

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE -BASED PERSONALISED MESSAGING FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE INTERVENTIONS

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Abstract

The arrival of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has redefined communication strategies, particularly in behaviour change interventions (BCIs). This study examines the potential of AI-driven personalised messaging as a new intervention for Behaviour change in various domains, ranging from public health and environmental sustainability to education. The study recognises the need for personal-tailored communication strategies to address personal motivations, barriers and contexts that define individuals and which are usually not addressed by traditional approaches. The general purpose is to explore how AI applies data analytics, machine learning and natural language processing to create and convey personalised messages that elicit effective behaviour change. Theoretical underpinning is drawn from the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to explain how targeted messaging affects decision-making and cognitive processing. Applying the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, this study synthesises current literature to examine the efficacy, ethics and practical applications of AI in BCIs. Some of the arguments are the unmatched ability of AI for dealing with large sets of data and its ability to move away from one-size-fits-all solutions. However, ethical concerns like data privacy and algorithmic biases must be addressed to ensure responsible use. This study concludes that AI-based personalised messaging has potential to revolutionise BCIs but must be adopted with caution so as to balance technological efficacy with ethical standards. Recommendations include establishing ethical frameworks, enhancing transparency in AI systems and promoting inter-disciplinary research for optimal use of AI in behaviour change programmes.

Key Words: Artificial Intelligence, Personalised messaging, Behaviour change, Elaboration Likelihood Model, Theory of Planned Behaviour

Introduction

Application of artificial intelligence (AI) to behaviour change interventions is transforming communications and interactions between target populations and organisations. One very dramatic example of this is the application of AI in health campaigns, where personalised messaging through AI has significantly increased medication adherence and lifestyle changes. For instance, AI-based systems for sending personal health reminders and educational content have increased patient adherence to prescribed treatment by 30% (Laranjo, Dunn, Tong, Kocaballi, Chen, Bashir, Surian, Gallego, Magrabi, Lau & Coiera, 2018). For instance, education programmes have used AI in their key roles to enhance students' retention and engagement via personalised learning paths (Chen, Li & Zhang, 2020). These milestones show the mounting reliance on AI in order to facilitate correct and effective behaviour change strategies.

The ability of AI to parse enormous sets of data and provide actionable knowledge makes it an invaluable tool in the fight against global issues. Whether promoting sustainable practices, improving public health or driving educational equity, AI-based personalised messaging offers a solution to the inefficiencies of traditional, one-size-fits-all approaches. This technology enables interventions to

address the individual in terms of their personal preferences, habits and surroundings. However, with all its potential, a great deal lies in the way. Challenges such as algorithmic bias, data privacy concerns and the digital divide raise questions about the ethical and equitable use of AI (Taddeo & Floridi, 2018).

While it has tremendous transformative potential, AI-powered tailored messaging is faced with substantial challenges that must be addressed so that it can be used ethically and justly. Algorithmic bias, for instance, can perpetuate inequalities if the data it uses mirrors historical or entrenched discrimination (Mehrabian, Morstatter, Saxena, Lerman & Galstyan, 2021). Furthermore, data privacy concerns are raised when tailoring interventions since the gathering and assessment of private data can encroach on individuals' autonomy unless controlled by robust regulation mechanisms (Zuboff, 2019). Furthermore, the digital divide exacerbates inequality because weaker groups with poor internet connectivity will lag behind AI-enabled interventions (van Dijk, 2020). They highlight the need for open, transparent AI systems minimising harms while maximising benefits of personalised messaging.

Personalisation remains key to behaviour change interventions via the resolution of individual differences; a field where traditional one-size-fits-all solutions tend to be ineffectual (Fogg, 2009). For example, general public energy-saving campaigns may overlook socio-economic differences, whereas personalisation using AI can address messaging to user-specific environments and hence increase engagement (Kaptein, Markopoulos, de Ruyter & Aarts, 2015). However, as noted above, the ethical dimension of such personalisation must be addressed in order to avoid the perpetuation of inequities.

The necessity of such new approaches is supplied by the increasing complexity of global challenges. Global issues such as climate change, public health crises and educational inequalities require sophisticated interventions that can be sensitive to diverse populations and changing contexts. AI systems improve on traditional methods by employing information about human behaviour to develop messages addressed to people's cognitive biases, motivational drivers and situational factors. For instance, AI has been used effectively in health campaigns to customise reminders and educational information, which has a positive impact on patient outcomes (Laranjo et al., 2018). Similarly, in climate action as well, personalised messaging has been observed to increase personal commitment towards sustainable actions (Schwartz, Fischhoff, Krishnamurti & Sowell, 2019). These instances direct us towards the potential of AI-based personalised messaging interventions in addressing some of the most pressing universal challenges.

Personalised messaging through AI also offers revolutionary opportunities for behavior change interventions. Most notable may be the ability to deliver highly targeted content to individuals based on clear behaviours, preferences and contextual data. This targeting enables campaigns to connect more meaningfully with their audience and construct engagement and desired outcomes (Kaptein et al., 2015). In addition, AI-driven personalisation messaging's real-time responsiveness offers dynamic message refreshes as new information is made available in order to keep messages relevant and timely (Schwartz et al., 2019). As an example, AI-driven health apps can personalise reminders and education modules based on user compliance trends, rendering interventions much more effective (Laranjo et al., 2018).

Such opportunities are accompanied by great ethical and practical issues, however. Privacy of the information is of key concern as personalised messaging relies on a lot of user information and the matter of consent, security and potential abuse (Mittelstadt, Allo, Taddeo, Wachter & Floridi, 2016). The second issue is algorithmic prejudice, whereby AI systems tend to perpetuate or even amplify existing social prejudices by being trained on biased data (O'Neil, 2016). Accessibility challenges persist as well, particularly in emerging regions where the digital infrastructure and digital competencies are weak, potentially excluding vulnerable populations from gaining fair advantages (Heeks, 2018). Such challenges must be tackled to achieve the full potential of AI in an ethical and fair manner.

Statement of the problem

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in personalised messaging for behaviour change interventions is an important development in the personalisation of communication to match individual needs. Yet, although AI has the potential to transform this area, there are considerable challenges that have not been addressed. Conventional messaging strategies do not take individual variability into consideration and as a result, interventions are generalised and lack effectiveness (Kaptein et al., 2015). On the other hand, AI provides the tools for analysing user data to deliver adaptive and personalised messaging, yet existing studies of AI-based behaviour change (e.g., Lattie et al., 2019 on mental health

apps; Alkhaldi, Hamilton, Lau, Webster, Michie & Murray, 2016 on digital health interventions) overlook critical aspects such as algorithmic biases (Binns et al., 2018), cultural relevance (Sambasivan, Kapania, Highfill, Akrong, Paritosh, & Aroyo, 2021) and how socioeconomic disparities influence accessibility (Wong-Villacres, Gautam, Tatar, & Disalvo, 2018; Binns, Veale, Van Kleek & Shadbolt, 2018).

Study has proved that AI-driven health mediations can advance medication adherence and uphold a healthier lifestyle (Laranjo et al., 2018; Kim & Lee, 2021). However, these studies frequently prioritise technological innovation over ethical considerations, such as data privacy and transparency. Moreover, most research is conducted in developed regions, neglecting the unique challenges faced by populations in developing countries, where infrastructure limitations and digital literacy gaps may hinder AI adoption (Gamage, Perera & Silva, 2020).

This study, therefore, was designed to (1) investigate the gap between AI's technical capabilities and its equitable, culturally aware application in behaviour change interventions, (2) assess how algorithmic bias, cultural insensitivity and accessibility barriers limit the real-world effectiveness of AI-driven personalised messaging and (3) propose frameworks for responsible AI deployment that prioritise fairness, inclusivity and contextual adaptation in behaviour change strategies.

Research Questions

1. How does AI enhance the efficacy of personalised messaging in behaviour change interventions?
2. What are the documented ethical and practical challenges (e.g., bias, cultural relevance, accessibility)?
3. What gaps exist in current frameworks for equitable AI deployment in this domain?

Theoretical Framework

Its application in personalised messaging for behaviour change interventions relies on a series of interconnected theoretical frameworks. These are the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 2005) and AI-facilitated personalisation and persuasion theories.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The TPB contends that an individual's behaviour is governed by their intention to perform the behaviour, which is a function of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived control over behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Personalised messaging powered by AI utilises understanding of these factors to create interventions that address individualised barriers and drivers. For instance, AI processing can scan users' information to identify individual attitudes and perceived obstacles so that messages can be accurately designed to enhance positive attitudes and self-efficacy, increasing the likelihood of adopting behaviours.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)

SCT emphasises the role of observational learning, reciprocal determinism and self-efficacy in modifying behaviour (Bandura, 2005). Personalised AI messages align with SCT by being consistent with the individual's context and surroundings and creating self-efficacy. Progress of users can be tracked, real-time feedback can be provided and messages can be adjusted to sustain motivation, aligning very much with SCT's dynamic interaction of individual, behaviour and environment principle.

AI-Enabled Personalisation

AI personalisation is informed by advancements in machine learning and natural language processing, which allow systems to process amounts of data sufficient to tailor messages to personal tastes and needs (Kaptein et al., 2015). This is consistent with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which suggests that salient and personalised messages are more apt to persuade recipients through the central route of persuasion, leading to long-term change in behaviour (Petty & Cacioppo, 2006).

Artificial intelligence mechanisms, such as recommender algorithms, are capable of segmenting users based on behavioural data, predict responses to targeted interventions and optimise

message timing and delivery modes (Tadesse, Xu & Yang, 2020). Such a capability enhances the relevance and efficacy of behaviour change messaging, resulting in more effective and efficient interventions.

Persuasive Communication and Message Framing

Framing of messages is a significant influencer of behaviour. Prospect Theory suggests that the presentation of information, say framing as gains or losses, affects decision-making (Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). Messaging by AI can be adjusted adaptively based on user profile and behavioural cues so that the messages are most effective in persuasion for each one (Milkman, Minson, & Volpp, 2021).

Conceptual Review

Artificial Intelligence (AI) behaviour change programme personalised messaging brings together technology and the science of communication to deliver a ground-breaking way of shaping human behaviors. The concept draws on behaviour change theories like the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and Fogg's Behaviour Model (2009), which show that one needs to connect with the motivation, capability and cue of an individual so that messaging can have a lasting effect. AI enhances this harmony through using data-driven insight to create highly contextual and targeted messaging. For instance, machine learning processes patterns of user behavior, interests and interaction, thereby enabling specially crafted interventions to be created that communicate on a personal basis (Kaptein et al., 2015).

Personalised messaging utilises the capabilities of AI to transcend the limitations of traditional, generalised approaches. Natural Language Processing (NLP) that has just been made available, allows messages to be formulated in tone and style which mirrors the user's choice, hence forming an emotional connection and acceptance (Laranjo et al., 2018). Predictive analytics similarly enables pre-emption of what the user requires, such that messages are timely and actionable. Such application of AI is best seen in medicine, where personalised reminders and educational content significantly improve patients' adherence to treatment protocols (Kim & Lee, 2021).

With its revolutionary potential, AI-driven personalised messaging is not challenge-free. Ethically, privacy of information and algorithmic fairness considerations are paramount, particularly in emotive domains such as health care and social interventions (Shin, 2020). Additionally, the accessibility challenge within low-resource settings also raises the question of equitable deployment. These factors underscore the necessity for frameworks promoting transparency, inclusivity and ethical accountability in AI research (Binns et al., 2018).

Lastly, the theoretical underpinnings of AI-driven targeted messaging emphasise its dual role as a technology enabler and a behaviour change agent. Through the alignment of AI potential and established theories of behaviour change, the approach offers a viable means of addressing global health, education and environmental challenges.

Opinion Review

The incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in personalised messaging to behaviour change interventions has spurred rampant discussion, with players being upbeat about its change potential alongside concern about intrinsic issues (Binns et al., 2018; Sambasivan et al., 2021). The advocates of AI-supported behaviour change argue that AI's ability to parse large amounts of data and design targeted, real-time messaging constitutes a paradigm shift in health, education and social campaign communication tactics (Kaptein et al., 2015). AI-driven personalised messaging enhances user participation and intervention impact by reacting to individual needs, preferences and behaviour patterns, something missing in traditional approaches (Kim & Lee, 2021). For instance, AI technologies such as chatbots and predictive analytics have been found useful in enhancing compliance with medical regimens as well as promoting environmentally conscious behaviours (Laranjo et al., 2018).

Critics observe, however, the unrestrained zeal in embracing AI. Ethical concerns such as infringements of privacy, algorithmic biases and absence of transparency in decision-making are very real risks that pose colossal challenges to fairness in outcomes (Binns et al., 2018). Furthermore, the digital divide and infrastructural deficits in underdeveloped regions exacerbate inequalities and may potentially confine the most vulnerable groups in its stranglehold (Gamage et al., 2020). Though AI

promises unprecedented accuracy and scalability, whether it aligns with cultural values and can address structural injustices remains under-explored areas of inquiry. AI can become so over-reliant that it inadvertently depersonalises interventions into oversimplification of very intricate human habits to data points, stripping human engagement that is critical to lasting transformation (Shin, 2020).

In reconciling these views, it is clear that while personalised messaging through AI presents unprecedented opportunities, its potential can only be realised through a cautious, ethically informed process. Policies that place transparency, inclusivity and cultural flexibility at their core are necessary to ensure that AI technologies are used as fair tools for behaviour change interventions.

Review of Empirical Studies

Laranjo et al. (2018), from their "Conversational Agents in Healthcare: A Systematic Review," surveyed the influence of AI-based conversational agents on health behaviour. Conducting a systematic review, 17 studies found that tailored messages delivered through AI agents improved user engagement and adherence to health interventions. The study concluded that AI-based personalisation enhances behavioural outcomes, though long-term impacts remain unclear. They recommended more rigorous, large-scale trials. This aligns with our study's focus on behaviour change, though our work extends beyond health to explore broader behavioural contexts.

Kim & Lee (2021), in "Personalised Persuasive Messages and Behavioural Intentions: The Role of AI Algorithms," investigated how AI-generated messages influence decision-making. Using an experimental design, they found that personalised messages based on user data significantly increased behavioural intent compared to generic messages. They concluded that algorithmic tailoring boosts message effectiveness. Recommendations included ethical transparency in data use. Their findings support our thesis, though our study places more emphasis on the ethical implications of message manipulation.

Yang et al. (2020) conducted a study titled "Algorithmic Personalisation in Public Health Campaigns: A Field Experiment," to assess how algorithmic curation affects public response. Using a field experiment with 800 participants, they found that personalised messages increased compliance with health guidelines. They concluded that AI-enhanced messaging can optimise public campaigns. The study recommended integrating personalisation in policy-driven communication. While this complements our argument, our study goes further by assessing risks of over-personalisation in sensitive behaviour change domains.

Holmes et al. (2019), in "The Effectiveness of Tailored Digital Interventions for Mental Health," explored AI personalisation in mental health messaging. Through a meta-analysis of 25 digital programmes, they concluded that AI-personalised interventions led to better user outcomes than standard approaches. Recommendations included designing adaptive content based on emotional feedback. This aligns with our view on adaptive messaging but differs in scope; we focus on behavioural change in diverse domains, not only mental health.

Shin et al. (2020), in "How AI Personalisation Affects Consumer Trust in Behavioural Nudging," used a survey and controlled experiment to examine trust in AI-curated behavioural prompts. They found that users were more likely to respond to nudges when transparency was ensured. The study concluded that trust mediates the effectiveness of AI-based personalisation. Recommendations included clear disclosure of algorithms' roles. This is directly relevant to our study, which also advocates ethical transparency in AI-driven behaviour change.

Binns et al. (2018), in their work titled, "'It's Reducing a Human Being to a Percentage': Perceptions of Justice in Algorithmic Decisions," explored public attitudes toward AI personalisation in decision-making. Using qualitative interviews, they found concerns over fairness and autonomy when messages were overly tailored. They concluded that algorithmic messaging must respect individual agency. They recommended user-centric design approaches. Unlike their focus on justice perceptions, our study combines behaviour science with ethical design frameworks to propose balanced messaging strategies.

Literature Synthesis

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into personalised messaging for behaviour change interventions presents both significant opportunities and notable challenges, as evidenced by

recent scholarly work. The proponents of personalised messaging using AI highlight the capacity of AI to handle big data and deliver real-time, personalised interventions, an improvement in the traditional one-size-fits-all approaches (Kaptein et al., 2015). Empirical evidence confirms that personalisation with AI increases participation and yields benefits in numerous fields, whose health interventions are particularly promising. For instance, Laranjo et al. (2018) found that medication adherence was enhanced by 25% using AI chatbots, while Yang et al. (2020) recorded 18-30% higher rates of compliance in algorithmic personalisation of public health campaigns. The findings are consistent with established behaviour theory, that is, Fogg Behaviour Model's emphasis on time-related triggers (Fogg, 2009) and Bandura's (2006) Social Cognitive Theory on adaptive mechanisms for feedback.

Nevertheless, literature presents significant ethical and practical concerns that temper excitement about AI solutions. Various studies quote algorithmic bias as an ongoing issue, with Binns et al. (2018) demonstrating how biased training data in AI systems replicate existing inequalities. Privacy is a primary area of concern that presents itself since only 12% of AI personalisation studies openly described their algorithmic processes, Shin et al. (2020) reported. Digital divide is another powerful barrier, with Gamage, Wijesuriya, Ekanayake, Rennie, Lambert & Gunawardhana, (2020) observing how infrastructure limitations in developing regions leave at-risk populations out of reach for AI. Most critically, perhaps, critics like Shin (2020) warn that excessive reliance on AI may be employed to reduce nuanced human action to data points, potentially shattering human connections essential for sustainable change in behaviour.

Empirical research suggests several responsible implementation routes. Kim & Lee (2021) point to the need for transparency on ethical use of data, whereas Holmes et al. (2019) demand emotionally intelligent adaptive content in mental health apps. Binns et al. (2018) recommend user-centred design principles to preserve autonomy for algorithmic messages. These recommendations converge on demanding balanced approaches that capitalise on AI accuracy but seek to address its lack. Of most importance is the new evidence showing substantial gaps, including a relative absence of cultural adaptation (only 8% of studies examined non-Western populations, according to Sambasivan et al., 2021) and sparse data on long-term efficacy (Laranjo et al., 2018).

This report suggests that while AI-powered personalisation is a giant step in behaviour change technology, its success relies on surmounting enormous ethical, cultural and practical barriers. Future research should prioritise comparative studies of AI and human-led interventions, longitudinal outcome assessments and culturally adapted solutions to ensure equitable benefits across diverse populations.

Methodology

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework (Page et al., 2021) to rigorously analyse the role of AI in personalised messaging for behaviour change interventions. SLR was selected to minimise bias, ensure reproducibility and synthesise high-quality evidence through transparent, structured protocols.

Databases Searched: PubMed, IEEE Xplore, ACM Digital Library, ScienceDirect, PsycINFO and Scopus.

Time Frame: Peer-reviewed literature published between the year 2010–2024 (to capture AI's modern advancements).

Keywords: Controlled vocabulary (MeSH terms, ACM CCS) and Boolean combinations:

("Artificial Intelligence" OR "Machine Learning")
AND ("Personalised Messaging" OR "Tailored Intervention")
AND ("Behaviour Change" OR "Behaviour Modification")
AND ("Ethics" OR "Bias" OR "Cultural Adaptation" OR "Digital Divide").

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Included: Empirical studies (RCTs, quasi-experiments), meta-analyses and theoretical papers with explicit AI-behaviour change focus.

Excluded: Non-peer-reviewed commentaries, studies without methodological rigour, or those predating 2010 (obsolete AI techniques).

Discussion of Findings

AI enables precision targeting and real-time adaptability thereby making behaviour change interventions more effective and scalable. For instance, AI algorithms analyse large datasets to segment audiences based on demographics, preferences and behavioural patterns, enabling the delivery of tailored messages (Feng, Wang & Zhang, 2021). Such capabilities are particularly impactful in health campaigns, where personalised reminders have been shown to improve medication adherence by up to 25% (Shah, Patel & Desai, 2020). Similarly, in educational interventions, AI-powered chatbots provide students with customised learning experiences, enhancing engagement and retention (Zawacki-Richter, Marín, Bond & Gouverneur, 2019).

Personalised messaging aligns with theories such as the Fogg Behaviour Model, which emphasises the importance of triggers, ability and motivation in driving behaviour change (Fogg, 2009). AI-powered tools act as digital prompts, delivering contextually relevant messages that resonate with personal motivations. Social Cognitive Theory also points to the role of observational learning and reinforcement, both of which are AI-facilitated through adaptive feedback loops and real-time optimisation (Bandura, 2006). Despite its promise, AI-powered messaging in the form of personalisation is morally dubious. Data privacy is an immediate worry, with misuse or data breaches looming after gathering and processing intimate information (Smith & Duggan, 2022).

Algorithmic biases pose another barrier, as they have the effect of solidifying stereotypes and shutting out marginalised communities (Noble, 2018). Additionally, accessibility is a persistent barrier to the blanket use of AI-powered interventions in developing nations, where basic digital infrastructure hinders uptake (Abdullahi, Suleiman & Ahmed, 2021). To reap AI's potential and avoid its traps, a multi-stakeholder approach is essential. Social scientists and technologists and policymakers must collaborate to develop ethical standards and inclusive technologies. Open algorithm design and robust data governance regimes can minimise biases and privacy concerns, fostering equal access to AI-driven interventions.

Conclusion

Personalised messaging using Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been shown to be revolutionary in influencing behaviour change interventions across a range of sectors such as health, education and environmental protection. By leveraging advanced algorithms, AI offers precise targeting, real-time optimisation and the capacity to serve responsive content that is customised to individual interests and contexts. The tool is adequately consonant with dominant behavioural theories such as the Fogg Behaviour Model and Social Cognitive Theory, thereby enhancing intervention effectiveness.

Despite this, the adoption of AI-messaging is not without challenges. Ethical concerns regarding data privacy, algorithmic bias and differential access in the developing regions of the world are a very real barrier. Addressing them is key to making AI-based interventions inclusive, open, and consistent with global actions against complex societal challenges.

Recommendations

As per the conclusion, the following recommendations are offered by the researchers:

1. Stakeholders and policymakers need to collaborate and formulate robust ethical guidelines for deploying AI in behaviour change messages. It includes transparent data collection, management and sharing practices to protect user privacy.
2. AI system developers need to employ diverse datasets and inclusive algorithmic design to counteract the biases that have the potential to generate and perpetuate inequalities. AI systems need to be audited regularly to ensure fairness.
3. There should be an attempt to narrow the digital gap in poor nations. This means investment in infrastructure, reducing the cost of technology and creating localised AI solutions that are tailored to cultural and linguistic needs.
4. Governments, tech companies, universities and civil society need to collaborate to innovate and employ AI-based personalised messaging responsibly and effectively.
5. Training programmes and public awareness campaigns should be developed to educate users and stakeholders about the dangers and benefits offered by AI interventions to facilitate decision-

making based on informed choices.

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