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Consumers and AI-Generated Content in Digital Communication

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Abstract - The main objective of this paper was to analyze the attitudes of Internet users towards the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in generating media and marketing content. The investigation focused on the evaluation of the quality of AI-generated content, examining whether that evaluation depends on the gender of the respondents and the frequency of their exposure to AI technologies. The research sample consisted of 1118 respondents, collected by an electronic questionnaire method. Statistical processing was done through Mann-Whitney U test and moderated ordinal regression (PLUM). Emphasis was placed on the objectivity of the analysis, which is common with online questionnaires. The results define that the gender of the respondents does not have a statistically significant effect on the evaluation of the content generated through AI. On the other hand, frequency of contact with AI was defined as a significant predictor of more positive evaluation of AI-generated content. For practitioners, this implies the need to open a public debate on how AI influences the perception of reality and what tools can help to better distinguish between human and machine content. The investigation highlights the acute need to educate users about the use and transparency of AI, the results of the investigation have the potential to contribute to a better understanding of users' attitudes when incorporating AI into processes in marketing and media communications. The originality of the paper lies in the combination of quantitative analysis with the current social debate on AI.

Key Words: Artificial intelligence, AI, media communication, marketing communication, content quality, consumer attitudes, frequency of contact with AI

1.INTRODUCTION

The recent period has focused on a considerable amount of information about the transformation of the media and marketing field under the influence of artificial intelligence (AI). Currently, the various types that are being incorporated under the term AI in marketing communications are automation of content creation, personalization of marketing campaigns and streamlining of brands' communication with customers. In a broader context, AI is currently categorized according to its purpose into machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and chatbots that can work with minimal human interaction, leading to potential cost and time savings (Noy & Zhang, 2023). AI has the potential to analyze large amounts of data and, based on this, create personalized content in marketing communications that is able to target communications precisely to individual user preferences. Thus, AI provides an extraordinary advance over traditional marketing approaches, which often required manual analysis in some situations and less flexible response to user changes (Schweidel et al., 2022). An important contribution in the AI segment, especially in media and marketing environments, is the ability to automate creative processes. AI generates various forms of content including text, static visuals, videos or complex multimedia campaigns. Additionally, data analytics and predictive models of customer behavior can be applied. Technology enables marketing managers to potentially use resources more efficiently and respond to changes in customer preferences in real time, thereby significantly increasing the effectiveness of marketing activities and their impact on the market (Cui et al., 2024). AI algorithms have the potential to identify changing customer preferences, thus having the potential to personalize communications and increase customer satisfaction (Gao & Liu, 2023), yet the essential elements of AI-generated content among users are specific and include aspects such as accuracy, naturalness, relevance, and the ability of content to mimic or replace human creativity and authenticity. On the other hand, the quality of AI content is strongly influenced by the degree to which systems are able to understand the context of human communication. Users subconsciously evaluate content based on whether it is perceived as natural, with AI-generated content often being perceived as colder, more mechanical or less empathetic compared to human-generated content (Elkhatat et al., 2023). The aforementioned view of AI-generated output is currently changing as the development of AI models progresses. Despite all this, a so-called hybrid approach is currently being promoted, which combines the benefits of AI-mediated content generation with human editing and professional review, helping to increase the credibility and overall quality of the final content (Jia et al., 2024). Of particular importance is the adoption of AI technologies in the media and marketing spheres through user trust, which depends on the use of AI, privacy and ethical aspects of data processing. Rodgers et al. (2023) define that users still have significant concerns about potential misuse of personal data and loss of control over their data, which may lead to resistance to the use of AI technologies. The above reason is important for the successful implementation of AI, where clear and open communication from the business is essential, which should clarify how data is collected, processed and secured. Incorporating protective interventions and security practices for data processing translates with importance into building long-term user trust in AI solutions (Kaur et al., 2023). Despite the positive elements of incorporating AI in marketing communications and media alike, they also have significant risks. It should be noted that among the most dominant ones are the dehumanization of communication, ethical dilemmas in AI systems' decision making, the threat of misuse of technology to spread misinformation and manipulate public opinion. Specifically, the dehumanization of communication is

often in the reduction of interaction to automated, often superficial and generic forms of communication, which has the potential to negatively impact the perception of business entities that should be authentic to users (Cheng et al., 2022). Another significant challenge comes in the form of ethical boundaries related to the decisions AI systems make, particularly when using private data or personalised content, which has the potential to be perceived as an aggressive form of data removal and misuse. For this reason in particular, it is important that AI technologies are accompanied by clear ethical standards and guidelines that take into account the interests of all stakeholders, including users, brands and wider society (Robles & Mallinson, 2025). The above is particularly noticeable in the context of marketing campaigns, where AI enables detailed analysis of user behaviour, helping brands to optimise communication strategies and increase return on investment (ROI). Technology that is used as predictive analytics and recommendation systems enables more precise ad targeting, optimizing budgets and minimizing the cost of ineffective campaigns (Masrianto et al., 2022). Despite all the technological advances, there is still a need for human oversight to ensure AI campaigns comply with ethical standards and transparency requirements. Reasons such as the implementation of AI must be accompanied by professional and lay discussion to ensure that potential risks are effectively mitigated and the positive benefits of AI are harnessed in a responsible manner.

2.METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the research was to analyse the attitudes and experiences of respondents regarding the use of AI technologies in media and marketing communications, with an emphasis on assessing the quality of AI-generated content with respect to the respondents' gender and the frequency of their contact with AI technologies. The research sample consisted of Internet users, the sample was selected through an electronic questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, the total sample obtained was n = 1308 respondents, from which 191 responses were subsequently excluded due to incomplete or inconsistent data, resulting in a final sample of n = 1118 valid responses. The data obtained were processed using IBM SPSS Statistics statistical software (version 29), and the Mann-Whitney U test was used to test for differences in AI content quality ratings between males and females, calculated using the formula

$$U = n_1 n_2 + [n_1(n_1+1)/2] - R_1 \quad (1)$$

(where n_1 and n_2 represent the sizes of each group and R_1 the sum of the ranks for the first group); moderated ordinal regression (PLUM) was applied to examine the effect of gender and frequency of encounter with AI technologies using a logit link function defined as:

$$\text{logit}(P(Y \leq j)) = \theta\_j - (\beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \ldots + \beta\_kX\_k) \quad (2)$$

where θ_j and β are the thresholds and regression coefficients, respectively; the model was validated using a parallel lines test to verify the proportionality of the odds. Limitations of the investigation include the inherent limitations imposed by online data collection and the potential uneven representation of some demographic groups.

3.RESULTS

The aim of this chapter is to present and interpret the results of the statistical analyses we conducted to explore respondents' attitudes towards artificial intelligence (AI)-generated content. The results are aimed at comparing respondents' evaluations of the quality of AI-generated content in terms of their gender, as well as exploring the impact of the frequency of their exposure to AI technologies on these evaluations. To test these relationships, two statistical methods were used - Mann-Whitney U test for comparison between two independent groups (males and females) and moderated ordinal regression (PLUM) to assess the significance of predictors (gender, frequency of contact with AI) on the evaluation of the quality of AI content.

Table 1: Mann-Whitney U test - evaluation of AI content quality by gender

GENDER	NUMBER (N)	AVERAGE RANKING	SUM OF RANKS	MANN-WHITNEY U	P-VALUE
MEN	365	553,04	201858,50	201858,50	>0,05
WOMEN	754	563,37	424781,50		

The Mann-Whitney U test was applied to determine whether there was a difference in the ratings of the quality of AI-generated content between men and women. The results are shown in Table 1 (located above). Ratings of the quality of AI content for males (mean rank = 553.04; n = 365) and females (mean rank = 563.37; n = 754) showed no statistically significant difference (U = 201858.5; $p > 0.05$). This result suggests that in the sample of respondents studied, gender is not a factor that significantly influences the perceived quality of AI-generated content. The slightly higher quality rating by females is not statistically significant and therefore cannot be considered relevant for generalization to the whole population.

Table 2: Moderated ordinal regression - AI content quality assessment

Variable	Estimate (β)	Std. error	Wald	df	p-value	95% Confidence Interval
Gender	0,077	0,116	0,440	1	0,507	-0.150 to 0.303
AI contact frequency	0,187	0,075	6,160	1	0,013 *	0,039 to 0,334

$p < 0.05$ (significant result)

In the second part of the analysis, a moderated ordinal regression model (PLUM) was used to investigate whether and how significantly respondents' gender and frequency of exposure to AI technologies affect their perceptions of the quality of AI-generated content (results in Table 2 above). The overall regression model was statistically significant ($\chi^2(2) = 6.267$; $p = 0.044$), but the level of explained variability was very low (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 0.006$). Respondents' frequency of exposure to AI technologies proved to be a significant predictor of perceived quality of AI-

generated content (β = 0.187; p = 0.013). A positive coefficient indicates that respondents who have more frequent contact with AI technologies tend to evaluate the quality of AI content more positively. On the other hand, respondents' gender did not have a statistically significant effect (β = 0.077; p = 0.507). This result confirms the previous Mann-Whitney U test, thus suggesting that the findings from both analyses are consistent. Verification of the model assumptions, specifically the parallel lines test, confirmed that ordinal regression was correctly applied (p = 0.179), and thus the results of the regression analysis are reliable. In summary, the results confirmed a significant effect of the frequency of respondents' exposure to AI technologies on the evaluation of the quality of AI-generated content, with the respondent's gender not playing a significant role in the evaluation. The above results push the importance of experience with AI technologies as a particularly important factor influencing the adoption of AI content in media and marketing communications. The results given point to the need to increase trust and positive attitudes towards AI through increased frequency of encounter with AI technologies and more in-depth education about their use.

3.DISCUSSION

This paper is devoted to the current issue of using AI in the field of media and marketing communication, with a focus on evaluating the quality of AI-generated content. The results provide extremely fruitful insights that have the potential to serve as a basis for further scientific and practical development in the field. The results section of the analysis defines that the gender of the respondents does not play a significant role in assessing the quality of AI-generated content. The above conclusion is confirmed by Mann-Whitney U test and ordinal regression analysis. As a result, we report that both males and females perceive the quality of AI-generated content similarly, with slightly higher ratings by females not being statistically significant. Thus, the findings suggest that there is currently no need for businesses to segment communication strategies and marketing activities using AI based on the gender of the target audience, but rather businesses should focus on other factors such as frequency of exposure to AI or experience with the technology. On the other hand, the frequency of exposure to AI technologies has been shown to be a significant factor that influences the evaluation of the quality of the content generated. Respondents who reported more frequent encounters with AI were more likely to lean more positively towards the generated content, which as a result may suggest to businesses that experience with AI may reduce initial mistrust and uncertainty. The aforementioned dependency is confirmed by Celik (2023), who suggests that higher exposure to AI technologies contributes to a better understanding of how they work, as well as an increased willingness to accept these technologies in everyday life. Equally, however, the results define that the level of explained variability was at a low level (Nagelkerke R^2 = 0.006), which determines the evaluation of the quality of AI-generated content as likely to be influenced by several other factors, such as the age of the respondents, the level of education, technical literacy, attitudes towards technology in general, or the quality of a particular AI system and its transparency. We add to the possibilities for future research by Ahmed et al. (2024) that further investigation would be useful to focus on more comprehensive approaches to analyzing factors influencing attitudes towards AI-generated content. The exploration yielded the insight that an important aspect is that respondents show concerns regarding ethical issues, privacy, and trustworthiness of AI-generated content. Factors such as transparency, reliability and security are key factors according to the respondents that influence their trust towards AI hence the need for businesses and media that implement AI to communicate how they process data and use AI in an ethical and responsible manner, which is also confirmed by Borden et al. (2024). Through exploration and clarification, we have come to the position that professional discussion should be directed towards topics such as the risks of AI, dehumanization of communication, manipulation or potential job loss, which is legitimate and relevant in this segment. Emerging concerns should be addressed through an open and critical dialogue between AI creators and promoters, regulators, media entities, marketing managers and consumers themselves, ensuring that negative impacts are minimized while maximizing the positive benefits of AI (Stark, 2023). Potential limitations of the study may be the subjective nature of the responses, or the question to generalise the findings with caution. Building on Chen et al. (2022), further investigation would be advisable to focus on a diverse and larger sample of respondents and potentially include more objective measures of AI content quality, for example through experimental methods or a combination of quantitative and neuromarketing qualitative approaches.

4.CONCLUSION

The present work analysed users' attitudes towards the use of AI in media and marketing communications, focusing on the evaluation of the quality of AI-generated content. Based on the analyses, it was found that the gender of the respondents does not have a significant impact on the evaluation of AI content. The frequency of contact with AI technologies proved to be a particularly significant factor influencing the perception of quality, with respondents who came into contact with AI technologies more frequently evaluating the generated content more positively. The facts defined are translated into the proposition that experience with AI is key to consumer adoption of AI, however, education and transparency in the implementation of AI systems is extremely important. Despite the stated benefits of AI being defined as automation and personalization, there are also significant concerns related to privacy, trust, and ethical aspects of the use of these technologies. The low explanatory power of the tested model was clarified. A number of other factors influence the evaluation of AI content, which should be the subject of further research. The investigation confirmed that artificial intelligence has the potential to be a significant asset for marketing and media communications. The success of implementation depends mainly on the ability to respond to legitimate user concerns and needs in a responsible and transparent manner. In conclusion, AI technologies have the potential to significantly change media and marketing communications. The results are useful in marketing strategies for marketing managers, media, policy makers and other stakeholders who plan to use AI to create content and communicate with their target audiences.

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