Editorial: User psychology and behavior regarding healthcare IT

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In the last decade, it has been proven that healthcare information technology (IT) has significant potential for (1) improving service quality, (2) redistributing healthcare resources, (3) reducing healthcare cost, and (4) alleviating rural-urban health disparities (Agarwal et al., 2010; Goh et al., 2011; Mein Goh et al., 2016). During the COVID-19 pandemic, the public were able to efficiently manage their health conditions, receive social support, and attend remote health consultations through the use of relevant healthcare IT (Wood et al., 2019). Despite these benefits, several challenges are associated with the sustainable use of healthcare IT, including (1) physicians’ under-contributions (Kim and Mrotek, 2016), (2) low patient engagement (Mirzaei and Esmaeilzadeh, 2021), and (3) poor membership retention and commitment in online platforms (Xing et al., 2018). Considering that healthcare IT involves personalization and human–computer interactions, researchers’ sole focus on investigating factors related to the information technology side of healthcare IT is not sufficient enough to increase our understanding or to address these challenges. Accordingly, the objective of this Research Topic is to call for further investigations on user behavior regarding healthcare IT across multiple disciplines such as psychology, information systems, and human–computer interaction.

This Research Topic on “User Psychology and Behavior Regarding Healthcare IT” includes nine articles that address the abovementioned challenges related to the use of healthcare IT. These articles investigate information/knowledge sharing behaviors and usage behaviors, and incorporate (1) psychological rewards, (2) patients’ trust, (3) health information privacy concerns, (4) social identity, (5) psychological distances, (6) prosociality, (7) anxiety, and other psychological factors in their research models. They include population samples of physicians, chronic patients, and the general population in the context of online health platforms and mobile health apps. More importantly, these articles offer valuable insights into user psychology and behavior regarding healthcare IT. Below, we summarize five of the nine articles:

Yao and Sheng examine the influence of psychosocial and technological factors on health information sharing adoption in the context of social sharing services. The authors develop a hypothesized model for health information social sharing adoption...
The authors investigate how patient visits and patient consultations influence physicians’ online knowledge sharing, considering the contingent roles of physicians’ online expertise and online knowledge sharing experience. Based on 6-month panel data from 45,449 physician-month observations in an online health platform in China, results indicate that both patient visits and patient consultations are positive regarding physicians’ online knowledge sharing. Specifically, online expertise weakens the positive effects of patient consultations on physicians’ online knowledge sharing. Moreover, the online knowledge sharing experience weakens the positive relationship between patient visits and physicians’ online knowledge sharing, and enhances the positive relationship between patient consultations and physicians’ online knowledge sharing.

Research on user psychology and behavior, in the context of healthcare IT, is lacking in terms of psychology, information systems, and human–computer interactions. Hence, this Research Topic addresses the gap in the literature by contributing to a better understanding of the influences of user psychology and behavior on the utilization of healthcare IT, and offers practical insights into how healthcare providers can improve the use of their healthcare IT.

Author contributions

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