Influence of Information and Service Quality on Users’ Continuous Use of Mobile Libraries in China

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ABSTRACT

This research mainly aims to explore the factors that influence users’ continuous use of mobile libraries. The findings of this study will provide empirical evidence to help improve the service and information quality of mobile libraries. Moreover, suggestions for optimization are provided with the objective of meeting user demands at its maximum. A theoretical model is constructed to reveal the impact of 11 influencing factors on users’ continuous use of mobile libraries. Structural equation modeling is adopted to verify the theoretical model and research hypothesis based on the valid data obtained from a questionnaire survey. The study found that personalized services and information availability have positive impacts on the service quality of mobile libraries. Moreover, perceived mobility and information quality have positive impacts on the perceived usability of mobile libraries. Finally, perceived usability, service quality, and platform stability have significantly positive impacts on the willingness of users to continue usage of mobile libraries.

KEYWORDS
Information Quality, Mobile Library, Personalized Services, Platform Stability, Service Quality

1. INTRODUCTION

Relying on modern network technology, mobile libraries provide a channel for people to conveniently obtain digital resources whenever and wherever (Wei & Yang, 2017; Hu & Zhang, 2016). As a result, people’s growing demand for mobile reading are met and the social reading and service function of traditional libraries further expands and deepens (Wei & Yang, 2017; Hu & Zhang, 2016). The service and information quality of mobile libraries has recently become a hot topic. The International libraries conference has been held in 2007, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, and 2016. The theme of the first conference was “exchange of experiences on utilizing mobile devices to provide service,” that of the fourth conference was “from marginal to mainstream,” that of the fifth conference was “from equipment to person”, and that of the sixth conference was “mobile library: intelligent library.” These themes reflect the continuity of the research and development of mobile libraries (Jin & Bi, 2017). Some scholars believe that user experience is a factor perceived during the interaction among users, services, and system. Moreover, user experience is believed to be integrated into various sectors of
the interaction between users and services, and the physical world influences user experience in the virtual world.

Main research achievements primarily include users’ demand for mobile libraries from the perspective of user experience, construction of mobile library platforms (Palmer, 2014), current situation of mobile library construction, and service quality evaluation of mobile libraries. Although some studies have quantitatively evaluated the service and information quality of mobile libraries from the perspectives of user perception and experience, no dedicated research has been conducted on the factors influencing users’ continuous use of mobile libraries.

Mobile libraries were developed late in China. The Shanghai Library app, which launched in 2010, is one of the earliest library apps. Subsequently, other domestic libraries, such as the National Library of China, Capital Library, and Chongqing Library, developed an app available on Android and IOS. At present, 31 libraries out of 35 domestic public libraries at or above the provincial level have launched mobile library app services. In 2011, Fudan University launched a library app in China for the first time. Since then, major universities have taken an active part in the construction and promotion of library apps. Thus far, 39 “985 universities” have launched mobile library apps. These apps effectively improve the service level and bring more and better experiences to readers.

In this paper, related domestic and foreign literature is summarized. Furthermore, current situations regarding the development of mobile libraries and users’ behavioral characteristics and extract factors, including personalized services, information convenience, perceived risk, timeliness, information quality, and information reliability, are considered. A research model for factors influencing users’ continuous use of mobile libraries is then constructed based on the psychological experience of users of mobile libraries, such as perceived usability and service quality. The direction and degree of the impact of various factors on users’ continuous use of the mobile library are also analyzed. The questionnaire survey method and structural equation method are utilized in this study to examine the influencing factors of users’ willingness to continue usage of mobile libraries. The authors of this study aim to provide a guideline that will help China’s public and university libraries understand the behavioral characteristics of users and promote the transformation and upgrade of traditional libraries in the mobile Internet environment.

The success of mobile library services depends on whether the technology application is advanced and whether users’ perception, acceptance, continuous use, and other behavioral problems are solved. Users are the ultimate receivers of mobile library services. Their views, perception attitudes, and feedbacks directly affect the implementation effect of a mobile library, which is an important symbol of the success or failure of a mobile library construction. However, at present, domestic and foreign libraries have encountered problems, such as low application degree of mobile library apps, insufficient reflection of actual service values, and low willingness of users to continue using mobile libraries. Therefore, a systematic research on the influencing factors of users’ continuous use of mobile libraries is of great significance to the construction of mobile libraries.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

At present, research on mobile libraries focuses on three aspects: (1) in terms of theory, focusing on the connotation, service mode, construction status, and development strategies of mobile libraries; (2) in terms of application, laying emphasis on the usage, user experience, and user demand of mobile libraries; and (3) in terms of technology, focusing on the system analysis and platform design of mobile libraries.

2.1. Theoretical Research on Mobile Libraries

The theoretical research on mobile libraries is led by Europe and America, followed by Japan, South Korea, and Finland. These countries have developed their own mobile library plans in succession, with their services covering book search, book reservation, video guidance, and checking nearby