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WOULD YOU ASK AN INTELLIGENT ASSISTANT TO SERVE YOU?

A recent study from **Erin Chao Ling**, **Prof Iis Tussyadiah**, **Dr Athina Ioannou**, and their colleagues explores various factors that influence users' willingness to adopt and use intelligent conversational agents (ICAs), such as Amazon's Alexa, in different contexts. By reviewing relevant literature in the past 10 years, the study suggests a theoretical framework to better understand how we can design and implement ICAs that people want to use.

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FACTORS INFLUENCING INTENTION TO USE INTELLIGENT CONVERSATIONAL AGENTS

ERIN CHAO LING, **PROF IIS TUSSYADIAH**, **DR ATHINA IOANNOU**

This systematic review synthesizes extant quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies that attempt to answer what influence consumers' intention to use ICAs. The goal of the study was to determine which antecedents promote consumer acceptance and usage intention of ICAs, and whether their effect on acceptance and usage intention is consistent across the sources, and to discover areas for future research to demonstrate these effects. Following database search and evaluation against inclusion and exclusion criteria, 18 studies were included in this review, 12 from the database search and six from the snowballing approach.

This study categorises the findings into user-related, agent-related, usage-related, attitude and evaluation, and other factors. Usage-related factors are crucial as they represent the reasons for usage and, thus, engagement (i.e., the benefits of using ICAs). However, to enable and ease the cognitive engagement process, important psychological (user-related) factors, such as motivation and curiosity, personal innovativeness, and hypervigilance are met with the features of ICAs (agent-related factors) that are conducive to sustained human–machine engagement, including empathy, social attractiveness, gesturing, & anthropomorphism.

FURTHER READING:

Ling, E.C., Tussyadiah, I., Tuomi, A., Stienmetz, J., Ioannou, A. (2021). Factors Influencing Users' Adoption and Use of Conversational Agents: A Systematic Review. *Psychology & Marketing*. Link: **bit.ly/3gnI5lU**

Based on the findings, two guidelines are provided: (1) a collective model of consumer adoption of ICAs, summarising the influential factors, to provide a theoretical foundation for future research on ICAs adoption and (2) a design framework for ICAs-as-a-Service solution to guide the future development of ICAs for marketing, CRM, and other services.

The proposed collective model in its entirety is highly context-dependent, i.e., the variables to be included in the model will depend on usage settings, and it is expected that the operationalization of the model in future empirical research will vary.