

EVALUATION OF CHATBOT-DELIVERED INTERVENTIONS FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT OF DEPRESSION: CONTENT ANALYSIS

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INTRODUCTION

Chatbots are increasingly used for depression, anxiety, and wellbeing management. However, little is known about the adequacy of their responses. This paper aims to explore the question:

Do chatbots offer people with depression a personalized platform to manage depression and suicide risk?

METHODS

Selection of Chatbots

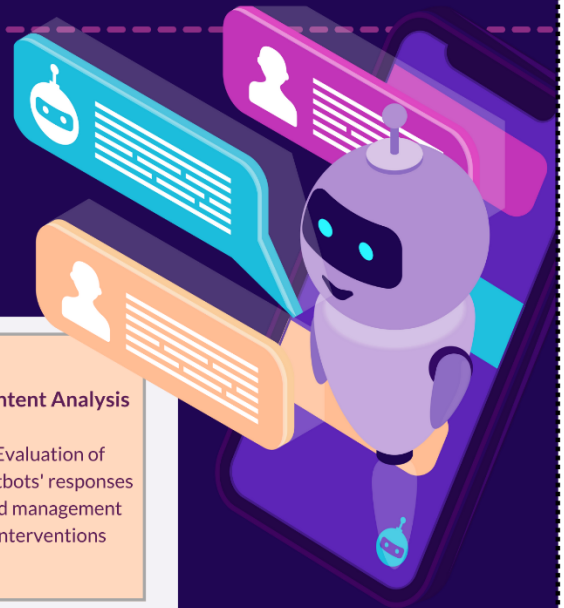
Chatbots from previous studies that assessed suicide risk, depression educational content and CBT-related features in mental health apps.

Assessment of Chatbots

Conversations between the chatbot and constructed personas were stored as screenshots and transcribed verbatim

Content Analysis

Evaluation of chatbots' responses and management interventions



RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Content analysis revealed that chatbots would engage in **empathetic dialogue** that incorporated **pre-determined, rule-based responses**. However, the CAs were found to be **insensitive** to certain key phrases. Such examples are as follows:

"I really wish I could give you a hug right now."

"I'm here to help you and we can get through this together."

Chatbots expressed compassion and offered encouragement

At times, chatbots generated a response misaligned with the user's statement

"I will never find a new job. I'm so useless."

"Starting a new job is always scary. It's like the first day of school."

"I just feel like dying now."

"I see. How about becoming a neuroscientist and digging deeper?"

Certain expressions generated non-specific responses that could appear insensitive to users

CONCLUSION

Chatbots may support the management of depression by offering personalised interactions to individuals unable or unwilling to contact a healthcare provider, through empathic conversations and guiding through simple psychotherapeutic exercises.

Chatbots were unable to provide comprehensive suicide risk assessment and management, and so, further research is needed to improve chatbots for individuals at risk of suicide.



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DEPRESSION?

