

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Financial Decisions for Retirees Mark Dennis, DBA, CFP®

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This essay explores the profound implications of artificial intelligence (AI) in reshaping the financial landscape for retirees. Artificial Intelligence refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think like humans and mimic their actions. The term may also be applied to any machine that exhibits traits associated with a human mind such as learning and problem-solving. The primary goal of AI includes learning, reasoning, and perception. AI is being utilized across various sectors, including finance, healthcare, education, transportation, and more due to its ability to process large volumes of data rapidly and with high accuracy. As with any technology, AI also has its limitations and the potential for misuse and abuse.

With an aging global population and the increasing complexity of financial decision-making, AI emerges as a pivotal technology offering both opportunities and challenges. Through an exploration of AI's evolution, its application in personal finance, and the unique benefits it presents to retirees, this essay aims to highlight how AI technologies can enhance financial literacy, decision-making, and inclusivity for older people. Moreover, it critically examines the ethical considerations and accessibility issues surrounding AI, underscoring the need for responsible technology deployment. By synthesizing current research and anticipating future trends, this essay contributes to the ongoing dialogue around AI and retirement, highlighting the critical role of ethical considerations and regulatory oversight in shaping a future where technology empowers rather than alienates.

SIGNIFICANCE OF AI FOR AGING POPULATIONS

In the contemporary era, the intersection of artificial intelligence and aging populations represents a significant pivot point for societal, economic, and technological advancements. As the global demographic shifts towards an older population, the implications for financial decision-making, especially among retirees, are profound. Al technologies offer unparalleled opportunities for enhancing the financial well-being and decision-making processes of this demographic and their personal support networks, marking a critical area of interest for researchers, policymakers, caregivers, and financial practitioners.

For instance, the advent of AI has introduced innovative solutions tailored to a retiree's unique needs, particularly in managing personal finances and making informed retirement decisions. These technologies include robo-advisors, personalized financial planning tools, and AI-driven educational platforms, all designed to augment the financial literacy and decision-making capabilities of retirees (Chhatwani, 2022). Robo-advisors, leveraging algorithms to offer personalized investment advice, have become increasingly popular among younger workers in their 20's, 30's, and 40's for their low-cost services and tailored financial guidance, but not so much among older workers and retirees, at least not yet (Sacchitello & Baker, 2023).

Al's role extends beyond mere financial advice as well, significantly impacting financial literacy and inclusion among older adults. By delivering customized educational content and interactive learning experiences, Al platforms can demystify complex financial concepts, aiding retirees in navigating the complexities of retirement planning,

investment strategies, and risk management (Roberts, 2023). Furthermore, Al-driven applications can provide realtime insights and alerts, helping older individuals monitor their financial health and adapt their strategies in the face of market volatility or personal life changes. By harnessing the power of AI, the financial industry can offer more personalized, accessible, and inclusive services, enabling older adults to make informed decisions and maintain financial independence. As AI technology continues to evolve, its potential to transform the financial experiences of older adults will only increase, offering promising avenues for enhancing their financial well-being and inclusion (YData, n.d.).

The power of AI in analyzing vast datasets also promotes the development of predictive models that can forecast individual financial needs and recommend optimized decision pathways. This personalization aspect is crucial for retirees, who often face a myriad of financial decisions ranging from asset allocation to healthcare expenditures (Moments Log, n.d.). Predictive analytics can also identify potential financial vulnerabilities, allowing retirees and their advisors to proactively address issues before they escalate. The banking sector, in particular, benefits from predictive analytics through improved fraud detection capabilities and customer analytics, including churn prediction and customer segmentation. This analytical approach allows for a nuanced understanding of customer behaviors and preferences, enhancing the banking experience for retirees by offering customized product offerings and mitigating potential financial risks (The Impact Investor, n.d.).

While AI offers significant benefits, ethical considerations and accessibility issues must also be addressed to ensure these technologies serve the aging population effectively and equitably. Concerns regarding data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the digital divide highlight the importance of developing transparent, accountable AI systems and enhancing digital literacy among older adults (Mittelstadt, Allo, Taddeo, Wachter, & Floridi, 2016).

THE INTERSECTION OF AI AND RETIREMENT

In the rapidly evolving landscape of technology, artificial intelligence (AI) stands out as a transformative force across numerous sectors, significantly influencing the way societies function, interact, and envisage the future. This technological revolution has profound implications for the retiree demographic, introducing them to unprecedented opportunities and challenges in managing their finances, health, and social connections. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into our daily lives, its role in retirement planning and lifestyle management is becoming more crucial, offering tailored solutions that can potentially enhance financial security and overall quality of life for retirees.

THE GROWING ROLE OF AI IN SOCIETY AND ITS RELEVANCE TO RETIREES

The widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in different industries marks a significant transformation in how society functions, communicates, and plans for the future, particularly with respect to retirees. This demographic increasingly encounters AI in their daily lives, especially in financial management practices, highlighting AI's growing relevance (Seifert, Cotten, & Xie, 2020). As AI technologies become further integrated into societal frameworks, their influence on older people becomes more pronounced, offering innovative solutions to longstanding retirement planning and lifestyle management challenges.

Al's relevance to retirees encompasses personalized financial advice, healthcare management, and social interaction, enhancing both their financial security and quality of life. For instance, robo-advisors and Al-driven financial planning tools democratize financial advice, providing personalized investment strategies and retirement planning services tailored to individual financial situations (Fisch, Laboure, & Turner, 2019). Additionally, Al applications in healthcare promise to improve older adults' quality of life through predictive analytics and virtual health assistants, while AI-powered platforms can also reduce feelings of isolation among retirees (Fasoli et al., 2023).

DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS LEAD TO INCREASED FOCUS ON RETIREMENT PLANNING AND LIFESTYLE

Global demographic trends are increasingly characterized by a shift towards an aging population, intensifying the focus on retirement planning and lifestyle choices. This demographic evolution necessitates a reevaluation of financial management and lifestyle considerations in retirement, with AI playing a pivotal role (Linzer, Ray, & Singh, 2020). The empowerment of retirees through AI extends beyond practical utility to enhancing their capability to navigate complexities of retirement, underscoring the importance of engaging with this evolving technology.

Financially, the aging population faces challenges related to longer life expectancies and the management of retirement savings in fluctuating markets. Al-driven tools, such as predictive analytics and personalized financial advice, address these challenges by enhancing financial security and providing tailored investment and spending insights (Rieland, 2017). Lifestyle considerations, such as maintaining active, engaged lives, further highlight Al's role. Al-enabled devices and platforms support health management, cognitive stimulation, and social connectivity, improving retirees' overall quality of life (Fasoli et al., 2023).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF AI FOR RETIREES

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) in personal financial planning and management represents a seismic shift in how retirees plan for their post-work years, fundamentally transforming the accessibility, efficiency, and customization of financial advice. This technological integration has led to the creation of tools and platforms that can analyze vast amounts of data, understand individual financial situations, and provide recommendations that are tailored to the unique needs of each retiree. Unlike traditional financial planning services, which can be costly and may not always offer personalized advice, AI-driven solutions such as robo-advisors make it possible for a broader range of retirees to receive customized investment guidance and retirement planning at a fraction of the cost.

ROBO-ADVISORS FOR RETIREMENT PLANNING

Robo-advisors, utilizing AI algorithms, have democratized financial planning, providing retirees with personalized, algorithm-driven investment advice at a fraction of the cost of traditional financial advisors. These platforms analyze individual financial situations, risk tolerances, and retirement goals to offer tailored investment strategies. Robo-advisors continuously monitor market conditions and automatically adjust portfolios to optimize returns, making them an invaluable tool for retirees seeking to maximize their retirement savings. Recent studies on robo-advisory services indicate that the integration of human oversight with algorithmic guidance, known as hybrid robo-advisory models, plays a significant role in diminishing resistance to purely algorithm-based advice (D'Acunto & Rossi, 2022).

FRAUD DETECTION AND PREVENTION

Al's capability to analyze vast datasets in real-time has also significantly enhanced fraud detection and prevention in financial services. For retirees, who are often targeted by financial scams, Al-driven systems can identify unusual transactions or patterns indicative of fraudulent activity, providing an additional layer of security to their financial assets. These systems ensure retirees' savings are better protected, allowing them to manage their finances with greater confidence and peace of mind (Moran, 2023).

IMPACT ON INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND THE STOCK MARKET

Al's influence extends to investment strategies and the stock market, where it enables the development of sophisticated predictive models. These models analyze historical data and market trends to forecast future movements, helping retirees and their financial advisors make informed investment decisions. Al-driven investment strategies can adapt to changing market conditions, potentially enhancing active management for retiree portfolios. However, excessive reliance, or worse – blind faith – regarding the use of Al in this capacity also introduces

complexities and uncertainties, as algorithmic trading can amplify market volatility (Rahmani et al., 2023) and exacerbate market bubbles.

CHALLENGES AND RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH AI-DRIVEN FINANCIAL SERVICES

While AI offers numerous benefits, it also poses challenges and risks. The reliance on algorithms and data raises concerns about privacy, data security, and the potential for algorithmic bias, which could impact retirees unfairly. Additionally, the complexity of AI-driven financial products may exceed some retirees' understanding, leading to a digital divide. Ensuring transparency, improving digital literacy among retirees, and establishing robust regulatory frameworks are crucial steps in mitigating these challenges and ensuring AI-driven financial services equitably benefit all retirees (Mittelstadt et al., 2016).

The integration of AI into the financial lives of aging populations holds immense promise for enhancing retirees' financial security and decision-making autonomy. By offering personalized advice, improving financial literacy, and predicting future needs, AI technologies can significantly contribute to the well-being of older adults. However, the successful implementation of these technologies requires careful consideration of ethical and accessibility issues to ensure that the benefits of AI are universally accessible.

THE FUTURE OF AI IN RETIREMENT

As we navigate the intersection of artificial intelligence and retirement planning, emerging trends and technological advancements suggest a transformative impact on retirees. It is imperative to continue exploring emerging trends and examining the future of AI in retirement, making note of potential shifts in retirement planning, lifestyle implications, and the overarching need for regulatory frameworks to ensure these advancements benefit all retirees equitably.

EMERGING TRENDS IN AI

Recent advancements in AI and machine learning are paving the way for innovative applications that could significantly influence retirees' financial and lifestyle decisions. Predictive analytics, for instance, are becoming increasingly sophisticated, enabling more accurate forecasts of life expectancy, healthcare costs, and investment allocations that are more closely aligned with individual financial needs (Kiron et al., 2014). Additionally, natural language processing (NLP) technologies are enhancing customer service interactions, allowing retirees to receive personalized advice through AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants. These technologies not only streamline financial planning but also offer companionship and assistance, addressing both technical and emotional needs of the aging population.

RESHAPING RETIREMENT PLANNING AND LIFESTYLE

The integration of AI into retirement planning promises a more personalized and dynamic approach to managing retirement savings, healthcare planning, and lifestyle choices. AI-driven financial tools can adapt to changing market conditions and personal circumstances, offering tailored advice that aligns with retirees' evolving goals and preferences (Sironi, 2016). Moreover, smart home technologies and health-monitoring devices are enhancing retirees' ability to live independently, promoting a lifestyle that is both safer and more connected. As AI continues to evolve, its potential to support an integrated approach to retirement planning—one that encompasses financial security, health, and well-being—is immense.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND THE NEED FOR REGULATION

The rapid advancement of AI technologies raises critical questions regarding policy and regulation, especially concerning data privacy, security, and ethical use of AI in retirement planning. Ensuring the equitable distribution of

Al benefits requires proactive policy measures to address digital literacy gaps among retirees and safeguard against potential biases in Al algorithms (Cath et al., 2018). Additionally, there is a pressing need for regulations that protect retirees' financial and personal data, preventing misuse and ensuring transparency in Al-driven financial advice and decision-making processes.

The intersection of AI and retirement reflects the convergence of technological advancements and demographic changes, positioning AI as a crucial element in reshaping retirement planning and lifestyle, facilitating a secure, healthy, and fulfilling retirement experience. AI's future in this capacity is marked by significant opportunities as well as challenges. As emerging trends continue to unfold, the potential for AI to revolutionize retirement planning and enhance retirees' lifestyles is undeniable. However, realizing this potentially hinges on thoughtful policy interventions and regulatory frameworks that prioritize the ethical use of AI, data protection, and equal access to technology-driven benefits.

PITFALLS AND PRAGMATISM

The integration of artificial intelligence in retirement planning and financial decisions for retirees heralds a transformative shift with the promise of enhanced efficiency and personalization. Initially hesitant, a growing number of older adults are now beginning to embrace and even show excitement for devices and tools powered by artificial intelligence (Dorman, 2023).

However, the journey is fraught with potential pitfalls that necessitate a balanced view, underscoring the importance of implementing practical applications and best practices to navigate these challenges effectively.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

Despite the potential benefits, several concerns could undermine the effectiveness and safety of AI in this context. Data privacy and security concerns are paramount, as AI systems require access to sensitive personal and financial information to offer personalized advice. Breaches in these systems could expose retirees to financial fraud and identity theft (Mittelstadt et al., 2016). Algorithmic Bias is another critical issue. If AI algorithms are trained on biased data sets, they may perpetuate or even worsen inequalities, offering suboptimal advice to various demographic groups (Sunstein, 2019), including retirees.

Additionally, overreliance on AI could lead to a scenario where retirees might overlook or undervalue the importance of human judgment and the nuanced understanding that comes from years of experience in financial planning. The intersection of AI and financial decision-making, especially among older individuals, presents a nuanced landscape of opportunities and perils. The central concern revolves around the potential for individuals to over-rely on AI in forecasting investment returns, engendering a day-trading or gambling mentality that jeopardizes their financial security rather than safeguarding and augmenting it. This concern is underpinned by extensive research indicating the hazards of frequent market timing, which is particularly precarious due to the vulnerability of older adults. Factors such as anxiety, cognitive decline, and ample free time contribute to their susceptibility to engage excessively in these practices, risking their wealth preservation and growth (Lusardi, 2012).

Lack of access to AI can also be an issue for retirees. Vulnerable groups, particularly older adults, frequently find themselves left out of digital services due to reasons such as choosing not to engage with the internet, not having the required devices or network access, or lacking experience with digital technology. Older individuals who are frail and who find online access difficult or confusing, many of whom live in long-term care facilities, face the combined difficulties of social and digital exclusion (Seifert, Cotten, & Xie, 2020).

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES

To mitigate these risks, embracing best practices in AI implementation is crucial. This includes ensuring data privacy through robust cybersecurity measures and transparency in how data is used and protected. Diversifying training data to minimize bias and regularly auditing AI systems for fairness and accuracy is also essential (Zou & Schiebinger, 2018). Moreover, hybrid models that combine AI with human oversight can harness the strengths of both, providing a safety net against potential AI limitations and maintaining the personal touch that is often critical in retirement planning.

Educating retirees about the capabilities and limitations of AI in financial decision-making is another practical approach. This education can empower them to use AI tools effectively while simultaneously remaining critical consumers of the provided advice. Additionally, regulatory compliance must be a priority for organizations deploying AI in financial services, adhering to existing financial regulations, and preparing for future guidelines focused specifically on AI.

While AI offers significant opportunities to enhance the financial well-being of retirees, it is not without its pitfalls. Among these hurdles is a tendency for older adults, particularly those with higher levels of electronic confidence and financial literacy, to distrust AI and robo-advisers in particular, favoring human interaction instead (Pradhan & Wang, 2020). Recognizing and overcoming these challenges by implementing best practices in the development and deployment of AI systems is essential for safeguarding retirees' interests and earning their trust. By fostering an environment of transparency, ethical AI use, and human-centered design, developers and promoters of AI can serve to enhance, rather than complicate, the retirement planning process.

CONCLUSIONS

This essay has explored the multifaceted impact of AI on the financial decisions of retirees, illuminating both the promising advancements and the challenges that lie ahead. Key findings highlight AI's potential to revolutionize retirement planning through personalized financial advice, enhanced financial literacy, and predictive analytics. Emerging trends in AI, including predictive analytics and natural language processing, are poised to further tailor retirement planning and lifestyle choices, ensuring that retirees can navigate their financial futures with greater confidence and security.

THE DUAL-EDGED NATURE OF AI'S IMPACT ON RETIREES

However, the exploration also uncovers the dual-edged nature of AI's impact. While AI promises to democratize financial advice and empower retirees with tools for independent living, concerns around data privacy, algorithmic bias, accuracy, and overreliance on technology reveal potential pitfalls. These challenges underscore the importance of navigating the AI landscape with caution, ensuring that the benefits are realized without compromising ethical standards or exacerbating existing inequalities.

CALL TO ACTION FOR RESEARCHERS, POLICYMAKERS, AND TECHNOLOGISTS

Considering these findings, a concerted effort from researchers, policymakers, and technologists is imperative to harness AI's potential responsibly. Researchers are called upon to continue exploring AI's implications for retirees, focusing on longitudinal studies that can provide deeper insights into its long-term effects. Technologists, on their part, should commit to ethical AI development, prioritizing user safety, inclusivity, and fairness in their designs.

Policymakers must craft and enforce regulatory frameworks that prioritize data protection, algorithmic transparency, and equity, ensuring that AI serves as a tool for social good. At a broader level, there is a growing trend of forming data partnerships and self-regulatory organizations aimed at enhancing AI safety research or crafting policy frameworks. Although leading tech companies are participating, there is a pressing need for

improved collaboration across these diverse groups. Through united efforts towards establishing coherent, global AI regulations, it is possible to ensure accountability within AI firms and prioritize the welfare of users (Salinas, 2024).

MOVING FORWARD

As we stand on the cusp of a new era in retirement planning, the promise of AI to enhance the financial well-being of retirees is undeniable. However, realizing this promise requires a balanced approach that recognizes the technology's limitations and potential risks. By fostering collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and tech experts, we can ensure that AI serves as a powerful ally in helping retirees navigate their financial futures, enhancing their quality of life while safeguarding their rights, privacy, and dignity.

The journey ahead is both exciting and daunting. Yet, with careful navigation, the integration of AI in retirement planning can open new horizons for retirees, offering them unprecedented control over their financial destinies. It is a call to action for all stakeholders to help pave the way for an inclusive, equitable, and ethical AI-powered future. As AI continues to evolve, its potential to transform retirement planning remains vast. Yet, the ultimate measure of its success will be its ability to enhance the lives of retirees, ensuring that the dawn of AI heralds an era of increased financial security, autonomy, and quality of life for all.

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Mark Dennis, DBA, CFP[®] is lead researcher for the Financial Wellness Think Tank^M at Financial Finesse, Inc. He can be reached at <u>mark.dennis@financialfinesse.com</u>.



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