

Can AI be an ally against immoral behavior and general incivility?

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Abstract

With the increasing interactions between humans and machines, Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems are expanding their roles beyond passive tools to more active participants in human interactions, addressing inappropriate behaviors in diverse contexts. This paper examines how the source of confrontation (AI versus human) and participant roles (perpetrator versus observer) influence perceptions of moral agency and message appropriateness. Through three experimental studies across distinct contexts (e.g., work performance and service failure scenarios), our findings indicate that feedback from AI is viewed as less morally grounded, leading to lower perceptions of moral agency and, thus, appropriateness. Participants in the observer role showed less sensitivity to the feedback source than perpetrators, particularly when confronted by AI. Finally, this study bridges the fields of moral psychology, consumer behavior, and human-AI interaction, providing a comprehensive perspective on AI's evolving role in managing social and behavioral evaluations.

Keywords: Human-AI Interaction; Moral Agency; Confrontation Perception.

Track: Consumer behavior