

## FACTORS INFLUENCING INTENTION TO USE AN ONLINE PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING FOR DISTINGUISHING MENTAL HEALTH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN CHINA

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A web-based psychological counseling platform for Chinese students was developed for initial examination and attention to in-depth mental health issues. Factors influencing students' intentions to use the online psychological counseling platform are explored to enhance the platform use in the future. Structural equation model constructed by TAM was used to analyse the influencing factors of user intention and their configuration paths. The survey was conducted among college students in China through an online platform. The results of this study show that psychological needs and platform feature play an important role in shaping student perceptions of platform usefulness and ease of use. Students' perceptions of the platform's ease of use and usefulness also has a strong influence on the intention to use the platform. Factors influencing platform use affect the further development of online psychology counseling platforms. This will effectively meet the psychological needs of students in the future and result in increased use of the platform for the better mental health of students.

**Keywords:** psychological counseling; online platform; mental health; intention to use; college student

The epidemic situation and severe social behaviours can bring negative feelings to students. Prolonged exposure to stressful situations can lead to anxiety, depression, or other emotional states may occur. When college students are faced with unfamiliar surroundings, they will respond differently to their ability to adapt. The mental health of Chinese college students is becoming a growing concern, with over 50% of college dropouts due to mental illness. The use of online programs in counseling psychology has shown promising results in addressing various mental problems, including anxiety (Davis et al., 2014, Frazier et al., 2015, Heber et al., 2016). A case study at Hunan Vocational and Technical College of Finance and Economics revealed that many students are reluctant to seek psychological counseling on their own, but the situation has improved

after the introduction of an innovative online psychological counseling platform. Such platforms offer advantages such as enhanced privacy, flexibility in time and location, and reduced tension and anxiety during consultations.

Researchers are trying to understand how feelings of empowerment among people affect their willingness to use and recommend technological engagement (Naranjo-Zolotov et al. 2019. Al-Emran et al. (2019). The impact of using knowledge management (KM) elements at each level was examined using the Importance-Performance Mapping Analysis (IPMA) technique through Smart PLS to confirm the important and effectiveness of each factor.

This research lies in identifying internal and external motivators that affect participants' behavioural intention towards online psychological counseling. By understanding these factors, this study contributes to the development of a theoretical model for behavioural intention in psychological counseling, enabling a deeper analysis of psychological counseling behaviours and characteristics. The findings will provide valuable insights for the development of psychological counseling platforms that can effectively address college students' psychological issues and improve their mental well-being.

### **Literature review**

Kim and colleagues (2021) presented two main insights: identifying key factors that motivate students to use online learning systems through a combination of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and emphasize that innovation influences moderation. Wu et al. (2022) examined the factors that determine adoption behaviour of mobile health (mHealth) application. Al-Bashayreh et al. (2022) looked at elements that may affect the adoption of mobile learning apps and Byrne et al. (2021) have also been cited as their influential work.

Occupational therapy and psychological control strategies targeting students' internet addiction in mobile social media environments were analysed in depth (Zhang, 2022). Building on the above-mentioned constructs, the role of social networks in increasing EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students' commitment and enjoyment in language learning has been explored (Li, 2022). The factors affecting university students' intention to adopt mobile learning among students in Indonesia were explored using migration theory and the framework of Push-Pull-Mooring (PPM) (Lisana, 2022). Gonzalez-Gonzalez et al. (2023) proposed a personalized gamification approach for learning by presenting an open player and student model with an interactive chatbot architecture. Songkhram et al. (2023) examined students' behavioural intentions towards digital learning platforms. Fino et al. (2022) proceeded a study to evaluate the English version of the Problematic Series Watching Scale, by analysing the factor structure reliability and criterion-related validity using the biopsychosocial component model of addiction.

Rekha et al. (2023) incorporated the expectation-confirmation model with features such as perceived openness and reputation to assess learners' continued intention to use MOOCs. Lisana (2022) aimed to discover the factors impacting university students' switching intention to mobile learning (ML) in Indonesia, grounding the research in migration theory and the Push-Pull-Mooring

(PPM) framework. Shin et al. (2022) sought to understand the effects of eHealth literacy and other factors on early adult women's health-promoting behaviours.

Meihui (2000) studied the effects of external variables in an asynchronous online learning system, which includes the quality of the system, and output, and the learner characteristics, and functionality that affects the learners' intention to use. Studies have found that perceived ease of use, flexibility, and reliability significantly influence usage intentions, while flexibility, teaching materials, and e-mail interaction significantly impacted perceived usefulness (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

As the "determiner" of individuals, the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (PN) can lead to a variety behaviours and consequences. Meeting basic PN helps maintain physical and mental health and stimulates innate behavioural tendencies (Ryan & Frederick, 1997). These needs are not only essential for mental health, but also serves as a basic nutrient provided by the social environment to promote growth and development (Juul, 1998). Online psychological counseling for students operates on similar principles.

The psychology counseling network platform is similar to electronic games, so it can learn from electronic game theory, especially Jesper Juul's interpretation of binary relationships. Juul's ternary structural model for describing electronic games consists of programs (material integration rules), materials (text, graphics, sound), and outputs (screens, sounds, text), emphasizing important relationships between materials and programs. Material (visible level) and program (invisible level) can be differentiated, where the material's combination rules, supported by the program play a crucial role (Alwin & Hawser, 1975). This analysis can be applied to the psychological counseling network platform in these two dimensions.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is an information systems theory for describing user acceptance and use of specific types of technology (Davis & Venkatesh, 1996). This model is one of the most common information systems models in the acceptance of social research because of its adaptability, reliability and simplicity (Liao et al. 2018). The main goal of using TAM is to estimate the adoption of new technologies among users and highlighting the problems of platform system design before large-scale deployment (Mun et al. 2006). TAM can effectively describe differences in technology use behaviours in different contexts and situations, including health services context on online platform (Alsyof et al. 2023). In order to understand how internal psychological factors, stimulate user behavioural intention, in technological acceptance, two primary factors of TAM influencing an individual's intention to accept new technology: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) are used in numerous technological contexts (Granić & Marangunić, 2019, Venkatesh et al. 2003).

Behavioural intention (BI), intention to use (ITU) are the factors that drives people to use technology or systems and may share experiences with relatives and friends. BI of user is determined by their attitudes towards information technology or systems and user perception of the benefits of technology. Meanwhile, attitude is affected by two motivating factors: PU and PEOU, and PEOU are indirectly affected towards attitudes through PU. A strong willingness to perform behaviour, behaviour will tend to show more. BI can refer to the intention to make a

conscious decision on whether or not to engage in a specific behaviour in the future (Ramírez-Correa et al. 2019). In this study, the student's behavioural intention was defined as the intent to use technology applications in mental counselling. It is basically the tendency of a person to perform certain behaviours. (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977).

Davis defined PU as "the degree to which users perceive the use of the system to enhance their work performance", and PEOU as "the ease of users' perceived learning system" (Davis 1989). Moreover, Davis and Venkatesh believed that attitude is only the user's emotional preference for information technology, which cannot fully convey the impact of PU and PEOU on BI, therefore, Davis revised the model in 1996 (Davis & Venkatesh, 1996).

In this study, we explore whether college students choose psychological counseling when faced with mental health issues and whether they prefer traditional face-to-face counseling or psychological counseling network platforms. What motivated their decision?

Theoretical framework and hypothesis development (Figure. 1) presents the influencing factors model of participants' ITU the psychological counseling network platform, based on TAM. TAM includes psychological need and characteristics of online psychological counseling platforms as it was before, PU and PEOU as independent variables, and college students' ITU the online platform for psychological counseling and innovation as the dependent variable. The model also considers the relationships between PU, PEOU, and ITU, as well as the relationships between PN, PF, PEOU and PU.

To achieve the study's purpose, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): PN positively impact participants' PU in online psychological counseling.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): PN positively impact participants' PEOU in online psychological counseling.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): PF positively impact participants' PU in online psychological counseling.

Hypothesis 4 (H4): PF positively impact participants' PEOU in online psychological counseling.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Participants' PEOU in online psychological counseling positively impacts their PU.

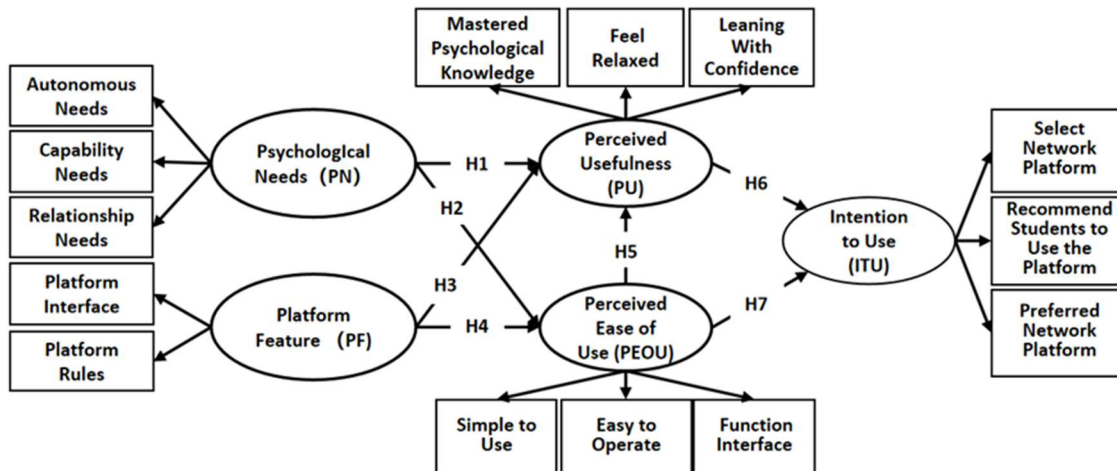
Hypothesis 6 (H6): Participants' PU in online psychological counseling positively impacts their ITU the psychological counseling network platform.

Hypothesis 7 (H7): Participants' PEOU in online psychological counseling positively impacts their ITU the psychological counseling network platform.

## Method

### Research Design

This study aims to examine the factors that influence college students' intentions to use an online psychological counseling platform for their mental health using structural equation model analysis (SEM). This research examines the interaction between psychological needs and features of online platforms for psychological, counseling perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and college students' behavioural intention to use the platform.



**Figure 1.** Theoretical model of influencing factors of ITU using psychological counseling network platform

### Sample profile

The targeted population for this research was college student from Hunan Hengyang Vocational and Technical College of Finance and Economics Industry in China. According analysis using SEM, the sample size was determined to be 10-20 times the number of parameters (Joreskog & Sorom, 1999; Hair, J. et al. 2010). This study involves structural equation modeling analysis, the researchers aimed for a maximum sample size of 20 times the total number of observed variables. As a result, the sample size of 280 people was considered appropriate for this study. The sampling process took into account the proportion of freshmen, sophomore and junior students using the psychology counseling network platform in the Institute of Finance and Engineering. Specifically, 21% of freshmen, 37% of sophomores, and 42% of juniors were included in the sample.

### Measurement Items

To verify the research model proposed in this study, a questionnaire survey was conducted. The survey includes two antecedent variables: PN and PF. PN encompass three observable variables: autonomy needs, ability needs, and relationship needs. The PF include two observable variables: platform interface and platform rules. The independent variables are PU and PEOU. PU includes three observable variables: mastering psychological knowledge, feeling relaxed, and having confidence in learning. PEOU includes three observable variables: ease of platform use, ease of platform operation, and ease of finding functional interfaces. The dependent variable is college students' ITU the online platform for psychological counseling and innovation, which includes three observable variables: choosing the online platform, recommending the platform to others, and selecting the online platform when faced with multiple choices. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure questionnaire items (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree).

### Data Analysis

The research in this section encompasses several key analyses, including reliability analysis, validity analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and the examination of descriptive data.

### Reliability Analysis

To assess the reliability of the measured questions within each variable group, the study conducted a reliability analysis using Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient. This analysis was applied both to the overall questionnaire and to each individual variable separately. The calculated Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient for the entire questionnaire was found to be 0.948, surpassing the threshold of 0.65, which is the standard used in this study to determine good reliability. Furthermore, the study computed Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient for each specific variable, and the results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Reliability coefficient of sample data.

Variable	Observable Variable	Index	Correction Item Total Correlation (CITC)	Item Deleted $\alpha$ Coefficient	Cronbach's $\alpha$ Value
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	Mastering Psychological Knowledge (MPK)	MPK1	0.645	0.738	0.793
		MPK2	0.535	0.765	
	Feel Relaxed (FR)	FR1	0.616	0.745	
		FR2	0.530	0.766	
	Learning With Confidence (LWC)	LWC1	0.467	0.781	
		LWC2	0.493	0.775	
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	Simple To Use (STU)	STU1	0.474	0.703	0.746
		STU2	0.491	0.707	
	Easy To Operate (ETO)	ETO1	0.487	0.709	
		ETO2	0.497	0.706	
	Function Interface (FI)	FI1	0.448	0.719	
		FI2	0.504	0.704	
Psychological Need (PN)	Autonomous Needs (AUT)	AUT1	0.559	0.833	0.848
		AUT2	0.551	0.834	
		AUT3	0.607	0.828	
	Capability Needs (CMP)	CMP1	0.531	0.836	
		CMP2	0.539	0.835	
		CMP3	0.579	0.831	
	Relationship Needs (REL)	REL1	0.588	0.830	
		REL2	0.569	0.832	
		REL3	0.564	0.833	
Platform Feature (PF)	Platform Interface (PI)	PI1	0.494	0.759	0.783
		PI2	0.549	0.746	
		PI3	0.556	0.745	
	Platform Rules (PR)	PR1	0.645	0.723	
		PR2	0.484	0.762	

Variable	Observable Variable	Index	Correction Item Total Correlation (CITC)	Item Deleted $\alpha$ Coefficient	Cronbach's $\alpha$ Value
		PR3	0.474	0.766	
	Select Network	SNP1	0.606	0.755	
	Platform (SNP)	SNP2	0.596	0.758	
		RUP1	0.524	0.775	
Intention to Use (ITU)	Recommend to Use the Platform (RUP)	RUP2	0.581	0.761	0.799
	Preferred Network Platform (PNP)	PNP1	0.466	0.787	
		PNP2	0.549	0.769	

The high values of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  for each variable indicate that the instrument used in this study demonstrates strong internal consistency and accuracy in measuring the intended constructs. This suggests that the data collected from the study participants can be considered reliable for further analysis and interpretation. The data analysis in Table 1 shows that the all-observable variables have CITC values higher than 0.466, and Cronbach  $\alpha$  values of are all above 0.700, indicating that the tool used in this study has high reliability and accuracy, and has good reliability.

#### Validity Analysis

For the validity analysis in this study, factor analysis was performed using SPSS24.0. To determine the appropriateness of the variables for factor analysis, two key metrics were utilized: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's sphericity test (Table 2). The ITU, PU and PEOU KMO values of 0.92 are considered highly acceptable for factor analysis. The PN, ITU, PU and PEOU KMO values of 0.88 and the PF KMO values of 0.80 are suitable for factor analysis.

Bartlett's sphericity test represents a statistical method used to assess whether the variables in the population is related. All test results are significance probability value (P-value) of 0.00. it indicates a significant relationship among the variables and confirms that factor analysis is appropriate.

**Table 2.** Validity analysis result

TEST	ITU, PU and PEOU	PN, ITU, PU and PEOU	PF
<b>KMO</b>	0.92	0.88	0.80
<b>Approx. Chi-Square</b>	1747.56	781.46	413.84
<b>df</b>	153	36	15

<b>P-value</b>	.000	.000	.000
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### Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The survey obtained a total of 280 questionnaires, and after data cleaning, 273 valid questionnaires were retained, resulting in an effective rate of 97.5%. The data was processed using SPSS24.0, and descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on the samples, considering five aspects: gender, grade, family economy, degree of psychological negative emotion, and the number of times of using the online psychological platform (Table 3) The survey reveals that the gender ratio of male to female subjects is approximately 1:2.7, with a significantly higher number of female participants compared to male participants.

#### Test Results of Structural Equation Model

Once the model was constructed, the study employed the maximum likelihood estimation method to assess the model's fitness and suitability, to ensure its feasibility. Six key indicators, namely  $\chi^2/df$ , TLI, PGFI, RMR, CFI, and NNFI, were utilized to evaluate the hypothetical model. The model fitting test yielded favorable results, with each fitting index demonstrating a strong level of good fitting. The findings presented in Table. 4 indicate that the theoretical model used in this study aligns well with the actual data, demonstrating a strong overall fit. The favorable model fitting results suggest that the model is a plausible representation of the underlying relationships and patterns in the data. The structural equation model exhibits a relatively ideal fitting effect on the collected data, underscoring the scientific and reasonable nature of the model employed in this research.

These findings show that the use of online counseling platform plays an important role in managing students' psychological emotions. The successful application and acceptance of online psychological counseling platforms has proven its effectiveness in meeting the psychological health needs of college students. Well-fitted structural equation models provide valuable insights into the factors affecting mental health, and can provide information for interventions and support mechanisms aimed at enhancing the mental health of college students.

**Table 3.** Description of the Respondent' s Demographic (N=273).

<b>Category</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender (Sex)</b>	Female	199	72.9
	Male	74	27.1
<b>Educational level</b>	Freshman	83	30.4
	Sophomore	126	46.2
	Junior	64	23.4
<b>Age (years)</b>	< 18	45	16.5
	18-20	180	65.9
	>20	48	17.6



<b>Sibling</b>	Non	60	22
	Have	213	78
<b>Negative emotional level</b>	Non	0	0
	Low	36	13.2
	Medium	206	75.4
	High	31	11.4
<b>Household annual income (yuan)</b>	< 50000	112	41
	50000-100000	82	30
	100000-200000	63	23.1
	>200000	16	5.9
<b>Negative emotional Degree</b>	Never	0	0
	Appreciably	36	13.2
	Quite a lot	157	57.5
	Very heavy	49	17.9
	Unbearable	31	11.4
<b>Using psychological platform experience (times)</b>	non	0	0
	1	21	7.7
	2	57	20.9
	3	137	49.4
	>3	60	22

### Hypothesis Analysis

After data analysis using SEM, these findings provide valuable insights into the relationship among each other and on students' intention to use the psychological counseling platform. The strength of the relationships between variables in the structural equation is represented by the standardized fitting path coefficients, while the significance of these relationships is indicated by the Critical Ratio (C.R.) values. A higher C.R. value corresponds to a greater significance level of the path coefficient. The path fitting results of the structural equation model can be found in Table 5.

A positive relationship between each path is shown. The results of this study confirm the validity of the above assumptions, revealing meaningful associations among PN, PF, PEOU, PU, and ITU regarding the use of online psychological counseling platforms. Normalized Path Coefficients of all hypothesis are exhibits significance and the standard load coefficient value is greater than 0.7, it indicates a strong correlation, but difference in their relationship levels.

H5 shows the strongest relationship between PEOU and PU, following with H3 and H7 show the lower relationship level between PF and PU, and between PEOU and ITU, respectively. H6, the relationship between ITU and PU, presents the lowest relationship level of path within model.

PEOU is strongest impacts to PU of online psychological counseling participants. The path coefficient between PEOU and PU is 1.142, with a significance level of 0.001. This implies that the ease of operating the platform system significantly impacts

**Table 4.** Modified Model Fitting Index

Model Fitting Index	x <sup>2</sup> /df	TLI	PGFI	RMR	CFI	NNFI
Measured Value of Fitting Index	1.806	0.903	0.718	0.020	0.913	0.903
Reference Range of Acceptable Model Fitting Index Value	<3	>0.9	>0.5	<0.05	>0.9	>0.9

**Table 5.** Path Fitting Results

Path Relation	Normalized Path Coefficient	Relevance	C.R	S.E	P
PU <--- PN	0.936	Positive Correlation	8.911	0.105	***
PEOU <--- PN	0.842	Positive Correlation	7.861	0.107	***
PU <--- PF	0.997	Positive Correlation	7.705	0.129	***
PEOU <--- PF	0.847	Positive Correlation	7.200	0.118	***
PU <--- PEOU	1.142	Positive Correlation	7.338	0.156	***
ITU <--- PU	0.762	Positive Correlation	8.449	0.090	***
ITU <--- PEOU	0.939	Positive Correlation	7.441	0.126	***

*Note:* \* indicates significance level<0.05\*\* Indicates the significance level<0.01\*\*\* Indicates significance level<0.001.

participants' perception of PU. When participants find the platform easy to navigate and interact with, they are more likely to perceive it as valuable for addressing their psychological needs. The path coefficient between PF and PU and between PEOU and ITU are 0.997 and 0.939, respectively, with a significance level of 0.001.

The study's results confirm the validity of the proposed hypotheses, revealing meaningful associations between PN, PF, PEOU, PU, and ITU regarding the utilization of the online psychological counseling platform. These findings provide valuable insights into the factors

influencing users' perceptions and behaviors and can contribute to the enhancement of online counseling services and user experience.

### **Result**

The results of this study indicate that PN has a positive impact on students' PU of online psychological counseling platforms. Participants who used the platform reported that their mental state had a strong influence on their perception of the platform's usefulness. This suggests that the online counseling platform effectively addresses students' psychological needs, contributing to their mental well-being.

Moreover, PN also have a positive impact on students' PEOU of the platform. The platform's design characteristics and operation mechanism significantly influenced their perception of the platform's ease of use. The platform's user-friendly interface and interaction rules make it more accessible and manageable for students, fostering a positive user experience. PF, including design features and operation mechanisms, were found to have a positive impact on students' perception of the platform's usefulness. Participants recognized that the acoustic-optic image and operating mechanism of the platform significantly affected their perceived usefulness of the platform. A well-designed platform with attractive visuals and efficient operations enhances student perception of the platform's usefulness and increase motivation to use the online psychological counseling services.

Similarly, PF were found to have a positive impact on students' perception of the platform's ease of use. Participants acknowledged that the platform's interface design and interaction rules significantly influenced their perception of the platform's ease of use. An intuitive and user-friendly interface, along with clear and simple operation rules, facilitates students' ease of using the platform. The study also revealed a strong positive relationship between students' perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of the platform. Participants' perception of the platform's ease of use significantly affected their perception of its usefulness. This indicates that when students find the platform easy to use, they are more likely to recognize its usefulness in addressing their psychological needs.

Furthermore, both PEOU and PU have a positive impact on students' behavioral intention to use the online psychological counseling platform. Participants' perception of the platform's ease of use and usefulness significantly influenced their intention to use the platform. When students perceive the platform as easy to use and recognize its usefulness in addressing their psychological issues, they are more inclined to use it as a means of seeking support.

### **Discussion**

The model constructed in this study has been validated, indicating that students are more likely to communicate their emotional centers online. This can be explained by researchers such as Stephen and colleague, based on this, this study mainly explores the relevant factors that affect college students' intention to use (Stephen et al., 2014).

Introducing the technology acceptance model in terms of behavioral intentions, the effect relationship between the variables still exists and is significant. This is consistent with previous research in the literature on help-seeking adolescent mental health, it was found that teenagers who

were knowledgeable about online therapy, were more aware of the help and more willing to absorb it (Rickwood et al., 2007).

The hypothesis is that the relationship between perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness is defined as the initial variable of satisfaction in the study and that the effect of perceived usefulness is expected to be greater than that of perceived ease of use, which is similar to the previous report (Geng et al., 2022). In the process of using the online psychological counseling platform, students' psychological needs and platform features are important factors influencing their satisfaction, as well as indirect influencing factors for intention to use behavior, similar to previous research (Mou et al., 2017)

In a previous study, it was found that college students with more knowledge about online therapy had a higher perception of help and a willingness to absorb online therapy. Because they understand the positive aspects of these programs as being helpful in determining their psychological state (Rickwood et al., 2007). In research, psychological needs are reliably considered to be the intrinsic motivation of college students to solve psychological problems. At the same time, its usability is quite interesting for students and they can correctly face mental problems during use. Therefore, platform features have an indirect impact on behavioral intentions. The platform features are supported as a hard indicator of the platform, and the design of the platform interface has a significant impact on student' continuous use of the platform. For example, it has emoticons and stickers that can express emotions and feelings, thereby making the emotions of the information more prominent (Zhao, 2019; Gantiva et al., 2020).

Unlike general online platforms, online psychological counseling platforms carry the function of solving psychological problems. The main purpose of their use is to help college students master certain psychological knowledge and solve psychological problems in a happy and efficient environment. As mentioned earlier, numerous empirical studies have shown that online psychology platforms are platforms that users find more relaxed and efficient. An important factor affecting students' behavioral intentions to use is satisfaction with participants' physical and mental integration using the platform and effective problem solving. This study confirms that mentoring students with an online psychology platform is to achieve external satisfaction and solve mental problems. Moreover, the online psychological counseling platform design concept that designers need to do is pay attention to the platform user experience and students' feelings from their perspective.

### **Managerial Implications**

The findings from this study have important implications for the development and implementation of an online psychological counseling platform for students.

First, it is important to understand the impact of PN on student perceptions of the platform's usefulness. It emphasizes the importance of tailoring counseling services to address the unique psychological issues faced by college students. Platforms should be designed to support a wide range of PNs, providing personalized and targeted interventions.

Second, the positive impact of PF on students' perceptions of the platform's usefulness and ease of use. It reinforces the importance of user experience in platform design. The interface is

visually appealing and easy to use, along with efficient operation mechanisms. It increases student engagement with the platform and promotes a positive user experience. Developers should prioritize user-centered design principles to create a smooth and enjoyable consultation platform.

Moreover, the strong relationship between PEOU and PU emphasizes the need to simplify platform operations and enhance user accessibility. When students find the platform easy to navigate and operate, they are more likely to recognize its usefulness in addressing their psychological concerns. Using easy-to-use and straightforward features promotes greater platform usage and engagement.

Furthermore, the positive impact of PEOU and PU on students' behavioral intention to use the platform highlights the importance of perceived value in promoting platform adoption. When students perceive the platform as a valuable tool in solving mental problems and find it easy to use, they will be more motivated to use the platform regularly. Consequently, enhancing students' perceptions of platform usefulness and ease of use will contribute to higher engagement and sustained use.

### Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing Chinese college students' intention to use an innovative online psychological counseling platform. PN and PF play an important role in shaping students' perceptions of the platform's usefulness and ease of use. Additionally, students' perceptions of the platform's ease of use and usefulness significantly influence their intention to use the platform. These findings highlight the importance of user-centered platform design and emphasize the need to effectively address the psychological needs of students.

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