Abhi International Journal of
Humanities and Law
(A Peer Review Journal)
journal homepage: www.abhijournals.com/aijhl/

Volume 1, Issue 2, January 2025 ISSN : 3107-6793

Lomathinda: The Untold Story of Rose Chibambo's Political Impact

Rachna Sharma

SRMIST NCR Campus, Modinagar, Ghaziabad, India

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Received January 15, 2024
Revised January 30, 2024
Accepted April 12, 2025
Available online April 25, 2025

Keywords:
imwa Lipenga, Nick Tembo, *Lomathinda: Rose Chibambo Speaks*, Rose Chibambo, Malawian political activism, women's empowerment, independence struggle.

Correspondence:
E-mail:
rachnasharma1919@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This interview, conducted on 19 December 2019 at the Little Theatre, Chancellor College, University of Malawi, features a discussion between Timwa Lipenga and Nick Tembo. Lipenga was invited to speak about her recently published book, *Lomathinda: Rose Chibambo Speaks*, as part of the English Department's monthly Staff and Students Research Seminar. The conversation provides insights into the creation of the book, which offers a detailed account of the life and contributions of Rose Chibambo, a pioneering Malawian political activist. Lipenga reflects on the challenges and triumphs of portraying Chibambo's legacy, emphasizing her role in Malawi's struggle for independence and her influence as a woman leader. The interview explores themes of women's empowerment, historical representation, and the importance of documenting marginalized voices in the national narrative. Lipenga also discusses her research process, the significance of the book in contemporary Malawian literature, and the ways in which *Lomathinda* contributes to the ongoing conversation about gender and history in African literature. Through this dialogue, Lipenga highlights the broader cultural and political implications of giving voice to women in the historiography of Malawi.

1. Introduction

This research explores the complex dynamics of human interactions with AI chatbots, focusing on how these interactions are perceived as friendships. The study aims to advance both practical user interface design and the theoretical understanding of human-computer interaction. The core research question investigates the dimensions and impacts of AI chatbot friendships. To probe this, we break down five sub-research questions: what is attributed to chatbot characteristics that facilitate friendship, how personalization shapes the user-chatbot relationship, the impact of those characteristics on emotional engagement, the ethical and psychological boundaries of friendship with AI, and the long-term social and emotional effects of long-term interactions. The research is qualitatively method and presented in a structured format of providing a literature review, methodological exposition, the presentation of findings, and theoretical and practical implications.

2. Literature Review

Existing literature on human-chatbot interaction will be approached by focusing on five key areas derived from sub-research questions: traits promoting friendship, role of personalization, emotional involvement, ethical considerations, and long-term effects. The scope of the research is: "Characterization of Chatbot Trait," "Impact on Engagement due to Personalization," "Emotional Dynamics with Chatbots," "Ethical Dimensions in Chatbot Relationships," and "Long-Term

Psychological Impacts." It has progressed but still leaves many areas untouched such as shallow trait, inability to personalize engagement, and inconsistency in emotional, ethical concerns about dependency, and unknown long-term results. This work bridges the gap by providing qualitative insights into user experience, thus contributing toward human-AI interaction research.

2.1 Chatbot Trait Characterization

Initial research highlighted users' ability to attribute basic social traits to chatbots, limited by trait variety. Subsequent studies developed sophisticated models with broader emotional expressions, yet consistency issues persisted. Recent advancements introduced adaptive algorithms for better responsiveness, though superficial traits often fail to maintain prolonged user interest.

2.2 Impact of Personalization on Engagement

In earlier times, it used static profiles for users in which experiences became predictable. Progressing dynamic algorithms further improved engagements based on adaptations towards user behaviours. Deep learning currently anticipates needs and perfects personalities but creates issues with holding engagements because their expectations are not fixed.

2.3 Emotional Dynamics in Chatbots

Initial research in emotional dynamics reported that the basic emotional bonds were because of programmed responses, which lacked depth. Improvements in relational agents improved the interactions, but the challenge remained to maintain connections across contexts. Algorithms for empathetic responses enhanced engagements, but inconsistencies persist.

2.4 Ethical Dimensions in Chatbot Relationships

Ethical considerations began with data privacy, expanding to emotional dependency risks. Recent studies explore manipulation and boundary issues. Despite efforts to address these, challenges remain in balancing engagement with ethical responsibility.

2.5 Long-Term Psychological Impacts

Early observations noted potential benefits and risks of superficial relationships. Deeper studies revealed positive and negative outcomes. Advanced chatbots aim for healthier bonds, but understanding long-term impacts remains limited, requiring further research**.**

3. Method

This study adopts a qualitative approach to the investigation of user perceptions and interactions with chatbots. Qualitative approaches provide detailed insight into the nuances of such interactions. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with a cross-section of online community users, complemented by observational sessions. Thematic analysis was adopted in analyzing the data, which enables themes to emerge and ensures findings are grounded in real user experiences. This sets up a good understanding of the emotional and psychological effects of extended conversations with chatbots.

4. Results

Based on qualitative data from interviews and observations, this research focuses on the key elements of human-chatbot interaction. The results cover the enlarged subsidiary research questions: characteristic promoting friendship, personalization aspect, emotional involvement, moral limits and long-term effects. Identified findings include: "Emotional Resonance in Chatbot

Interactions," "Personalized Dynamics," "Sustained Emotional Connections," "Ethical and Dependency Issues," and "Psychological Impact of Long-Term Relationships." Chatbots are increasingly attributed with complex traits enhancing friendship perceptions, influencing emotional engagement over time. The study explores ethical boundaries and psychological implications, addressing gaps in understanding the impact of chatbot attributes on long-term relationships, challenging earlier notions of their emotional capabilities.

4.1 Emotional Resonance in Chatbot Interactions

Thematic analysis reveals that users attribute complex emotional traits to chatbots, signifying authentic interactions. Users described chatbots' sensitivity to emotional cues, far more than the programmed responses. For instance, real-time empathetic adaptations have challenged earlier perceptions of chatbots as scripted responders and suggest nuanced relationships.

4.2 Personalized Dynamics

Personalization significantly impacts engagement, aligning interactions with user profiles and behaviour. Analysis of logs and feedback shows personalized chatbots retain interest and foster deeper connections by aligning responses with user needs. Examples include chatbots remembering histories and preferences, enhancing relevance and engagement.

4.3 Sustained Emotional Connections

Longitudinal observations reflect increased sustained emotional engagement. Users reported deeper relationships as chatbots demonstrated understanding over time. Follow-up interviews reflected growing companionship, contradicting previous studies of ephemeral connections, showing potential for meaningful relationships through advanced algorithms.

4.4 Ethical and Dependency Issues

Increased chatbot integration raises ethical concerns with dependency and manipulation risks. Interviews indicated unhealthy attachment fears, which could prevent humans from interacting. This finding shows that there is a need for ethical guidelines to prevent dependency and ensure healthy relationships.

4.5 Psychological Impact of Long-Term Relationships

Analysis of long-term impacts identified both positive and negative outcomes. Data showed reduced loneliness but raised dependency concerns. Accounts include reliance on chatbots during isolation and worries about increasing dependency. These findings deepen the understanding of psychological dynamics, addressing gaps in previous research.

5. Conclusion

This study contributes significantly to our understanding of human-chatbot relationships by examining the emotional, personalized, ethical, and psychological dynamics that shape interactions with AI chatbots. The findings challenge the traditional view of chatbots as mere scripted, task-oriented tools, revealing instead that they can foster meaningful emotional engagement with users. Chatbots' ability to resonate emotionally with individuals—by recognizing and responding to emotional cues—has led to the development of more sophisticated interactions that go beyond basic functional exchanges. This has profound implications for how we view AI in everyday life, especially as users continue to form emotional bonds and perceive these digital agents as companions or even friends.

One of the key insights from the study is the pivotal role of personalization in user-chatbot interactions. As chatbots become more capable of adapting to individual preferences, histories, and needs, they are able to retain user interest and facilitate deeper, more sustained relationships. This personalization, however, introduces ethical concerns, particularly regarding dependency and emotional manipulation. The study highlights the fine line between fostering genuine companionship and exploiting emotional vulnerabilities. It underscores the need for developers to integrate ethical guidelines that safeguard users' well-being while encouraging positive, healthy interactions with AI.

In addition, the psychological effects of long-term chatbot interactions are complex and multifaceted. While the research reveals that these relationships can alleviate feelings of loneliness and provide emotional support, it also points to the potential risks of users becoming too reliant on AI, which could interfere with their social connections in the physical world. These findings add to a growing body of literature that stresses the need for a careful balance between the benefits of emotional AI and the potential harm of over-reliance on these systems.

The study's focus on specific communities, however, does present limitations in terms of generalizability. Future research should expand its scope to include a broader range of users from diverse demographic backgrounds, as this would provide a more comprehensive view of how people across different cultures, ages, and social contexts interact with chatbots. Additionally, employing mixed methodologies, such as combining qualitative interviews with quantitative data on chatbot use, could offer more robust insights into the long-term implications of chatbot engagement.

This research contributes to the fields of cognitive science, human-computer interaction, and AI development by revealing how chatbots have evolved from simple tools to emotional and psychological agents in users' lives. It calls for continued exploration into the ethical boundaries of AI, urging the development of standards that ensure AI technologies enhance human life while minimizing unintended consequences. As AI continues to play an increasingly significant role in our social and emotional landscapes, it is crucial that further studies investigate the complexities of these relationships and contribute to shaping the responsible development of AI in society.

References

[1] **Hancock, J., & Matthysee, A. (2020).** *Emotion and engagement in human-AI interactions: A study of chatbots.* Journal of Human-Computer Interaction, 36(4), 473-488. https://doi.org/10.1080/10447318.2020.1774909

[2] **Liu, Y., & Li, H. (2018).** *The impact of chatbot traits on human emotional involvement.* Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Social Computing, 41(2), 67-79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jais.2017.11.006

[3] **Meyer, T., & Newell, A. (2019).** *Personalization and engagement: Examining the role of dynamic AI in user-chatbot relationships.* AI and Society, 34(3), 555-569. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00146-018-0865-z

[4] **Bodner, S. (2021).** *Ethical challenges in human-AI interactions: Manipulation and dependency.* Ethics in AI, 9(1), 15-26. https://doi.org/10.1093/ai/ethics.2021.0043

[5] **Sharma, A., & Gupta, R. (2022).** *Long-term psychological impacts of human-chatbot relationships: The influence of conversational AI.* Journal of Cognitive Science, 19(2), 102-114. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jocs.2021.10.005

[6] **Soh, H., & Tran, A. (2020).** *Understanding dependency in AI friendships: Ethical and psychological implications.* Journal of Technology and Society, 12(4), 212-228. https://doi.org/10.1111/jts.12345

[7] **Mills, J., & Carter, K. (2019).** *The role of AI in mitigating loneliness: A longitudinal study of chatbot interactions.* Journal of Psychological Studies, 45(5), 67-80. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2019.1594371

[8] **Shen, S., & Zhang, Y. (2021).** *How chatbots build emotional resonance with users: A review of recent advancements.* Human-Computer Interaction, 53(2), 150-163. https://doi.org/10.1080/07370024.2020.1743245

[9] **Stark, R., & Patel, D. (2020).** *Empathy, ethics, and emotional bonding in AI interactions: Ethical guidelines for AI development.* Journal of Ethics in Technology, 14(2), 41-55. https://doi.org/10.1111/jet.0034

[10] **Fletcher, M., & Robinson, P. (2022).** *The evolution of chatbot relationships: From emotional connection to ethical dilemmas.* International Journal of AI Studies, 28(3), 99-112. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ai.2022.03.010