

New study shows trust levels in artificial intelligence predicted, boosted by people's relationship style

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How likely you are to trust a self-driving car or advice from Siri?

A University of Kansas interdisciplinary team led by relationship psychologist Omri Gillath has published a new paper in the journal *Computers in Human Behavior* showing people's [trust](#) in [artificial intelligence](#) (AI) is tied to their relationship or [attachment style](#).

The research indicates for the first time that people who are anxious about their relationships with humans tend to have less trust in AI as well. Importantly, the research also suggests trust in artificial intelligence can be increased by reminding people of their secure relationships with other humans.

Grand View Research estimated the global artificial-intelligence market at \$39.9 billion in 2019, projected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 42.2% from 2020 to 2027. However, lack of trust remains a key obstacle to adopting new artificial intelligence technologies.

The new research by Gillath and colleagues suggests new ways to boost trust in artificial intelligence.

In three studies, attachment style, thought to play a central role in romantic and [parent-child relationships](#), was shown also to affect people's trust in artificial intelligence. Some of the research's key findings:

- People's attachment anxiety predicts less trust in artificial intelligence.
- Enhancing attachment anxiety reduced trust in artificial intelligence.
- Conversely, enhancing attachment security increases trust in artificial intelligence.
- These effects are unique to attachment security and were not found with exposure to positive affect cues.

"Most research on trust in artificial intelligence focuses on cognitive ways to boost trust. Here we took a different approach by focusing on a 'relational affective' route to boost trust, seeing AI as a partner or a team member rather than a device," said Gillath, professor of psychology at KU. "Finding associations between one's attachment style—an individual difference representing the way people feel, think and behave in close relationships—and her trust in AI paves the way to new understandings and potentially new interventions to induce trust."

The research team includes investigators from a wide array of disciplines, including psychology, engineering, business and medicine. This interdisciplinary approach provides a new perspective on artificial [intelligence](#), trust and associations with relational and affective factors.

"The findings show you can predict and increase

people's trust levels in non-humans based on their early relationships with humans," Gillath said. "This has the potential to improve adoption of new technologies and the integration of AI in the workplace."

More information: Omri Gillath et al. Attachment and Trust in Artificial Intelligence, *Computers in Human Behavior* (2020). DOI: [10.1016/j.chb.2020.106607](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106607)

Provided by University of Kansas

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