HOPE AS A CATALYST: AI-BASED CONVERSATIONAL AGENTS IN MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

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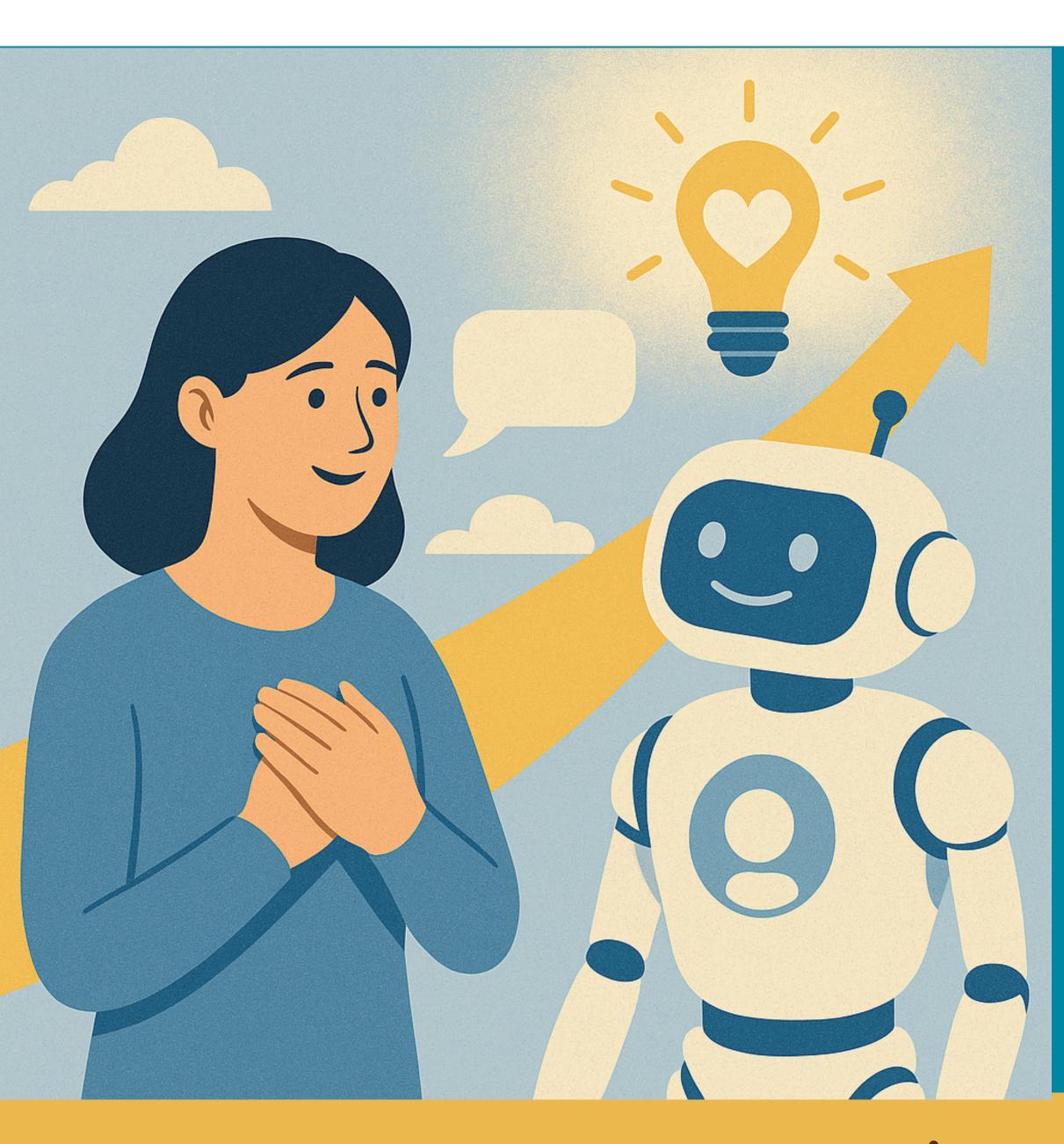
INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand for mental health services, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the necessity for innovative and accessible solutions. The World Health Organization estimates that approximately one billion people suffer from mental disorders, many of whom lack access to adequate care.

OBJECTIVES

Explore the role of **hope** in the **acceptance and continued use of AI-based conversational agents**, as a means to **provide psychological support.**

METHOD

* Conceptual approach grounded in **Snyder's hope theory**
* **Literature review** on the intersection of **hope** and **technology adoption**
* **Identify key factors** that may **facilitate or hinder** the **acceptance** of digital mental health interventions

RESULTS

* **Literature review shows:**
  * **a significant gap in the literature** concerning the role of hope in the adoption of health information technologies (HITs),
  * **need for further empirical research**

* **Preliminary findings suggest that:**
  * individuals with **higher levels of hope** are more **optimistic** and **motivated** about the effectiveness of **technological interventions**,
  * **High levels of hope** may lead to **adoption and continuous use of AI-based conversational agents** for mental health support.

CONCLUSIONS

* Hope literature indicates that:
  * **Hope can act as a facilitator** in overcoming perceived barriers related to digital mental health interventions, such as stigma and distrust,
  * **Understanding the role of hope** in the acceptance of technological innovations **can enhance the implementation of intelligent conversational agents in clinical practice**.

* Implications for Academics:
  * This research contributes to the **academic debate on mental health information technology adoption**
  * Findings offer valuable insights for **improving mental health care through innovative digital solutions.**

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