



Research Paper

Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Customer Service by Selected BA Comm Graduates and Companies

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Communication

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ABSTRACT :

This study entitled “Utilization of Artificial Intelligence in Customer Service by Selected BA Comm Graduates and Companies” which was focused on the selected BA Comm graduates from the Academic Year 2018 to 2023 and two prominent BPO companies Global Payments Process Centre and Sutherland Philippines. The study employed a qualitative research design, the researcher utilized semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions to gather insights from the participants.

The primary goal was to understand AI utilization and effectiveness in the context of customer service guided by the objectives of the study which is following: (1) to analyze utilization of AI in customer service, (2) to know the level of effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence in Customer Service in terms of: (2.1) Cost, (2.2) Problem-solving, (2.3) Responsiveness, (3) To understand the relationship of Human-AI in customer service. (4) To provide an excerpt study for Laguna University and companies that will serve as a basis for an understanding of the evolving dynamics between human and artificial intelligence.

Drawing on the experiences of BA Comm graduates who have entered the workforce during the specified timeframe. Additionally, the study involved the perspective of company, represented by Global Payments Process Centre and Sutherland Philippines, as secondary participants offering valuable insights into the evolving landscape of customer service in the age of AI. The study revealed that artificial intelligence was effective, there were areas for improvement, including empathy, handling complex questions, and security. On the other hand, AI cannot replace human but may lead to job reductions. Furthermore, this indicates the importance of a collaborative approach between AI and human workers in workforce. Additionally, BA Comm graduates needed to be adaptable and technologically literate to stay competitive in the evolving job market.

The findings of this study contributed to the growing body of knowledge surrounding the intersection of communication, skills and emerging technologies, on the implications of AI on customer service and informing potential areas for improvement and development.

KEYWORDS: Artificial Intelligence, Customer Service, BA Comm graduates, Chatbot, Automated System

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are major widespread concern today about artificial intelligence technologies. In recent years, the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has revolutionized numerous industries, including customer services. AI technologies, such as chatbots, virtual assistants, and automated systems, have been increasingly

adopted by organizations to enhance customer experiences and streamline operations. AI technology presents major challenges to workforce stability and raises numerous concerns over possible job displacement in multiple sectors. By 2030, up to eight hundred million occupations might disappear due to automation alone based on McKinsey & Company (2021).

There are 61% of customer service professionals said representatives will use AI/automation by 2024 (Nicholson,2023). Vinnie Schneider, director of brand strategy and lead generation at Dovetail, stated that, "When it comes to AI, something like an AI chatbot can be useful as a first touch with customers to help direct them to an actual human more quickly.". According to Pew Research, about half 48% of experts surveyed felt that robots and digital agents will displace a significant number of blue- and white-collar jobs. Their concern is that this will increase income inequality and create a mass of virtually unemployable people. The other half 52% expect robotics and AI to create more jobs than they take.

Nevertheless, due to the digitalization, AI technology was designed according to the study of Kumar (2020), he discussed AI machines and systems capable of performing tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as data analysis, decision making, and natural language processing. He also highlighted in this study that this significantly poses and challenges the human skills in the labor market in being able to cope with this 21st century advancement and demands in job requirements (Kumar, 2022).

Therefore, learning and exploring this for the expansion of utilization of AI from the evolving landscape and job demand skills to guide nor prepare the Bachelor of Arts in Communication student working with AI. Additionally, communication is more than just words. It is the ability to use verbal and non-verbal cues, such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, to engage with customers in a professional manner. To be successful in customer service, it is important to have a thorough understanding and mastery of different communication techniques (Chechi, 2023).

II. MATERIAL AND METHOD(S)

This research adopted a qualitative approach to explored the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) on customer service positions and the consequent effects on individuals with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from Laguna University. The research utilized thematic analysis to examined the interview data, an approach well-suited for detecting and interpreting patterns and themes within varied qualitative data sets. Inductive coding applied during the analysis to let themes naturally surface from the data, free from the constraints of any pre-defined frameworks or theoretical constructs.

This research conducted among former BA Comm students of Laguna University (LU) who attended during the academic years 2018 to 2023. LU, situated within the Laguna Sports Complex, formerly known as RECS Village in Barangay Bubukal, Santa Cruz, Laguna. Additionally, for the secondary participant which is BPO company of Global Payments Process Centre and Sutherland Philippines that was utilizing AI located at Metro Manila.

The participants of the study involved two main groups, BA Communication graduates from academic year 2018-2023. Specifically, those currently employed or with experience in customer service roles. The graduating classes for each academic year are as follows: 32 graduates in 2018-2019, 34 graduates in 2019-2020, 45 graduates in 2021-2022, and a total of 70 graduates in 2022-2023. Secondary participant, from two companies utilizing Artificial Intelligence in customer service. Purposive sampling was employed, allowing the researchers to intentionally select participants based on specific criteria aligned with research objectives. This ensured that participants with relevant experiences and perspectives were included, facilitating a focused and comprehensive exploration of the research topic.

The researchers employed a semi-structured interview guide containing seven open-ended questions. This guided consist of two sets, each designed for a different interview format. The first set and second set of questions administered online, utilizing the Google Meet platform. The data-gathering process involved a list of potential participants that will be obtained by focusing on BA Communication graduates. Invitations are extended, elucidating the research purpose and seeking participation which are conducted one-on-one to facilitate candid responses, an audio recorder is employed with the participants' consent. Subsequently, the recorded interviews are transcribed verbatim, utilizing reliable transcription tools or services to maintained

accuracy. Throughout the entire procedure, strict adherence to ethical considerations is maintained, upholding participant confidentiality and research integrity. The recorded interviews with employers are transcribed, allows for a comprehensive understanding of their perspectives.

Table 1. Thematic of Data (Primary Participant)

Objectives	Data	Treatment
1.To analyze utilization of AI in customer service	1. How would you define artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of customer service? 2. In your opinion, what are the main benefits of using AI in customer service? 3. In your opinion is there any potential challenges or drawbacks of implementing AI in customer service? 4. Have you worked in a customer service role where AI technologies, such as chatbots or virtual assistants, were utilized? Yes/No?	Thematic Analysis
3.To understand the relationship of Human-AI in customer service.	4.1. If yes, please describe your experience working with AI in customer service. What tasks or responsibilities did AI assist with? 4.1.1 How did it impact your workflow and interactions with customers? 5. In your experience, what are the advantages and disadvantages of human interaction compared to AI interaction in customer service?	Thematic Analysis
4.To provide an excerpt study for Laguna University and companies that will serve as a basis for understanding of the evolving dynamics between human and artificial intelligence.	6. What skills or qualities do you believe BA Comm graduates should possess to effectively work alongside AI technologies in customer service roles? 7. How do you foresee the role of customer service evolving with the continued advancement of AI technologies? 7.1 What changes do you anticipate in terms of job required skills in the future?	Thematic Analysis

Table 2. Thematic of Data (Primary Participant)

Objectives	Data	Treatment
1.To analyze utilization of AI in customer service	1. As a decision-maker in the company, what factors influenced the choice to implement AI in customer service? 3. What are the function of using AI in customer service? 4. How responsive is AI in customer service, and what impact does it have on overall effectiveness?	Thematic Analysis
2.To know the level of effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence in Customer Service in terms of: a. Cost b. Problem-solving c. Responsiveness	2.How would you assess the cost-effectiveness of implementing AI in customer service, and what factors contribute to the company? 6. How do you assess the effectiveness of AI and Human in customer service, specifically in terms of its ability to demonstrate solve problems, and respond to customer inquiries?	Thematic Analysis
3.To understand the relationship of Human-AI in customer service.	How do you perceive the collaboration between Human and AI in customer service interactions?	Thematic Analysis
4.To provide an excerpt study for Laguna University and companies that will serve as a basis for understanding of the evolving dynamics between human and artificial intelligence.	7. Are you planning to continue using Artificial Intelligence in the future? 7.1 if yes, are you going to upgrade or enhance its function? 7.2 if no, are planning to replace it with the real agent?	Thematic Analysis

III. RESULT

This presented the analysis and discussion of the results. Using thematic analysis guided by the objectives, the themes in primary participants

Table 1. Thematic Analysis (Primary Participants)

OBJECTIVES	QUESTIONS	THEMES
To analyze utilization of AI in customer service	1. How would you define artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of customer service?	Themes: -Conveniences and efficiency Sub-themes: - Make Process easier.
	2. In your opinion, what are the main benefits of using AI in customer service?	Themes: Operational Efficiency and Service Enhancement Sub-themes: -Efficient Issue Resolution
	3. In your opinion, are there any potential challenges or drawbacks of implementing AI in customer service?	Themes: Limitations of AI in Customer Service Sub-themes: -Lack of Emotion and Empathy -Job loss -Overreliance on AI
To understand the relationship of Human-Ai in customer service.	4. Have you worked in a customer service role where AI technologies, such as chatbots or virtual assistants, were utilized? Yes/No? 4.1. If yes, please describe your experience working with AI in customer service. What tasks or responsibilities did AI assist with?	Theme: AI Assistance in Customer Service Tasks Sub-themes: - Task Efficiency and Management - Customer Engagement and Interaction - Enhanced Customer Experience - Operational Efficiency and Workforce Optimization
	4.1.1 How did it impact your workflow and interactions with customers?	Theme: Perspectives on the Impact of AI in Customer Service Sub-themes: - Positive Impact and Benefits of AI - Challenges and Limitations of AI - Balancing AI and Human Interaction - Long-Term Sustainability and Success
	5. In your experience, what are the advantages and disadvantages of human interaction compared to AI interaction in customer service?	Theme: Human and AI Interaction in Customer Service Sub-themes: - Advantages of AI in work reduction. - overreliance in AI -Security concern
	6. What skills or qualities do you believe BA Comm graduates should possess to effectively work alongside AI technologies in customer service roles?	Theme: Skills and Qualities for BA Communication (Comm) Graduates in Customer Service Roles alongside AI Sub-themes: - Adaptability and Openness to Change - Human Connection and Empathy - Communication Skills - Technological Literacy and Familiarity with AI - Multidimensional Skillset
To provide an excerpt study for Laguna University and companies that will serve as a basis for understanding of the evolving dynamics between human and artificial intelligence	7. How do you foresee the role of customer service evolving with the continued advancement of AI technologies?	Theme: Customer Service with AI Technologies Sub-themes: - Benefits of AI efficiency - Improve customer services -Job reductions/Job displacement

Table 2. Thematic Analysis (Secondary Participant)

OBJECTIVES	QUESTIONS	THEMES
To analyze utilization of AI in customer service	1. As a decision-maker in the company, what factors influenced the choice to implement AI in customer service?	Themes: Efficiency and Convenience -Fast response
To know the level of effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence in Customer Service in terms of: 2.1 Cost 2.2 Problem-solving 2.3 Responsiveness	2. How would you assess the effectiveness of implementing AI in customer service, and what factors contribute to the company? To the following: 2.1 Cost 2.2 Problem solving 2.3 Responsiveness	Themes: Implementing AI Sub-themes: -Profit cost -Deep research -Common question -Quick response
	3. What are the function of using of AI in customer service?	Themes: AI fast service -fast and consistent support
	4. How responsive is AI in customer service, and what impact does it have on overall effectiveness?	Themes: Time reduces Sub-themes: -Waiting time of customer -Fast replies in inquires
To understand the relationship of Human-AI in customer service.	5. How do you perceive the collaboration between Human and AI in customer service interactions?	Themes: Workforce efficiency -Workflow collaboration -AI limitation
	6. How do you assess the effectiveness of AI and Human in customer service, specifically in terms of its ability to demonstrate solve problems, and respond to customer inquiries?	Theme: Effect of AI -Job loss/Job reductions -Complex level inquires
4. To provide an excerpt study for Laguna University and companies that will serve as a basis for understanding of the evolving dynamics between human and artificial intelligence.	7. Are you planning to continue using Artificial Intelligence in the future? 7.1 if yes, are you going to upgrade or enhance its function? 7.2 if no, are planning to replace it with the real agent?	Themes: Adaptation technology -Improve service -Enhancing data security

IV. DISCUSSION

The study revealed the effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence in work environment as it helped companies to lessen workloads and as the study gathered the secondary participants data it showed that implementation of AI technology enhances efficiency and convenience by providing fast services, reducing time, and improving workforce efficiency, while also necessitating adaptation to the effects of AI and embracing technological advancements. However, it's also revealed the drawback of AI as it can affect to job reductions in customer service, artificial intelligence in customer service as a tool that speeds up tasks and reduces workloads.

Furthermore, due to technological advancement many companies have been adapting AI including (1) chatbot (2) Automated system and (3) non-voice representative, that has been developed in different sectors of industries. This study also showed BA Communication graduates possessing skills in using AI and adapting to emerging technologies. As the result shown good relationship collaboration between humans and AI is important for effective task completion in customer service roles.

As the researcher delved deeper in the study highlighted based on the gathered data that BA Comm graduates needed to be technological literate to maintain competitiveness in the workforce industries especially in the evolving technological advancement.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The AI utilization in customer service among BA Communication graduates, revealed varied viewpoints on its role, functional advantages, concerned about errors and job security, and its widespread integration in professional settings. Additionally, companies emphasize AI's versatile role in improving efficiency and delivering consistent support independently of agents.
2. AI effectiveness in customer service coming from the secondary participants acknowledged the potential long-termed usability and profitability. They highlighted its problem-solving capabilities grounded in data, along with its quick responsiveness, while also recognizing AI as a collaborative support tool. These insights assist companies in comprehending its role in enhancing efficiency in workplace.
3. The gathered responses highlighted the importance of integrating human analysis with AI support to streamline processes, acknowledging AI's efficiency impact while also addressing concerns like over-reliance and privacy issues. This comprehensive understanding aided BA Communication graduates in navigating the evolving dynamics of Human-AI interaction in customer service.

Furthermore, companies revealed a collaborative relationship between humans and AI in customer service, emphasizing the potential for outstanding customer experiences through their combined efforts.

4. The main findings from primary participants underscore the importance of adaptability in the AI landscape, AI's role in communication, and the significance of human qualities in customer service. Important skills included technical proficiency, adaptability, continuous learning, ethics, empathy, and problem-solving.

Additionally, AI's continuous usage by secondary participants highlighted the adoption of technological advancements for the benefit of customers. These insights established a fundamental comprehension of the evolving interaction between humans and AI in communication, while also providing guidance for stakeholders' decision-making processes.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on conclusions drawn from the findings, the recommendations of the study were as follows:

1. The Department of Communication may want to consider organizing seminars for BA Communication students to improve their understanding about Artificial Intelligence and BPO customer service communication.
2. The BA Communication Program may offer experiential learning opportunities through internships, practicums, or projects with industry partners to cultivate practical skills and real-world insights for students.
3. Laguna University Management Information System (MIS) could integrate an artificial intelligence chatbot on Laguna University's webpage for easy response to student inquiries.
4. Students of Laguna University shall familiarize themselves with Artificial Intelligence technology to remain competitive and knowledgeable in technological development.
5. Future researchers interested in similar studies within a university context, focusing on the efficacy of AI for academic purposes at Laguna University, are encouraged to explore the implementation and impact of AI-driven initiatives.

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