy and childbirth). Health knowledge payment has become an important channel for many online users to alleviate health anxiety and build disease prevention and health promotion capacity. Most health knowledge payment studies focus on the context of online health consultation. Li et al.^[1] found physicians' knowledge contribution and reputation positively affect patient consultation.

In order to find more generally applicable factors affecting purchase intention of online health knowledge including articles, consultation services, fitness courses and others, this study attempts to explore: (1) What are the main factors of knowledge itself that affect users' purchase intention of online health knowledge? (2) What are the main factors of the platform that affect users' purchase intention of online health knowledge? (3) How do knowledge characteristics and platform characteristics drive users' purchase intention of online paid health knowledge?

2. THEORY AND RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Based on the S-O-R model and perceived value, we propose knowledge characteristics (rarity, personalization) and platform characteristics (information quality, service quality), functioning as external stimuli, positively impact users' perceived value as the organism (utilitarian value, hedonic value), and thus purchase intention. The hypotheses and research framework are proposed herein (Figure 1).

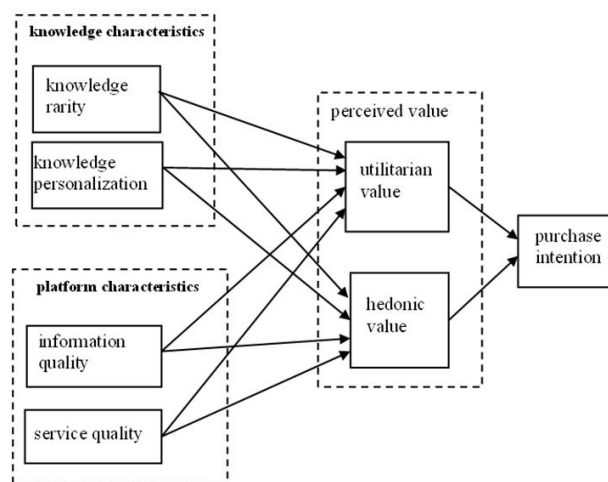
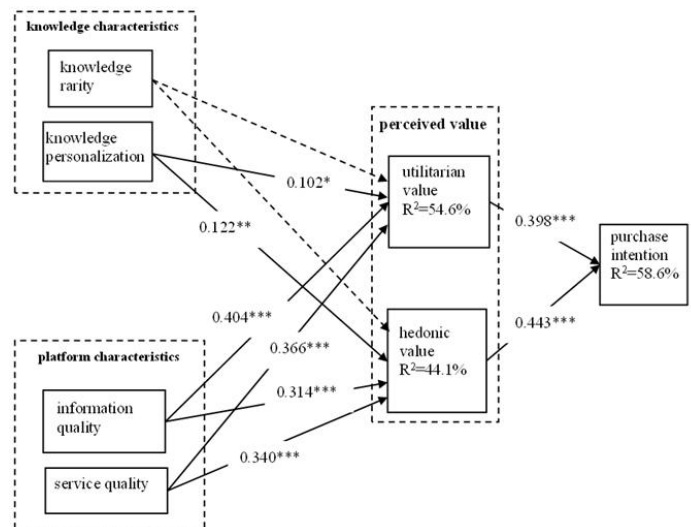


Figure 1. Research framework

The dataset is derived from online questionnaires conducted online during May 2022 with the help of [Credamo.com](https://www.credamo.com/). A total of 432 valid questionnaires is obtained. we adopt PLS-SEM to assess the measurement model and structural model using SmartPLS 3.0 software.

3. RESULTS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

This paper reveals the following findings: (1) Knowledge rarity has no significant impact on perceived value, which is not consistent with previous research on knowledge payment^[2]. This may be due to the fact that more and more health practitioners offer professional health knowledge products or services, especially during the epidemic period, and the role of knowledge rarity is mitigated. (2) Knowledge personalization positively affects utilitarian value and hedonic value, which is still not consistent with existing findings^[2], reflecting its crucial impacts on the current OHP users' purchase intention. Most of popular fields and hot contents are highly standardized and easy to reproduce in the paid field of health knowledge, thus making knowledge personalization matters. (3) Platform information quality has positive impacts on utilitarian value and hedonic value. (4) Platform service quality has a positive effect on utilitarian value and hedonic value. (5) Both utilitarian value and hedonic value positively affect the OHP users' intention to purchase health knowledge and the partial mediation role of perceived value is also supported.



Notes: ***: $p < 0.001$, **: $p < 0.01$, *: $p < 0.05$, dotted arrows: not significant

Figure 2. Research results

4. CONTRIBUTIONS

Our research proposes more generally applicable factors from the perspective of knowledge characteristics and platform characteristics affecting OHP users' perceived value of health knowledge, thus purchase intention. This paper demonstrates that the framework of S-O-R model and the mediation mechanism of perceived value can be applied to guide future research on health knowledge payment. For practical implications, OHPs need to reduce the knowledge content homogeneity and duplication through the screening and auditing mechanism. At the same time, users' preferences and needs for health knowledge can be obtained through reasonable user data analysis, so as to provide users with relatively personalized knowledge products and services. Besides, it is important to improve the production process of knowledge products, ensuring that the description information of knowledge products is accurate and clear. The active operation of knowledge payment service system for better service quality and respond efficiency is necessary as well.

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