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Trust in AI-based conversational agents in the customer service - a theoretical framework

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Trust in AI-based conversational agents in the customer service - a theoretical framework

TREO Talk Paper

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Abstract

In the context of AI-based conversational agents, existing trust theories are fragmented. Researchers may get lost and feel confused in reading existing literature with diverse perspectives. Based on prior literature, there is a need to expand existing frameworks by integrating different views into one comprehensive model. In this paper, we aim to clarify all different views in trust antecedents and identify a comprehensive framework that can be generalized to various contexts. Our research question is: What factors affect the trust beliefs of users to interact with AI-based conversational agents (AICA) in customer service?

Grounded on the theory of ABI (i.e., Ability, Benevolence, Integrity) (Mayer et al. 1995) for trusting beliefs, we take unique characteristics of AI-based conversational agents for customer service into account to study trust antecedents. Specifically, we propose a theoretical framework to empirically examine the trust antecedents on trusting beliefs in AI-based conversational agents, and the impact of trusting beliefs on the trusting intentions towards AI-based conversational agents. Our proposed framework differs from previous articles in several ways: 1) We clarify definitions and categorization for trust-related concepts; 2) We incorporate existing literature in trust antecedents into a comprehensive framework; 3) We apply the comprehensive framework to the context of AI-based conversational agents in the customer service. The proposed research model is illustrated in Figure 1.
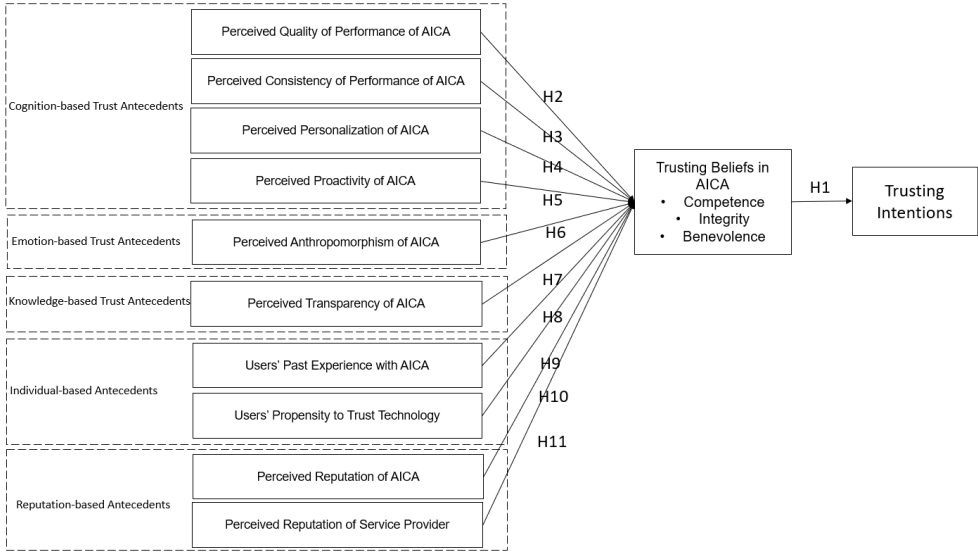
Figure 1. Research Model

References

Mayer, R.C., Davis, J.H. and Schoorman, F.D., 1995. An integrative model of organizational trust. Academy of management review, 20(3), pp.709-734.