

The Digital Facet of Psychology: Current Debates on The Use of Technology in Psychological Treatment

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Abstract

With the advances in psychiatric treatments and developments in psychopharmacology in the last century, it seems inevitable that psychiatric practice in the future will probably be affected by new trends based on computerized approaches and digital communication. The advancement of AI technologies and their application in psychological practice has important implications that can be expected to transform the field of mental health care. The promises of this paradigm shift for the future, its practical benefits and possible ethical problems are examined within the framework of the literature. For this purpose, firstly, it will be mentioned how smartphones, digital traces, social media, artificial intelligence and virtual reality offer new opportunities for intervention. Secondly, it will be reviewed the available evidence on the current applications of these new technological approaches in clinical psychology practice, focusing on their use in various psychological problems. As psychologists and other mental health professionals have an important role in the development, evaluation and ethical use of artificial intelligence technologies, possible practical, legal and ethical problems that may arise regarding the use of digital practices in mental health services will be discussed. The literature review concludes that smartphones, artificial intelligence, social media and virtual reality are already changing mental health care in unforeseen and exciting ways. Consequently, the literature review seems to point to the need for further efforts to strengthen existing technological practices.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, digitalization, digital trace, ethical issues, treatment