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COMMERCIALIZATION OF MENTAL HEALTH ONLINE SERVICES IN THE INTERNET AGE

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ABSTRACT : Mental health has become a social issue that cannot be ignored in this digital era, online mental health services become an effective means to solve the contradiction between supply and demand of mental health services, improving the public's mental health level and promoting the harmonious development of society. This paper analyzes the reasons and problems of commercialization of online mental health services, provides related count measures, make a conclusion that the commercialization of online mental health services will have a broader development prospect and contribute to building a healthier and more harmonious society.

KEY WORDS: Commercialization; Mental Health; Online Services; Internet Age

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 21st century, human society has entered a brand-new digital era, which not only reshapes the economic form and social mode, but also profoundly affects the pattern of mental health services. Online commercialization of mental health services, as a symbolic achievement in the digital age, its rapid development stems from the growth of social demand and the rapid progress of technology, which marks a major innovation in mental health service model.

Mental health has become a social issue that cannot be ignored. According to the data of China Mental Health Association, more than 200 million people in China are facing mental health problems. However, due to the uneven distribution of resources of traditional mental health services and the shortage of professionals, many people's needs have not been responded promptly and effectively. In this context, the Internet, with its convenience, anonymity, and wide coverage, has opened up new possibilities for the popularization of mental health services. Online mental health services, such as online psychological consultation, mental health APP and psychological self-help platform, came into being and quickly commercialized, which became an effective means to solve the contradiction between supply and demand of mental health services.

The Internet accelerates the exchange of information, and the psychological needs hidden offline are exposed and gathered because of the circulation of the network.

The significance of commercialization of mental health online service lies in that it breaks the geographical restrictions and enables remote areas or busy individuals to obtain professional mental health support conveniently; Through the introduction of market mechanism, the innovation vitality of service providers has been stimulated, and the diversified and personalized development of mental health service products has been promoted. At the same time, the new healing economy, such as body, mind, and art healing, has also begun to flourish because of the prominent demand and the convenience provided by the Internet. However, due to the lack of uniform standards in the market, there have also been problems such as professionalism, privacy protection and service quality monitoring.

II. THE REASONS FOR THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF ONLINE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

2.1 The Existence of Market Demand

Market demand is the key force to promote the commercialization of mental health online services. The rapid growth of the global mental health market is expected to reach \$200 billion in 2025, which is behind the public's awareness of mental health problems and the urgent need for professional help. The annual growth rate of online service users exceeds 15% (2018-2022), and the extensive participation of key groups such as teenagers, professionals and middle-aged and elderly people further proves the market potential and necessity of commercialization of online mental health services.

2.2 The Popularization of Network Platform and the Presentation of Mental Health Problems

With the popularity of the Internet and the widespread use of social media, people have more platforms to express themselves and share their experiences. This trend makes mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and stress get more extensive attention and discussion on the Internet. People can share their mental health problems and seek help and support through social media platforms such as blogs, Weibo and Tik Tok.

The convenience of the network is also reflected in information acquisition. Faced with mental health problems, people often rely on the Internet to search for symptoms, causes and solutions. This kind of search behavior not only promotes people's understanding of their own problems, but also often drives them to seek professional mental health assistance.

More and more people choose to consult psychologists, attend mental health courses, or join mental health communities through online platforms. These online services provide people with more convenient and flexible mental health support and make mental health problems get more attention and attention.

However, the convenience of the network has brought more mental health problems to light, but it has also triggered a series of challenges. For example, inaccurate or misleading information on the Internet may cause the public to misunderstand or even panic about their own problems. In addition, anonymity and a sense of distance on the Internet may also make people more vulnerable to cyber bullying or fraud.

2.3 Government Support

The active involvement of the government has provided a strong impetus for the commercialization of online mental health services. For example, the Opinions on Promoting the Development of "Internet +Medical Health" issued by the China Municipal Government directly encouraged the innovation and application of online mental health services. Policy support is manifested in providing online service providers with practical help such as start-up capital, R&D funding and tax relief. These measures directly reduce the economic burden of start-ups and enable them to focus more on service quality and technological innovation.

At the same time, the government also ensures the professionalism and effectiveness of mental health services by establishing national standards and certification systems. For example, the mental health service certification program promoted by the National Health and Wellness Committee sets clear quality standards for online services and certifies service providers that meet the standards. This measure not only enhances consumers' trust in online services, but also provides a solid foundation for the standardization and professional development of online services.

III. THE PROBLEMS OF MENTAL HEALTH ONLINE SERVICES

3.1 The Emerging Psychological Market Industry Chain Is Immature

The business model of mental health market is still in the exploratory stage, and it is still looking for a stable and sustainable business model. Although there are various forms of mental health services in the market, such as online consultation, physical clinics and psychological courses, the synergy between them has not been fully utilized. The overall market efficiency needs to be improved, and some service providers pay too much attention to short-term interests and ignore the long-term optimization of service quality and customer experience.

Although people pay more and more attention to mental health, the overall market demand has not been fully released. On the one hand, some people have cognitive biases about mental health problems, and think that psychological problems are not diseases or do not need professional treatment; On the other hand, because mental health services are expensive and not included in the scope of medical insurance, some people in need may give up seeking help for economic reasons.

Scientific and technological progress has brought the rise of digital mental health services, but the integration of technology and services needs to be further deepened. At present, most digital mental health products on the market stay at the level of simple psychological test and relaxation training, lacking in-depth intervention and personalized service. In addition, the application of big data, artificial intelligence and other technologies in the field of mental health is still in its infancy, and mature solutions and service models have not yet been formed.

The mental health market urgently needs cross-industry cooperation and resource integration to expand the service field and improve the service effect. However, at present, most mental health service providers operate independently and fail to establish effective cooperation and resource integration with other industries. This situation limits the coverage and application scenarios of mental health services, and also affects the maturity and competitiveness of the market.

3.2 Professional Issues Under the New Situation

The number of mature psychological counselors and therapists is seriously insufficient, and the overall quality and level need to be improved. Compared with western developed countries, China's mental health education started late, and its training system is not perfect. This leads to insufficient supply of high-quality mental health services in the market, and it is difficult to meet the growing market demand.

The mental health market lacks effective unified supervision and regulation, and the professional qualifications and standards lack clear regulation and supervision. This leads to many non-professional mental health service providers in the market, who may lack the necessary professional knowledge and skills, which affects the overall quality and effect of mental health services. In addition, the lack of industry standards also makes it difficult for consumers to judge the quality of service, which increases the difficulty of choice.

3.3 Emergency Response limitations

Online mental health service platform has obvious limitations in dealing with emergency mental health crisis. A key problem is that when users express extreme self-harm or suicidal tendencies through online platforms, it is often difficult for the platforms to provide timely and effective intervention measures. Due to the anonymity and remoteness of online services, it is difficult to quickly determine the location of users and contact emergency rescue resources in case of emergency.

In addition, online consultants may not be qualified or prepared enough to deal with these emergencies, and users may not be able to get immediate manual response through online platforms in times of crisis. This delay in response may lead to serious consequences, especially when users are in a highly vulnerable state. Therefore, the lack of online mental health services in providing immediate crisis intervention is a problem that needs urgent attention and solution.

IV. COUNTER-MEASURES

4.1 Strengthen Market Quality Supervision and Improve Standards

The government should speed up the formulation and improvement of laws and regulations related to mental health services, and clarify the definition, scope, qualifications, and standards of mental health services, to provide legal basis for market supervision. Strengthen the law enforcement inspection of the mental health service market, severely crack down on illegal practices such as illegal medical practice and false propaganda, and safeguard market order and consumer rights and interests.

Trade associations or government departments should be responsible for formulating a unified set of mental health service standards, covering service processes, quality, and effect evaluation, etc., to ensure that service providers abide by unified norms.

Encourage mental health service providers to adopt standardized service processes and technologies to improve the professionalism and standardization of services. At the same time, reduce service costs and improve service efficiency through standardized services.

Trade associations should strengthen the self-discipline management of member units, formulate industry norms and codes of conduct, and guide member units to operate in good faith and standardize services. At the same time, trade associations can also provide training, exchange, and other support services for member units to improve the overall level of the industry.

The government should establish a multi-sectoral supervision mechanism and strengthen the daily supervision and regular inspection of the mental health service market. Through cross-departmental cooperation and information sharing, a joint regulatory effort will be formed to improve the regulatory effect.

Increase investment in mental health education and improve the quality and level of education. At the same time, colleges and universities are encouraged to cooperate with mental health service institutions to carry out practical teaching and practical training and cultivate mental health service talents with practical experience and professional skills.

In-service mental health service providers should receive regular training and continuing education to update their professional knowledge and skills, to improve the service quality and level. At the same time, service providers are encouraged to participate in academic exchange activities at home and abroad to broaden their horizons and ideas.

Encourage scientific research institutions and enterprises to increase investment in scientific research and development in the field of mental health and develop psychological evaluation tools and intervention technologies with independent intellectual property rights. At the same time, strengthen the transformation and application of scientific and technological achievements, and improve the scientific and technological content and effect of mental health services.

4.2 Strengthen the Popular Science Education of Mental Health Knowledge

To enhance the public's awareness and concern about mental health problems, we can make full use of media propaganda and public activities. Through these channels, we can guide the public to establish a correct concept of mental health and encourage them to actively seek professional help and support when they encounter psychological problems.

In popularizing mental health knowledge, it is particularly important to organize mental health knowledge popularization activities, which is helpful to improve the public's mental health literacy and self-regulation ability. By holding lectures, workshops, and training, we can impart necessary mental health knowledge and skills to the public, so that they can cope with the pressures and challenges in life more effectively.

4.2 Build an Effective Crisis Intervention Mechanism

In view of the shortage of online mental health services in dealing with emergencies, it is urgent to build an effective crisis intervention mechanism. This mechanism should include a rapid response process to ensure that when users express an urgent psychological crisis through the platform, they can immediately start the plan. The platform should be equipped with a professional crisis intervention team, which is on standby for 24 hours, to quickly intervene and provide necessary support when receiving emergency signals.

At the same time, the online service platform should establish cooperative relations with local medical institutions and emergency centers to form an online and offline linkage crisis management network. In this way, when the user has a serious psychological crisis, the online consultant can inform the cooperative offline institutions in time to ensure that the user can get timely on-site assistance. In addition, the platform should regularly provide crisis intervention training for consultants to improve their ability to identify and deal with emergencies.

4.4 Optimization of Payment and Insurance Policies

At present, online mental health services are limited in payment methods and often lack insurance coverage, which limits the popularity of services and the acceptance of users to some extent. To improve the accessibility and affordability of online mental health services, it is necessary to promote the reform and optimization of medical insurance policies. Specifically, the government and regulatory agencies can explore the inclusion of online mental health services in the coverage of medical insurance and provide a certain proportion of reimbursement for users' consultation fees, thus reducing the economic burden of users.

In addition, insurance companies can design more insurance products for online mental health services to provide users with diversified payment options. The intervention of insurance mechanism can not only reduce users' worries about the high cost of mental health services, but also promote the expansion and maturity of the online mental health service market.

4.5 Take Precautions from Campus Mental Health Education.

With the rapid development of Internet technology, the commercialization of mental health online services has become a trend that cannot be ignored. At present, online psychological counseling has broken through the time and geographical restrictions and brought more convenient and flexible psychological support services to users. According to incomplete statistics, there are more than thousands of online psychological counseling platforms around the world, such as Talk Space and Better Help, which connect millions of users seeking help with thousands of professional psychological counselors through video calls and instant messages, realizing rapid response and personalized customization of mental health services.

At the same time, mental health APP, as another mainstream of commercialization, is being popularized at an unprecedented speed. These applications not only provide functions such as mental health education, emotional tracking, and stress management, but also add innovative features such as AI consultation and community interaction. According to the data of market research company Grand View Research, the global mental health APP market is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of over 20% in the next few years, reflecting the strong demand and high recognition of the market in this field.

The commercialization process has brought unprecedented opportunities for mental health services. On the one hand, it promotes the popularization of mental health knowledge, lowers the threshold for seeking help, and enables more people to face up to and pay attention to their mental health problems. On the other hand, through the application of big data, AI and other technologies, mental health services can more accurately match the needs of users and improve the efficiency and quality of services. The commercialized operation mode also provides financial and resource support for the sustainable development of mental health industry and promotes the innovation and upgrading within the industry.

However, commercialization also comes with a series of challenges. How to ensure the professionalism and effectiveness of service and avoid the decline of service quality caused by excessive commercialization is an urgent problem to be solved at present. Issues such as user privacy protection and data security have also attracted widespread attention. In the process of commercialization, how to balance business interests and users' rights and interests and build a safe and credible online mental health service environment is an important issue that the industry must face.

Online commercialization of mental health services brings opportunities, but also faces many challenges. In the future, with the continuous progress of technology and the gradual improvement of policies, this paper has reason to believe that this field will develop in a more professional, personalized, and standardized direction to protect the mental health of more people.

The influence mechanism of the commercialization of mental health online service is deeply rooted in the fertile soil of technological development. With the increasing popularity of mobile Internet, by 2022, the global penetration rate has reached 78.37%, which provides a solid foundation for online mental health services. The explosive growth of mental health apps has exceeded 1,000 worldwide. These applications integrate advanced technologies such as video calling, real-time messaging, and even AI-assisted diagnosis, which greatly broadens the reach and convenience of mental health services. These technological innovations not only lower the threshold of traditional psychological counseling, but also meet the diverse mental health needs of users through personalized and instant service experience.

The improvement of policies and regulations provides a strong institutional guarantee for the commercialization of mental health online services. The China Municipal Government clearly encourages the innovation of mental health services by issuing the Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Mental Health Services and other documents, which points out the direction for the development of online services. At the international level, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of the European Union, it emphasizes the importance of data security and privacy protection, requires service providers to strictly abide by relevant regulations when collecting and processing user information, and enhances users' trust in online mental health services. The United States, Britain and other countries have set up special institutions to supervise mental health services, ensuring the quality and professionalism of services and building a good ecological environment for the healthy development of the industry.

The commercialization of mental health online service has many influences, which not only comes from technological progress, but also is the result of market demand and policy orientation. In the future, with the continuous innovation of technology, the continuous growth of market demand and the improvement of policies and regulations, the commercialization of online mental health services is expected to usher in a broader development prospect.

Through empirical research on several mental health online service platforms, this paper collects a lot of data. These data profoundly reveal the impact of the commercialization of mental health online services on users' mental health status and service quality. Specifically, different commercialization models have received different user feedback, and the effects are also different.

The mental health 360 platform adopts membership-based charging mode, and the improvement rate of users' mental health is as high as 75%, which shows the effectiveness of this mode in providing professional and continuous services. 90% service quality satisfaction shows that users have high recognition of the platform, and the average usage time of 5 hours per week also reflects users' high stickiness and activity. This model ensures the continuity and depth of service through stable membership fees and contributes to the long-term maintenance of users' mental health.

In contrast, the station agent platform charges through advertisements and value-added services, and the improvement rate of users' mental health is 68%. Although it is slightly lower than the membership platform, the effect is still remarkable. 85% service quality satisfaction shows that users are basically satisfied with the service content provided by the platform, but the existence of advertisements may have a certain impact on the user experience. The average usage time of the platform is 4 hours per week, which shows the stability of the user group, but the charging of value-added services may limit the deep participation of some users.

The psychological cloud home platform focuses on paid consultation and course sales, and the improvement rate of users' mental health is 72%, which shows the positive impact of professional consultation and systematic courses on users' mental health. 88% satisfaction with service quality and average usage time of 6 hours per week show users' demand and satisfaction with high-quality consulting services. However, the consultation mode of pay-per-view may pose a certain threshold for users with limited economic ability.

Xinyue online platform realizes free service through enterprise cooperation and sponsorship, and the improvement rate of users' mental health is 65%. Although it is lower than other commercial platforms, the popularity of free service enables more users to access mental health resources. 80% satisfaction with service quality and 3 hours usage per week reflect users' acceptance and usage habits of free service. However, the sustainability of corporate sponsorship and the depth of service still need further observation.

The platform of Friends of the Soul adopts the mode of membership charging and advertising revenue in parallel. The improvement rate of users' mental health is 70%, the satisfaction of service quality is 86%, and the average weekly usage time of users is 5 hours. This model not only ensures the stability of service, but also increases the flexibility of the platform through advertising revenue. However, how to find a balance between membership fees and advertising experience will be a problem that the platform needs to solve in the future.

There are various forms of commercialization of mental health online services, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Different platforms have achieved positive results in improving users' mental health and service quality through different business models. In the future, with the continuous progress of technology and the increasing diversification of market demand, the commercialization of mental health online services will pay more attention to the optimization of user experience and personalized customization of services to better meet users' mental health needs.

Through a comprehensive discussion on the commercialization of online mental health services in the Internet age, this paper probes into its remarkable contribution to meeting the growing demand for mental health and improving the quality and accessibility of services. It is found that with the development of technology, especially the application of big data and artificial intelligence in the field of mental health, online services have achieved more personalized and precise intervention, effectively alleviating the uneven distribution of traditional mental health service resources. The introduction of business model not only stimulates the market vitality, but also promotes the popularization of mental health knowledge and enhances the public's understanding of the importance of mental health.

In the process of commercialization, online mental health services also face many challenges, such as data security and privacy protection, uneven service quality, and lagging regulatory policies. The empirical analysis of this study shows that despite the challenges, users generally accept the commercialization of online mental health services. Especially among young people, they are more inclined to use convenient and efficient online platforms to obtain psychological support. This reflects that in the fast-paced modern life, the commercialization of online mental health services has become a trend that cannot be ignored.

Looking forward to the future, the commercialization of mental health online services will show the following development trends: First, technology integration will be deeper, and AI algorithm will be used to optimize consultation matching, emotion recognition and intervention strategies to improve service efficiency and effectiveness; Second, the service model will be more diversified, combining online and offline resources to build an all-round and full-cycle mental health service system; Third, the regulatory policy will be further improved to ensure the safety and quality of services and protect the rights and interests of users; Fourth, mental health education will be more popular, and mental health knowledge will be disseminated through commercial platforms to enhance the mental health literacy of the whole people.

In view of the current problems and challenges, it is suggested to start from the following aspects: first, strengthen industry self-discipline and standard setting, and promote the standardized development of mental health online services; The second is to increase investment in technological innovation and improve the level of service intelligence; Third, improve the legal system to provide a strong guarantee for the commercialization of mental health online services; Fourth, strengthen public education and publicity to improve the society's cognition and acceptance of mental health services.

The immature industrial chain of mental health market involves many aspects, which need the joint efforts of the government, industry associations, service providers and consumers to solve. By strengthening supervision and regulation, cultivating professionals, innovating business models, improving market demand and cognition, promoting technology integration and innovation, and strengthening cross-border cooperation and resource integration, the industrial chain of mental health market can be gradually matured and improved.

At the same time, the online service platform should establish cooperative relations with local medical institutions and emergency centers to form an online and offline linkage crisis management network. In this way, when the user has a serious psychological crisis, the online consultant can inform the cooperative offline institutions in time to ensure that the user can get timely on-site assistance. In addition, the platform should regularly provide crisis intervention training for consultants to improve their ability to identify and deal with emergencies.

V. CONCLUSION

In the Internet age, the commercialization of online mental health services has become an important force to promote social progress and cultural development. Just as General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized the importance of cultural construction, the development of mental health online service also undertakes the mission of promoting public welfare and building a harmonious society. This service model not only provides a convenient and efficient mental health support network for the public, but also gradually becomes the mainstream service model through continuous technological innovation and market standardization, instead of just supplementing the traditional mental health service.

Personally, online mental health services greatly encourage more people to actively face and solve their psychological problems by providing a private and flexible environment. The popularity of this service model not only helps to enhance the public's mental health awareness, but also promotes the wide spread of mental health knowledge, so that mental health issues have been more deeply recognized and concerned by the society.

From a social perspective, the promotion of online mental health services has effectively alleviated the social pressure caused by mental health problems and contributed to social stability and harmony. At the same time, it also promoted the rapid development of mental health industry and formed a positive industrial ecological cycle.

The commercialization of mental health online service is the product of the Internet age, which has played an important role in solving the contradiction between supply and demand of mental health services, improving the public's mental health level, and promoting the harmonious development of society. Looking forward to the future, with the continuous progress of technology and the constant standardization of the market, the commercialization of online mental health services will have a broader development prospect and contribute to building a healthier and more harmonious society.

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