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Research on the Influencing Factors of User 's Online Knowledge Consumption Behavior

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Abstract

In this study, researchers do interviews with 18 samples who are selected as the semi-structured interview object, and then we use the qualitative analysis software, NVivo 11, to qualitatively analyze the original data of the interview. In the end, we get six main influencing factors of the user's online knowledge consumption behavior, namely, perceived information quality, task-driven, subjective norms, perceived value, perceived price, free values. The perceived information quality is the most important influencing factor; the task-driven is the key point, the subjective norms and the perceived value are the vital influencing factors and the perceived price are also an important factor while the free values are relatively unimportant. The conclusion will help us to further understand the user's online knowledge consumption behavior and provide more suggestions for the platform which focuses on the knowledge consumption.

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1. Introduction

Knowledge is spread more and more rapidly through networks in this emerging “information society” where individuals and firms have already realized the importance of information. In accordance with the definition of knowledge consumption by the Information Research Department of China [1], knowledge consumption based on an online platform where users can purchase knowledge and experience so that users can get correct answers in an effective way. According to a survey by the Social Investigation Center of China Youth Daily in 2016, 63.6% of the participants agreed to pay for knowledge, and 73.9% of the participants were willing to pay for the answers to get some certain questions [2]. What factors affect user's willingness to pay? What are the key factors that drive users to do payment behavior? This study, the influencing factors of user's online knowledge consumption behaviour will help us to analyze the problems above.

Qualitative research methods provide an opportunity for the researcher to gain more information that may be overlooked through the traditional ways [3]. It is generally recognized that the qualitative research is a mathematical statistics method which researchers can find some things through exploring a phenomenon,

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situation or events [4]. It includes interviews, observations, case studies, surveys, and historical and document analyses. It will examine the factors influencing user's online knowledge consumption behavior in a qualitative research method in this research.

This study will proceed with some initial thoughts on the user's online knowledge consumption behaviour, deriving an influencing factors framework. And then it will discuss the findings which the semi-structured interview we made before and this may help us get the influencing factors. Finally, this research will conclude with some key factors on knowledge consumption behaviour.

2. Theoretical basis

Online digital content consumption has been shown tremendous growth over the past few years, some scholars try to identify the users' willingness to pay for information products [5]. Chu et al. report that the perceived value of online music is a significant factor in the purchaser behavior of buying online music in Taiwan. It is also shown that the beneficial factor of the perceived usefulness and playfulness are identified. Moreover, users and potential purchasers differ in the determinants from the perceptions of value which users hold towards online music [6]. Wang et al. point out that users' willingness to pay for online content or services is positively related to their perception of convenience, essentiality, added-value, and service quality. In addition, users' willingness to access subscription-based web content is negatively related to their perceived unfairness in their subscription-based online service [7]. Kim et al. propose that perceived prices explains a large portion of the variances in adoption behavior and continued usage intention toward mobile data service [8]. Punj report that while the estimated amount of the payment for digital content is related to income and education, willingness to pay is more related to age and gender [9]. Wolk et al. point out that the number of users of the content-paid is directly and positively influenced by the quality of the offering, interactivity, and accessibility [10]. Although there are already amounts of researches which about the driving factors of information consumption motivation have been conducted, little has been focused on the influencing factors of user's online knowledge consumption behavior.

3. Research method and data analysis

3.1. Research tools

NVivo is software that supports qualitative and mixed methods research. It is a powerful tool that, if used appropriately, can facilitate many aspects of the grounded theory process from the design and sampling procedures, through to the analysis of data, theoretical development and presentation of findings [11]. Using qualitative software does not lessen the quality of the qualitative research nor simplify the whole process of doing qualitative research [12].

3.2. Participants

According to the 39th China Statistical Report by China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) on January 2017, young people, typically aged 20-29, are active information consumers [13]. Therefore, in this research, 18 people (20-29 years old) are chosen to participate in the in-depth interview, including 11 (61.1%) males and 7 (38.9%) females; The average age of the participants is 24.4 years; 10 (55.6%) participants have already worked, and other 8 participants (44.4%) are student; all the participants have college degrees; and all interviewees have been involved in the knowledge consumption. Guest et al. point out that the aim of the interview is to understand common perceptions and experiences among a group of relatively homogeneous individuals, twelve interviews should suffice [14]. In this regard, the interview results are reliable.

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