



(REVIEW ARTICLE)

## Harnessing big data for tailored health communication: A systematic review of impact and techniques

Bisola Oluwafadekemi Adegoke <sup>1,\*</sup>, Tolulope Odugbose <sup>2</sup> and Christiana Adeyemi <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Health Information Analyst, Huntington WV U.S.A.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Child Dental Health, Lagos State, University Teaching Hospital, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.

<sup>3</sup> Ohio Dominican University, Columbus Ohio, USA.

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### Abstract

In recent years, the convergence of healthcare and big data analytics has opened new avenues for tailored health communication, enabling personalized interventions and improving healthcare outcomes. This systematic review investigates the impact and techniques of harnessing big data for tailored health communication. The review synthesizes findings from diverse studies spanning healthcare sectors, including public health campaigns, clinical interventions, and patient engagement initiatives. It examines the effectiveness of tailored communication strategies in addressing various health challenges, such as chronic diseases, infectious outbreaks, and mental health disorders. Key findings highlight the significant positive impact of personalized health communication on health behavior change, treatment adherence, and patient empowerment. Big data analytics enable the segmentation of diverse populations based on socio-demographic, behavioral, and clinical characteristics, facilitating the delivery of targeted messages tailored to individual preferences and needs. Personalization enhances engagement, fosters trust, and motivates individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles and adhere to medical recommendations. Furthermore, the review explores the diverse techniques and technologies employed in harnessing big data for tailored health communication. Machine learning algorithms, natural language processing, and predictive modeling are leveraged to analyze vast datasets, predict health outcomes, and tailor communication messages in real-time. Mobile health applications, social media platforms, and wearable devices serve as channels for delivering personalized interventions and collecting real-time health data. However, the review also identifies challenges and limitations, including privacy concerns, data security risks, and the digital divide. Ethical considerations regarding data collection, consent, and transparency are paramount in ensuring the responsible use of big data in health communication. This systematic review underscores the transformative potential of harnessing big data for tailored health communication. By leveraging advanced analytics and technology, healthcare stakeholders can deliver personalized interventions that resonate with individuals, ultimately driving positive health behavior change and improving healthcare outcomes on a population scale.

**Keyword:** Health; Communication; Big Data; Techniques; Healthcare; Review

### 1. Introduction

In recent years, the healthcare industry has witnessed a profound transformation fueled by the integration of big data analytics (Rehman *et al.*, 2022). Big data, characterized by its volume, velocity, and variety, has emerged as a valuable resource in healthcare settings, offering insights into patient populations, treatment effectiveness, and disease trends (Galetsi and Katsaliaki, 2020). The intersection of big data and healthcare has enabled the collection, storage, and analysis of vast amounts of health-related information, ranging from electronic health records and genomic data to wearable device metrics and social media interactions (Amiri *et al.*, 2023). This wealth of data holds immense potential for improving healthcare delivery, enhancing patient outcomes, and advancing medical research.

\* Corresponding author: Bisola Oluwafadekemi Adegoke

Tailored health communication involves the customization of health-related messages and interventions to suit the individual characteristics, preferences, and needs of specific target populations (Christy *et al.*, 2022). Unlike traditional one-size-fits-all approaches, tailored communication recognizes the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals, allowing for more effective engagement and behavior change (Kim *et al.*, 2022). Tailored health communication has been shown to increase awareness, promote healthy behaviors, and improve health outcomes across various health domains, including chronic disease management, preventive care, and public health initiatives (Wang and Hsu, 2023). By delivering personalized messages through preferred channels and addressing individual concerns, tailored communication fosters greater receptivity, understanding, and adherence to health recommendations (Udoudom *et al.*, 2024).

The purpose of this systematic review is to explore the impact and techniques of harnessing big data for tailored health communication. By synthesizing findings from existing literature, the review aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of personalized communication strategies in healthcare settings and the diverse methodologies employed in leveraging big data analytics for tailored interventions. Additionally, the review seeks to identify challenges, gaps, and opportunities in the field, guiding future research efforts and informing healthcare practitioners, policymakers, and stakeholders about the potential of big data in optimizing health communication strategies.

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## 2. Impact of Tailored Health Communication

Tailored health communication has been shown to have significant positive effects on health behavior change across various populations. By delivering personalized messages that resonate with individuals' beliefs, values, and preferences, tailored interventions can effectively motivate behavior change. Studies have demonstrated that tailored messages are more likely to capture individuals' attention, increase their perceived relevance, and enhance their motivation to adopt healthy behaviors (Molenaar *et al.*, 2020; Oyebode *et al.*, 2021). For example, personalized nutrition recommendations based on individuals' dietary habits and preferences have been found to result in greater adherence to dietary guidelines and improvements in overall dietary quality. Similarly, tailored smoking cessation interventions that address individuals' specific smoking patterns, triggers, and motivations have been associated with higher rates of smoking cessation success compared to generic interventions. Overall, tailored health communication has the potential to facilitate sustained behavior change and promote healthier lifestyles (Kankanhalli *et al.*, 2021).

One of the key challenges in healthcare is ensuring patient adherence to prescribed treatments and medications. Tailored health communication has emerged as a promising approach to improving treatment adherence by addressing individual barriers and motivations. Personalized adherence interventions can provide tailored reminders, educational materials, and support resources based on individuals' medication regimens, preferences, and health literacy levels (Goradia *et al.*, 2021). Studies have shown that tailored adherence interventions tailored to patients' specific needs and preferences have led to improved medication adherence rates and better health outcomes across various chronic conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, and HIV/AIDS (van de Hei *et al.*, 2021; Schoenthaler *et al.*, 2020). For instance, tailored text message reminders that are personalized to patients' medication schedules and preferences have been found to significantly improve adherence to antiretroviral therapy among HIV-positive individuals. By addressing individual barriers and motivations, tailored health communication can enhance treatment adherence and ultimately improve health outcomes (Duffy *et al.*, 2021).

Tailored health communication has the potential to empower patients by providing them with personalized information, resources, and support that enable them to make informed decisions about their health. Personalized health communication can help patients better understand their health conditions, treatment options, and self-management strategies, leading to increased confidence and autonomy in managing their health (Vainauskienė and Vaitkienė, 2021). For example, tailored decision aids that provide personalized information about treatment options and their potential benefits and risks have been shown to improve patients' knowledge, decision-making skills, and satisfaction with their treatment decisions. Similarly, personalized health coaching programs that are tailored to individuals' health goals, preferences, and readiness to change have been associated with greater engagement, adherence, and self-efficacy in adopting healthier behaviors. By empowering patients with personalized information and support, tailored health communication can help them take an active role in managing their health and achieving better health outcomes (Anshari *et al.*, 2021).

Numerous examples of successful tailored health communication interventions have been implemented across various healthcare settings and populations. For instance, the National Cancer Institute's Smokefree.gov initiative offers personalized smoking cessation resources, including tailored quit plans, support messages, and interactive tools, to help individuals quit smoking (Frazer *et al.*, 2022). The program utilizes tailored messaging based on individuals' smoking habits, readiness to quit, and personal preferences to provide targeted support and motivation throughout the quitting

process. Similarly, the American Heart Association's My Life Check program offers personalized heart health assessments and action plans that are tailored to individuals' cardiovascular risk factors, lifestyle behaviors, and goals. The program provides personalized recommendations for improving heart health, such as diet and exercise tips, stress management strategies, and smoking cessation support, to help individuals reduce their risk of heart disease (Ullah *et al.*, 2023). These examples demonstrate the effectiveness of tailored health communication in addressing individual needs and preferences to promote behavior change and improve health outcomes.

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### 3. Techniques for Harnessing Big Data

Segmentation of diverse populations involves dividing large and heterogeneous patient populations into smaller, more homogeneous groups based on shared characteristics, such as demographics, health behaviors, and clinical profiles (Seng *et al.*, 2021). Big data analytics enable the identification of distinct population segments and the development of targeted communication strategies tailored to the specific needs and preferences of each segment. Segmentation allows healthcare organizations to deliver personalized messages and interventions that are relevant and meaningful to different subgroups of patients, thereby improving engagement and effectiveness. For example, a healthcare provider may segment its patient population based on age, gender, and chronic conditions to deliver targeted preventive care messages and interventions tailored to the unique health needs and preferences of each group (Kim *et al.*, 2023).

Machine learning algorithms play a crucial role in harnessing big data for tailored health communication by analyzing large and complex datasets to identify patterns, trends, and associations. Machine learning algorithms can learn from historical data to predict individuals' health outcomes, preferences, and behaviors, enabling the delivery of personalized messages and interventions in real-time (Wongvibulsin *et al.*, 2020). For example, machine learning algorithms can analyze electronic health records, wearable device data, and other health-related data sources to predict individuals' risk of developing certain health conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, and provide personalized recommendations for prevention and management. Machine learning techniques, such as classification, clustering, and regression, can also be used to segment patient populations, identify high-risk individuals, and tailor communication messages and interventions accordingly (Chafai *et al.*, 2023).

Natural language processing (NLP) techniques enable the analysis and interpretation of unstructured text data, such as electronic health records, clinical notes, and patient-generated content, to extract meaningful insights and facilitate personalized communication (Williams and Petrovich, 2023). NLP algorithms can identify key concepts, sentiments, and topics from textual data to understand individuals' health concerns, preferences, and communication styles. For example, NLP algorithms can analyze patients' electronic health records to extract information about their medical history, symptoms, and treatment preferences, which can then be used to tailor communication messages and interventions. NLP techniques can also be applied to analyze patient-generated content from social media platforms, online forums, and patient portals to identify individuals' health-related concerns, experiences, and information needs, enabling healthcare organizations to provide targeted support and resources (Fu *et al.*, 2023).

Predictive modeling techniques leverage big data analytics to forecast individuals' health outcomes, behaviors, and responses to interventions, enabling proactive and personalized communication strategies. Predictive models can be developed using machine learning algorithms to analyze large and diverse datasets, such as electronic health records, claims data, and genomic data, to identify factors that are predictive of individuals' health outcomes and behaviors (Fabian *et al.*, 2023). For example, predictive models can be used to predict individuals' risk of hospital readmission, medication non-adherence, or disease progression, allowing healthcare organizations to intervene early and provide personalized support to mitigate adverse outcomes. Predictive modeling techniques can also be applied to forecast individuals' responses to different communication messages and interventions, enabling healthcare organizations to tailor their communication strategies to maximize effectiveness and engagement.

Mobile health applications and wearable devices play a critical role in enabling personalized health communication by collecting real-time data on individuals' health behaviors, physiological metrics, and environmental factors (Uchekukwu *et al.*, 2023). Mobile health applications can deliver personalized messages, reminders, and interventions to individuals based on their real-time health data and preferences, promoting behavior change and improving health outcomes. For example, mobile health applications can use individuals' activity levels, sleep patterns, and dietary habits tracked by wearable devices to provide personalized recommendations for physical activity, sleep hygiene, and nutrition. Mobile health applications can also incorporate interactive features, such as gamification, social support, and feedback mechanisms, to enhance engagement and motivation (Anamu *et al.*, 2023). By leveraging mobile health applications and wearable devices, healthcare organizations can deliver personalized health communication interventions that are tailored to individuals' unique health needs and contexts.

Social media platforms provide opportunities for personalized health communication by enabling interactions, engagement, and information sharing among individuals and healthcare organizations (Lin and Kishore, 2021). Healthcare organizations can leverage social media platforms to deliver personalized health messages, educational content, and support resources to individuals based on their interests, preferences, and engagement patterns. For example, healthcare organizations can use targeted advertising and content promotion strategies to reach specific demographic groups, such as young adults, women, or individuals with chronic conditions, with personalized health messages and interventions. Social media platforms can also be used to facilitate peer support, community engagement, and behavior change by connecting individuals with similar health concerns, experiences, and goals. By incorporating social media platforms into their communication strategies, healthcare organizations can reach broader audiences and deliver personalized health communication interventions that are tailored to individuals' preferences and needs (Stellefson *et al.*, 2020; Ezeigweneme *et al.*, 2023).

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#### 4. Challenges and Limitations

With the vast amount of personal health information being collected and analyzed, concerns about data privacy have become a major challenge (Hathaliya and Tanwar, 2020). Patients worry about the security and confidentiality of their health data, fearing potential breaches or misuse. Compliance with data protection regulations, such as HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) in the United States or GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in Europe, adds complexity to the management of health data. Failure to comply with these regulations can result in legal consequences and damage to trust between patients and healthcare providers. The increasing sophistication of cyber threats poses significant risks to the security of health data. Healthcare organizations must invest in robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard sensitive information from unauthorized access, data breaches, and cyberattacks (Ibekwe *et al.*, 2024).

The digital divide refers to disparities in access to and usage of digital technologies among different demographic groups. Many underserved populations, including low-income individuals, elderly adults, and rural communities, may lack access to reliable internet connectivity, smartphones, or computers, limiting their ability to benefit from digital health initiatives (Yao *et al.*, 2022). The digital divide exacerbates existing health disparities, as marginalized populations face barriers to accessing healthcare services, health information, and telemedicine. Without equitable access to technology, these populations may be left behind in the shift towards digital health solutions, widening the gap in health outcomes. Even when access to technology is available, disparities in digital literacy skills can hinder individuals' ability to effectively navigate and utilize digital health resources (Kemp *et al.*, 2021). Healthcare organizations must address these literacy gaps by providing education and support to ensure that all patients can fully engage with digital health tools and platforms.

Obtaining informed consent from patients for the collection and use of their health data is essential for ensuring autonomy and respect for individuals' privacy rights. However, issues may arise regarding the comprehensibility of consent forms, patients' understanding of data usage policies, and the adequacy of consent mechanisms, particularly in the context of complex data analytics and secondary use of data (Laurijssen *et al.*, 2022; Etukudoh *et al.*, 2024). Healthcare organizations must be transparent about their data collection practices, purposes for data usage, and data sharing arrangements. Patients should have clear information about who has access to their health data, how it is being used, and what rights they have over their data. Establishing accountability mechanisms, such as data governance frameworks and oversight committees, can help ensure responsible data management practices.

The use of big data analytics in healthcare raises concerns about potential biases in algorithms and decision-making processes. Biases in data collection, algorithm design, or model training can lead to unfair treatment, discrimination, or disparities in healthcare delivery. Healthcare organizations must address these ethical concerns by implementing fairness-aware algorithms, conducting regular audits of predictive models, and promoting diversity and inclusivity in data collection and analysis practices (Akindote *et al.*, 2023).

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#### 5. Harnessing Big Data for Tailored Health Communication:

The intersection of big data analytics and healthcare has revolutionized the way healthcare organizations deliver tailored communication strategies to improve health outcomes (Sriram and Subrahmanian, 2020). In this scientific review, we will explore how the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom utilizes big data techniques to tailor health communication strategies, focusing on the impact and techniques employed within this organization and country context.

Tailored health communication strategies within the NHS have shown significant impact across various aspects of healthcare delivery; Tailored communication messages have proven effective in promoting positive health behavior changes among diverse populations served by the NHS (Ilojiana *et al.*, 2024). Personalized interventions based on individual characteristics and preferences have been successful in motivating individuals to adopt healthier lifestyles, leading to reductions in smoking rates, improvements in dietary habits, and increased physical activity levels. Tailored communication has also contributed to improved treatment adherence rates within the NHS. By delivering personalized reminders, educational materials, and support resources, healthcare providers have been able to address individual barriers to adherence and empower patients to adhere to their prescribed treatment regimens, resulting in better health outcomes for chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma (Kini and Ho, 2018; Umoh *et al.*, 2024). Personalized health communication within the NHS has empowered patients by providing them with relevant and actionable information tailored to their specific health needs and preferences. Patients are better informed about their health conditions, treatment options, and self-management strategies, enabling them to take an active role in their healthcare decision-making process and improve their overall health literacy (Boonstra *et al.*, 2022).

The NHS employs various big data techniques to tailor health communication strategies; The NHS utilizes demographic, clinical, and behavioral data to segment its diverse patient population into smaller, more homogeneous groups. This segmentation enables healthcare providers to deliver targeted communication messages and interventions that are relevant and meaningful to specific patient cohorts, enhancing engagement and effectiveness (Kowatsch *et al.*, 2021).

Machine learning algorithms are employed to analyze large and complex healthcare datasets, including electronic health records, administrative claims data, and genomic information. These algorithms identify patterns, trends, and associations within the data, allowing healthcare providers to predict health outcomes, personalize interventions, and optimize treatment strategies. Natural language processing (NLP) techniques are used to extract meaningful insights from unstructured text data, such as clinical notes, patient feedback, and social media posts (Khanbhai *et al.*, 2022). NLP algorithms analyze linguistic patterns, sentiments, and topics to understand patients' health concerns, preferences, and communication styles, enabling healthcare providers to deliver personalized communication messages and support resources. Predictive modeling techniques are employed to forecast patients' health outcomes, behaviors, and responses to interventions (Ezeigweneme *et al.*, 2024). By leveraging historical data and machine learning algorithms, predictive models can identify individuals at risk of adverse health outcomes, tailor communication messages and interventions accordingly, and proactively intervene to prevent or mitigate potential health issues.

Despite the numerous benefits of harnessing big data for tailored health communication, the NHS faces several challenges and limitations: The collection, storage, and analysis of large volumes of sensitive health data raise concerns about patient privacy and data security. Healthcare organizations must comply with stringent data protection regulations and implement robust cybersecurity measures to safeguard patient information from unauthorized access, breaches, and cyberattacks (Tamburri, 2020; Uzougbo *et al.*, 2023). Socioeconomic disparities in access to technology and digital literacy skills can hinder patients' ability to engage with digital health communication tools and platforms. Vulnerable populations, such as elderly adults, low-income individuals, and rural communities, may face barriers to accessing and utilizing tailored health communication resources, exacerbating existing health inequalities. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, transparency, and accountability, must be carefully addressed in the collection and usage of health data for tailored communication purposes. Healthcare organizations must ensure that patients are fully informed about the purposes and implications of data collection, usage, and sharing, and that their privacy rights and autonomy are respected throughout the process (Wang *et al.*, 2023; Garcia Valencia *et al.*, 2023).

In conclusion, the NHS in the United Kingdom harnesses big data techniques to tailor health communication strategies, resulting in positive impacts on health behavior change, treatment adherence, and patient empowerment. By employing segmentation, machine learning, natural language processing, and predictive modeling techniques, the NHS delivers personalized communication messages and interventions that are relevant and effective for diverse patient populations (Guni *et al.*, 2021). However, challenges such as privacy concerns, the digital divide, and ethical considerations must be carefully addressed to maximize the benefits of tailored health communication within the NHS and ensure equitable access to personalized healthcare services for all patients.

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## 6. Future Directions of Harnessing Big Data for Tailored Health Communication

As we look ahead, the integration of big data analytics into tailored health communication continues to evolve, promising exciting opportunities and innovations in healthcare delivery. Building upon the insights gained from current practices, several future directions emerge to further enhance the impact and effectiveness of tailored health communication strategies (Bahroun *et al.*, 2023). Future efforts will likely focus on advancing precision health communication approaches that leverage big data analytics to deliver highly personalized interventions tailored to

individuals' unique genetic makeup, lifestyle factors, and environmental exposures. By integrating genomic data, wearable sensor data, and real-time environmental data, healthcare providers can develop targeted communication messages and interventions that address individuals' specific health risks and needs, leading to more precise and effective health outcomes (Abernethy *et al.*, 2022). The integration of AI and machine learning algorithms holds great promise for optimizing the delivery of tailored health communication. Future research may explore the development of AI-powered chatbots, virtual health assistants, and personalized recommendation systems that utilize natural language processing and predictive modeling techniques to deliver personalized health information, support, and guidance to individuals in real-time. AR and VR technologies offer immersive and interactive platforms for delivering tailored health communication messages and interventions. Future research may explore the development of AR and VR-based healthcare applications that provide personalized health education, behavioral interventions, and simulated healthcare experiences, enhancing patient engagement, understanding, and adherence to medical recommendations (Kundi, 2023; Barteit *et al.*, 2021). With growing concerns about data security and privacy, blockchain technology may emerge as a viable solution for ensuring secure and transparent data sharing in tailored health communication. Future research may explore the use of blockchain-based platforms to enable patients to securely control access to their health data, consent to data sharing, and track the usage of their data for research and communication purposes.

Future directions may involve the integration of multiple communication channels and modalities, including text messaging, voice interfaces, video conferencing, and social media platforms, to deliver tailored health communication messages to diverse populations (Shankar *et al.*, 2022). By leveraging a combination of communication channels, healthcare providers can reach individuals through their preferred channels, increasing engagement and effectiveness of communication interventions (Blasiak *et al.*, 2022). Future research should prioritize rigorous evaluation of tailored health communication interventions using robust study designs and methodologies. By generating high-quality evidence on the impact and effectiveness of tailored communication strategies, healthcare organizations can make informed decisions about the implementation and scaling of these interventions to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes on a broader scale (Zajac *et al.*, 2021; Crable *et al.*, 2023).

In conclusion, the future of harnessing big data for tailored health communication holds great promise for revolutionizing healthcare delivery and improving patient outcomes. By embracing emerging technologies, advancing precision health approaches, and prioritizing evidence-based evaluation and implementation, healthcare organizations can unlock new opportunities to deliver personalized and effective communication interventions that meet the unique needs and preferences of individuals, ultimately leading to better health outcomes and enhanced patient experiences (Agarwal *et al.*, 2020; Ginsburg *et al.*, 2021).

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## 7. Conclusion

Tailored health communication plays a pivotal role in modern healthcare delivery, offering personalized interventions that are tailored to individuals' unique needs, preferences, and characteristics. By delivering messages and interventions that resonate with individuals, tailored health communication has been shown to promote behavior change, improve treatment adherence, and empower patients to take an active role in managing their health. In an era of personalized medicine and patient-centered care, tailored health communication is essential for optimizing healthcare outcomes and enhancing patient experiences.

Through our systematic review, we have examined the impact and techniques of harnessing big data for tailored health communication. Key findings underscore the significant positive effects of personalized communication strategies on health behavior change, treatment adherence, and patient empowerment. Leveraging advanced analytics and technology, healthcare organizations can deliver targeted messages and interventions that resonate with individuals, leading to improvements in health outcomes and patient engagement. Techniques such as segmentation, machine learning, natural language processing, and predictive modeling enable the customization of communication strategies to address individual needs and preferences effectively.

The systematic review highlights the transformative potential of integrating big data analytics into healthcare communication practices. By harnessing big data, healthcare organizations can gain deeper insights into patient populations, tailor communication messages and interventions, and optimize healthcare delivery. However, the review also underscores the importance of addressing challenges such as privacy concerns, digital divide, and ethical considerations to ensure responsible and equitable use of big data in healthcare communication. Moving forward, the field of healthcare and big data integration must prioritize evidence-based practices, ethical considerations, and patient-centered approaches to maximize the benefits of tailored health communication and improve healthcare outcomes on a population scale.

In conclusion, tailored health communication powered by big data analytics holds immense promise for transforming healthcare delivery and improving patient outcomes. By embracing innovation, collaboration, and patient-centered approaches, healthcare organizations can leverage big data to deliver personalized and effective communication interventions that meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities, ultimately advancing the goal of providing high-quality, equitable, and patient-centered care.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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