



An investigation into information chatbots for students

by Kyle Pixley
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Introduction

Information in educational institutes can be difficult to gather due to the range of places it is stored.

Chatbots are an advancing technology that could be proposed as a solution to this issue to provide a faster and easier means of information gathering for students.

Aims & Objectives

Aims

Investigate chatbots used in education.
Produce a chatbot as a proposed solution

Objectives

1. Conduct a literature review on the various chatbots and their uses in educational systems
2. Design & Develop a chatbot for students
3. Gather data using primary research - benefits and drawbacks of the chatbot produced in this project.
4. Compare existing methods for gathering information and chatbots.
5. Evaluate effectiveness of the chatbot for getting information

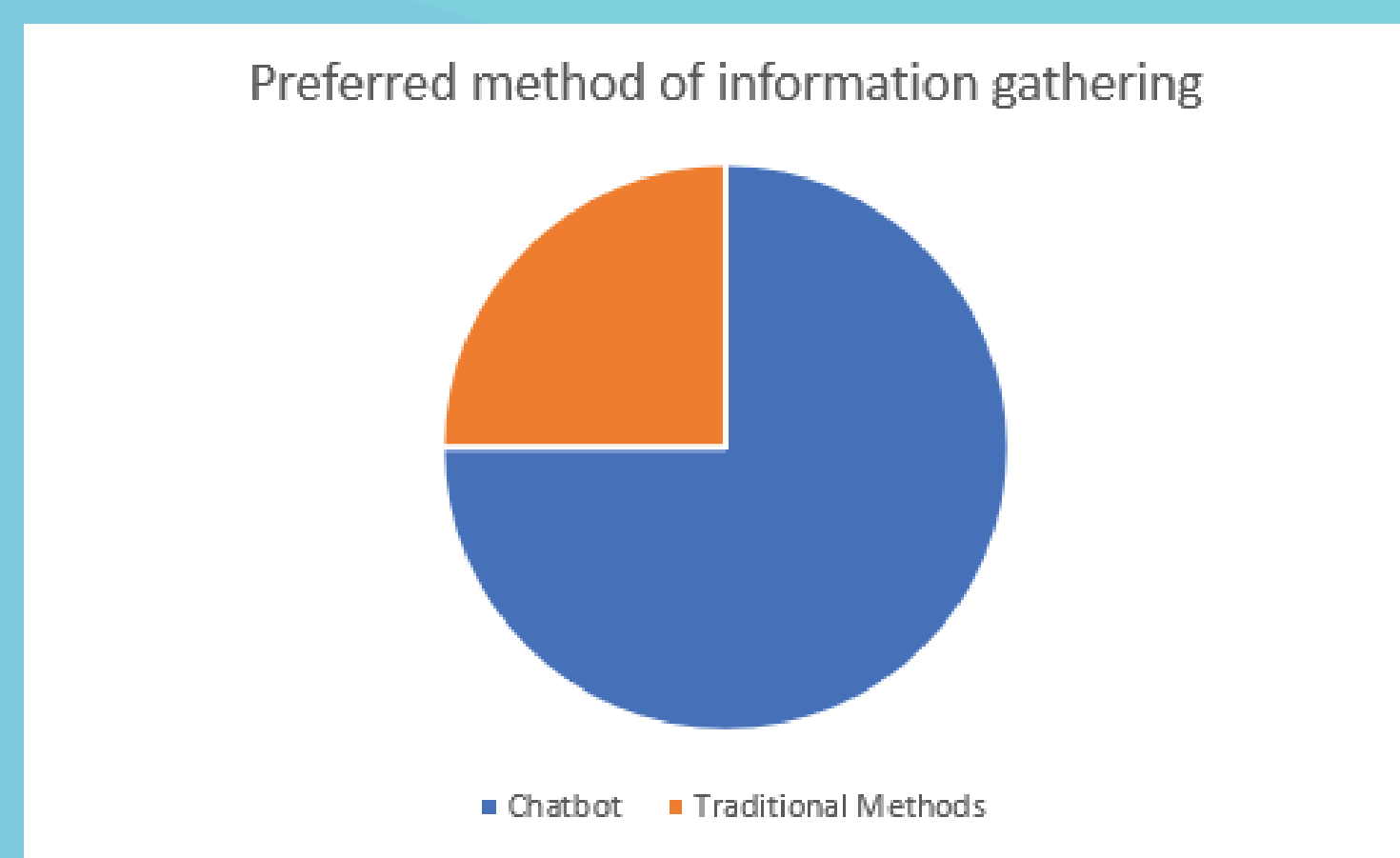
Methods

Testing was completed by users and the programmer. Black and white box testing was completed to ensure functionality of code and the usability of interfaces.

Questionnaires were utilised to document experiences with the chatbot and provide feedback. Results from these questionnaires provided further avenues for analysis and potential links to the literature review.

Results

11 of 16 people believed the chatbot was easier than traditional methods. Reasons for this included the chatbot being easier to get information as it only requires a single input. 75% of users chose the chatbot as their preferred method for information gathering.



Conclusions

Overall test results shows that the respondents preferred the chatbot over traditional methods. As more people found it easier and quicker to use than traditional systems.

Chatbot was similar to Bolton College's chatbot Ada, although slightly less advanced it was still considered an improvement over existing methods. Challenges faced during the development of the chatbot were similar to those found in the literature review - machine learning is very complex and a lack of experience made it so it was not utilised.

References

- [1] Bolton College, "Education Secretary praises Ada, Bolton College's AI chatbot," 2019
- [2] Mahmudur Rahman A, Al Mamun A. "Programming challenges of chatbot: Current and future prospective," 2017