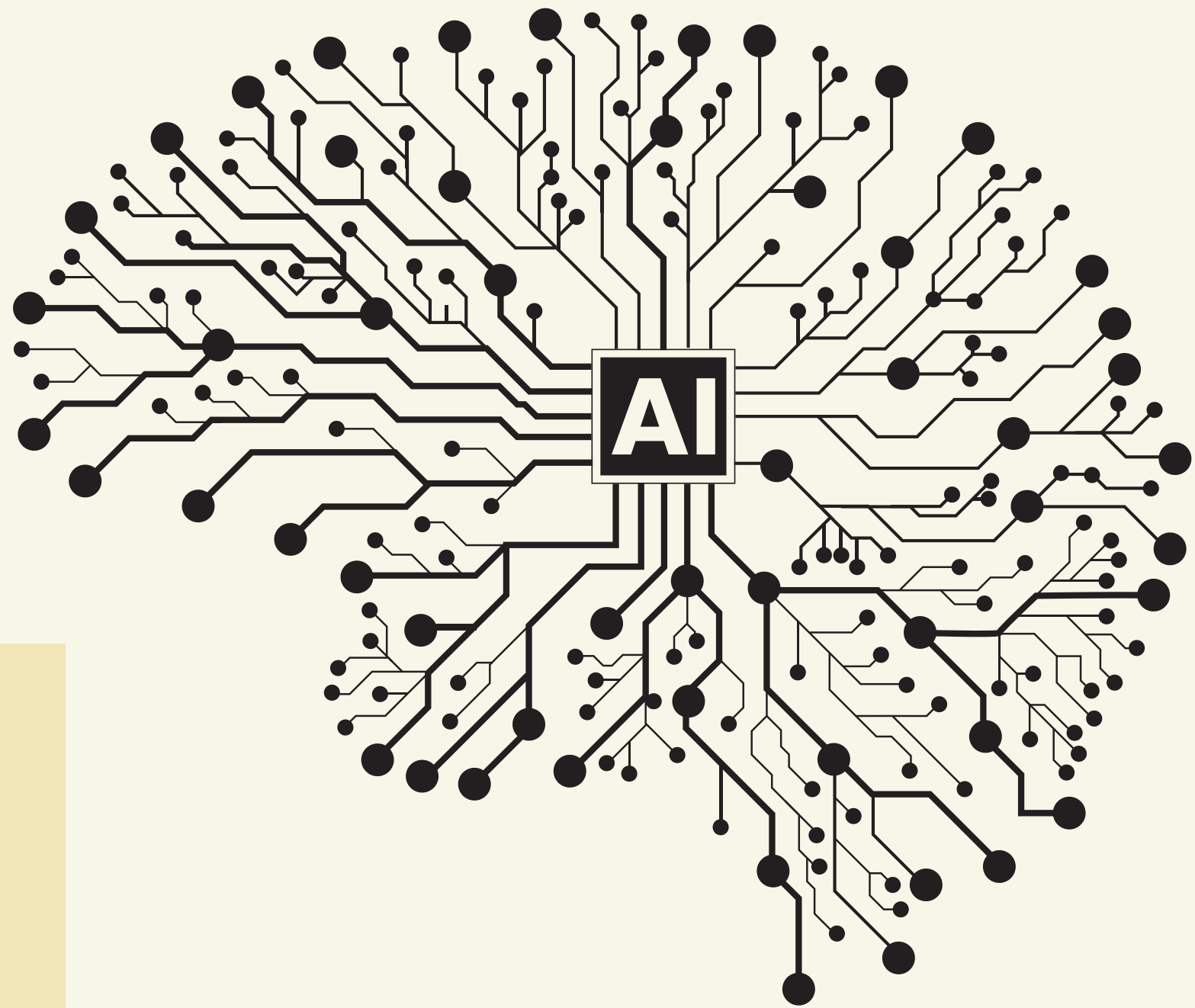


ACCEPTABILITY OF AI FOR PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH VISIBLE SKIN CONDITIONS : A QUALITATIVE REPORT

This presentation will be discussing the acceptability of AI for individuals with visible skin conditions.

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Psychology BSC empirical project



INTRODUCTION

Visible skin conditions (VSC) affect up to 54% of the UK population (Heapy et al.,2020). Evidence shows that a VSC can have negative effects on an individuals psychosocial wellbeing and their quality of life (Vaswnai et al.,2022). Reports have shown that individuals with a VSC may experience stigma, which can negatively affect their work and social life (Yang & Kourosh,2017). A VSC can influence a person’s lifestyle, such as hobbies and fashion choices due to attempts to cover up and hide their condition (Rumsey,2018). Due to VSCs having negative influences on several areas of life, people with VSCs can be at high risk of depression, anxiety and more serious psychological issues if they do not receive psychosocial support (Dalgard et al.,2015). Beneficial support for those with VSCs include cognitive behaviour therapy, although it has been shown to have barriers such as expense, waiting lists and is considered to not be suitable for some anxiety disorders (Egan et al., 2014). With advancements in technology in recent years, psychosocial support is also now available from artificial intelligence (AI) (Ettman & Galea, 2023). With AI being a relatively new form of psychosocial support research, it’s acceptability and any barriers to it being used are limited

OBJECTIVE

- To explore the acceptability of AI as a psychosocial support for individuals with VSCs.
- To explore any barriers for individuals with VSC to using AI as psychosocial support

METHODOLOGY

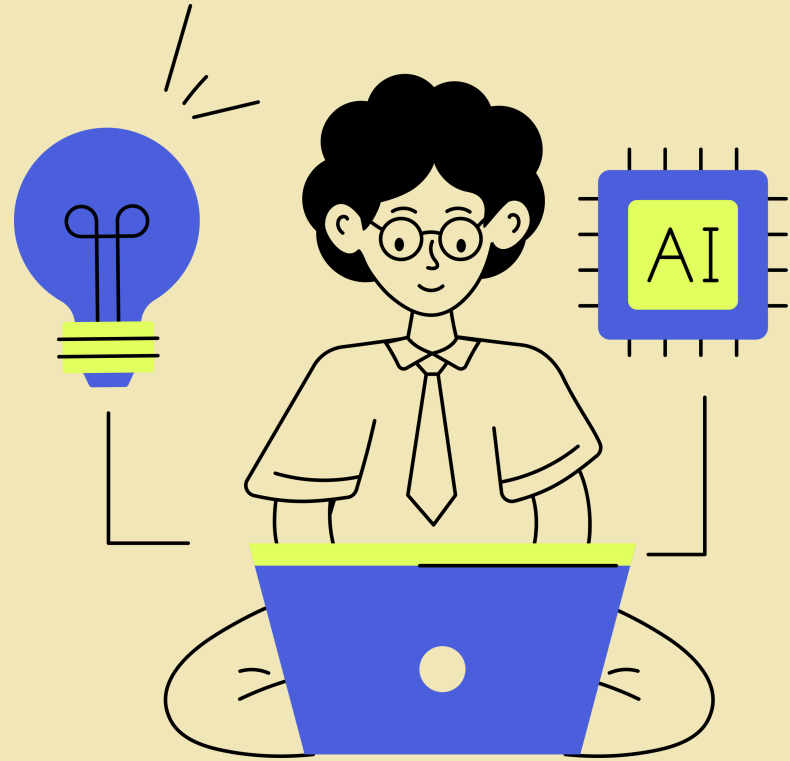
- The research design was qualitative using semi structured interviews with open ended questions via Microsoft Teams.
- Six participants aged between 18-71 were recruited via the University of Wales Trinity Saint David social media platform.
- The inclusion criteria involved individuals being over the age of 18 with a VSC. Participants also needed to consent to speaking about their daily support needs due to their VSC and to discuss their views and beliefs about AI as psychosocial support.

ANALYSIS

The data collected was thematically analysed using Braun & Clarkes (2022) six step thematic analysis framework. Four themes were identified, being:

- The effect of perceived social norms
- Challenges to receiving support
- Concerns of AI as psychosocial support
- Positive perceptions of AI

Subthemes were identified within each theme, which can be seen in table one.

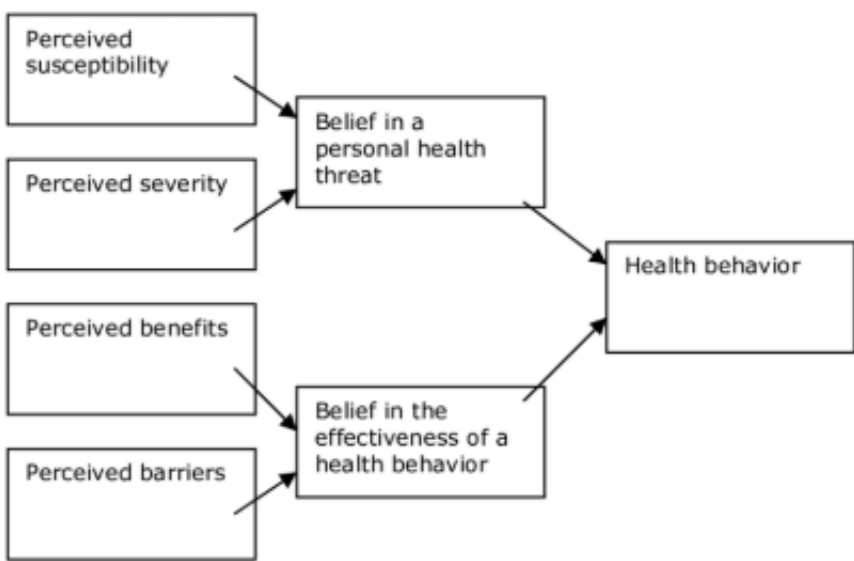


RESULTS

- The results showed that individuals felt their VSC influenced their behaviour and lifestyle and as a result had psychosocial support needs. However, the participants were sceptical on the ability of AI to be able offer adequate psychosocial support.
- Although individuals expressed psychosocial issues they did not always know they could receive support for them.
- Individuals had a lack of knowledge and experience of AI as a psychosocial support tool.
- Participants had ethical concerns about AI and safety.
- Individuals had positive perceptions of AI in that it was impartial, confidential and non judgemental.
- Results contradicted previous research regarding age being a barrier.

The Health Belief Model (HBM)

The HBM framework helped in formulating questions to explore beliefs and barriers to using AI as psychosocial support



Pseudonyms and participant information

Participants	Age	Gender	Skin condition
Barb	22	Female	Eczema
Henry	35	Male	Eczema
Geraldine	49	Female	Skin rashes
Lucy	71	Female	Basal cell carcinoma & solar keratosis
Lottie	35	Female	Acne

Table one: Themes & sub themes

Table of themes and sub themes	Participant input time stamp				
	Barb	Henry	Geraldine	Lucy	Lottie
The effect of perceived social norms	1.31	1.49			
Perceived stigma			2.10	2.26	
Coping mechanisms				2.26	
Effect on identity	2.21&2.49			3.01	1.30
Challenges to receiving support.					
Psychosocial support needs	2.03&4.55	5.13		7.09	
Causation support needs			4.58		4.34
Self-care support	4.14				
Concerns of AI as a psychosocial support					
AI lack of emotional intelligence			15.26		8.18
Unreliable information	11.38	10.52	15.26		
Ethical Concerns		9.18			10.07
Positive perceptions of AI	10.32	8.49	14.30		12.32&9.17
Potential for AI education			17.15	9.50	

STRENGTHS & LIMITATIONS

- This study collected information which highlights some barriers that may prevent individuals considering AI as a psychosocial support tool as well as highlighting areas for future research.
- The small sample size may be considered a limitation.
- This study consisted of only one male participant so might not be representative of males.
- This study may not be representative of all VSCs

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study showed that there are several barriers to be addressed for individuals with VSCs to find AI acceptable as psychosocial support, such as ethical and safety concerns. Participants had limited experience and understanding of AI as a psychosocial support tool, so beliefs about AI as psychosocial support were biased. The intervention of education may reduce these barriers. Future research could explore the strengths and limitations of AI as a psychosocial support aid, with participants interacting with AI.

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