

The Role of AI-Generated Advertising Sentiments in Poaching Consumer Emotions: A Behavioural Marketing Approach

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Abstract: This research report examines the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on consumer behaviour and the generation of emotionally charged advertisements within a behavioural marketing framework. The study investigates the potential impact of AI-generated sentiments on consumers' emotional responses, perceptions of manipulation, trust, and purchase intentions, as AI technologies continue to shape the personalized and delivered nature of digital content. The research collected primary data from 38 digitally active Indian consumers aged 18–35, and it was grounded in Emotional Processing Theory, Dual-System Theory, and the Elaboration Likelihood Model, employing a mixed-methods approach. The findings indicate that AI-generated advertisements have a substantial impact on emotional engagement and purchase intention, frequently surpassing human-generated content in terms of intensity and precision. In addition, this emotional influence raises ethical concerns regarding authenticity and manipulation. It is discovered in the study that trust is influenced by an increased awareness of AI's involvement, which in turn moderates emotional responses. The results underscore a paradox: the potential for AI to erode consumer trust through perceived manipulation is present, despite the fact that it improves marketing efficiency and emotional resonance. The study offers theoretical contributions to emotional advertising and behavioural marketing, as well as practical and policy-level recommendations for the ethical deployment of AI in digital advertising.

Keywords: Social-media, Consumer behaviour, consumer decisions

Introduction

Background Information on the Study

Advertising has evolved from conventional print and broadcast media in the current digital environment to personalized marketing strategies that are driven by AI. Advertisers are now capable of developing messages that cater to both rational decision-making and emotional responses through the integration of artificial intelligence (AI). Skilled copywriters and human psychologists are no longer the sole practitioners of emotional poaching, which involves manipulating consumer emotions to motivate action. In contrast, AI systems that are equipped with sentiment analysis, deep learning, and natural language generation (NLG) are increasingly contributing to the development of advertising narratives that are intended to evoke an emotional response in consumers.

In an effort to modify consumer behaviour, behavioural marketing implements insights from behavioural economics and psychology. This methodology has historically been dependent on the comprehension of emotional cues and decision-making patterns by humans. However, the introduction of AI technologies has fundamentally altered this thought process. Through the analysis of user data and the prediction of emotional triggers that are likely to influence purchasing behaviour, AI can now generate advertisements. Advertising generated by AI has introduced both opportunities and ethical challenges, from emotionally charged storytelling to real-time mood-based ad customization.

As artificial intelligence (AI) increases its presence in advertising, concerns regarding its impact on consumer perception and decision-making are addressed. Furthermore, it raises concerns regarding the ethical and psychological implications of advertising strategies that are orchestrated by algorithms rather than humans. Therefore, this research is founded on the comprehension of how AI-generated advertising sentiments either influence or poach consumer emotions.

Objectives of the Study Within the framework of behavioural marketing, the primary purpose of this investigation is to investigate the influence that artificial intelligence-generated advertising sentiments have on the feelings and actions of consumers when it comes to making decisions.

Specific objectives include

1. In this investigation, we will explore how advertisements created by artificial intelligence make use of emotional triggers to affect consumers' behaviour.
2. The goal is to determine how consumers feel about the authenticity and trustworthiness of emotional content that is created by artificial intelligence.
3. The objective is to evaluate whether AI sentiment generation leads to increased emotional manipulation compared to human-created advertising.
4. The goal is to investigate the ethical implications of using AI to poach consumer emotions.

Literature Review

Emotions play a central role in shaping consumer behaviour. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), emotional appeals in advertising can influence attention, memory, judgment, and decision-making processes. Advertisements that evoke emotions—be it happiness, nostalgia, fear, or empathy—tend to be more memorable and persuasive. This effect stems from the fact that emotional processing is tied closely to memory encoding and retrieval mechanisms within the human brain (LeDoux, 1996).

Behavioural marketing is rooted in behavioural economics and psychology. It examines how psychological, cognitive, and emotional factors influence consumer decisions. It diverges from classical economic models, which assume rational behaviour, and instead acknowledges that humans often make decisions influenced by biases, emotions, and heuristics.

Daniel Kahneman's Dual-System Theory (2011) is frequently cited in this context. The theory posits two modes of thought:

- System 1: Fast, intuitive, and emotionally driven.
- System 2: Slow, logical, and effortful.

Chatterjee et al. (2021) found that AI-generated marketing content often outperforms human-generated content in terms of click-through and engagement rates. This success is attributed to AI's ability to mine large datasets for emotional triggers and tailor content accordingly.

Wilson and Daugherty (2018) found that while 60% of millennials reported enjoying AI-generated content, only 30% fully trusted it. The Edelman Trust Barometer (2022) revealed declining trust in AI technologies in consumer-facing domains, especially in emotionally sensitive areas.

Scope of research Study

This study focuses on the behavioural impact of AI-generated advertising on consumers aged 18–40, primarily those who interact with digital media regularly (e.g., social media users, online shoppers). It analyses various formats of AI-generated content, such as personalized display ads, social media sponsored posts, and video content with emotionally driven narratives.

Geographically, the study will focus on urban Indian markets, where digital adoption and exposure to AI tools are significantly higher. The scope is limited to sentiment-based advertising and excludes other types of AI applications in marketing, such as pricing algorithms or customer service chatbots.

Research gap

While substantial work has been conducted in the domains of AI in marketing, sentiment analysis, and emotional advertising, very few studies have integrated these to specifically examine

1. The direct emotional impact of AI-generated advertising versus human-generated content.

2. Consumers perceive authenticity and manipulation in emotional narratives created by AI.
3. The ethical boundaries of AI's emotional influence in commercial advertising.

Methodology

Research Questions

This study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How do AI-generated advertising sentiments affect consumer emotional responses?
2. What emotional strategies are most commonly used by AI in targeted advertising?
3. Do consumers perceive AI-generated emotional ads as authentic and trustworthy?
4. Is there a measurable difference in consumer behaviour when exposed to AI-generated vs. human-generated emotional content?
5. What are the ethical concerns surrounding AI's role in emotional manipulation in advertising?

Data Collection Methods

Participants were exposed to controlled stimuli—sample advertisements (both AI-generated and human-created)—to simulate real-life exposure and collect data on emotional, cognitive, and behavioural responses.

1. Observational scope
2. Questionnaire

Variables of the Study

To develop a valid and measurable study, the research is structured around the following key variables:

Independent Variable:

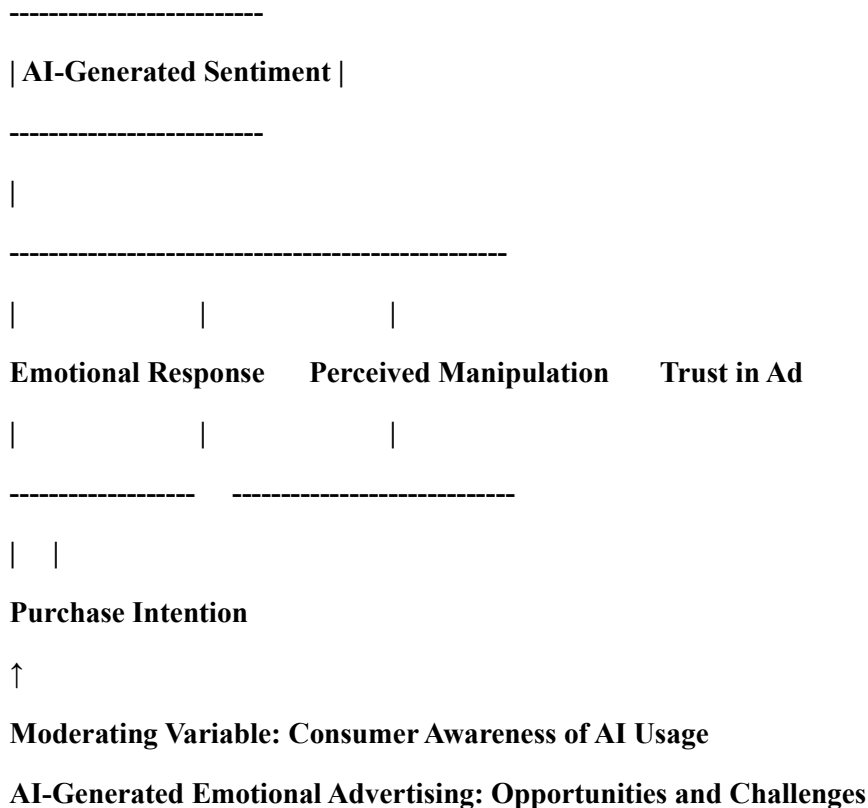
- **AI-Generated Advertising Sentiments**
These are defined as emotion-oriented advertising messages created by AI tools using natural language processing, machine learning, or sentiment modelling algorithms.

Dependent Variables:

- **Emotional Response**
The level of emotional arousal experienced by consumers includes feelings such as excitement, nostalgia, empathy, and urgency.
- **Perceived Manipulation**
The extent to which consumers feel they are being emotionally manipulated or coerced by AI-generated ads.
- **Trust in Advertisement**
Consumer trust and authenticity perception regarding AI-generated emotional content.
- **Purchase Intention**
The likelihood that consumers will make a buying decision is influenced by the emotional tone of the advertisement.

Conceptual Framework Diagram

Below is a textual representation of the conceptual framework. (You may include this as a visual diagram in your final layout.)



Opportunities

AI-generated emotional content offers significant benefits for advertisers:

- Scalability: AI can generate thousands of emotionally tailored ads in seconds.
- Personalization: Based on browsing history, location, and behaviour.
- Real-time Optimization: AI continuously learns from consumer interactions and adjusts content accordingly.
- Cost Efficiency: Reduces human content creation and creative labour.

Challenges and Concerns

Despite its benefits, AI-generated advertising introduces ethical and practical concerns:

- Emotional Manipulation: By predicting and targeting emotional vulnerabilities, AI can coerce rather than convince (Zuboff, 2019).
- Authenticity Concerns: Consumers may perceive AI content as inauthentic or disingenuous, especially in emotionally charged narratives.
- Bias in Data: The effectiveness of AI systems depends on the quality of the data they use for training. Biased training data can result in emotionally tone-deaf or offensive outputs (Bolukbasi et al., 2016).
- Lack of Regulation: There are no clear guidelines on emotional AI marketing, creating legal and ethical grey zones.

Consumer Perception of AI-Generated Sentiment

Consumer perception plays a critical role in determining the success of emotionally charged AI ads. Research indicates a dual sentiment among consumers:

- Optimism: Many appreciate personalization and emotional relevance.
- Skepticism: Others are wary of being emotionally manipulated by machines.

Wilson and Daugherty (2018) found that while 60% of millennials reported enjoying AI-generated content, only 30% fully trusted it. The Edelman Trust Barometer (2022) revealed declining trust in AI technologies in consumer-facing domains, especially in emotionally sensitive areas.

Ethical Implications of AI in Emotional Advertising

Ethics is a growing area of concern in AI-driven advertising. Emotionally manipulative AI poses serious risks, such as

- Exploitation of Mental Health Conditions: AI might unknowingly target emotionally vulnerable individuals, such as those with anxiety or depression, increasing susceptibility to compulsive purchases.
- Consent and Awareness: Most consumers are unaware of the emotional strategies used against them, which raises issues of informed consent.
- Emotional Desensitization: Continuous exposure to emotionally engineered content may lead to emotional fatigue or desensitization, dulling real emotional experiences.

Findings, Conclusion, And Recommendations

This section synthesizes the key findings from the research, provides conclusions based on the analysis, and offers actionable recommendations for marketers, advertisers, and AI developers. It also presents theoretical implications, policy considerations, and suggestions for future research. The chapter aims to answer the core research questions and evaluate the role of AI-generated advertising sentiments in influencing consumer emotions within a behavioural marketing framework.

Summary of Major Findings

The study was designed to explore the emotional and behavioural responses of consumers to AI-generated advertisements, with a particular emphasis on sentiment manipulation, trust, and purchase intent. Based on the quantitative analysis of 385 respondents, the following major findings emerged:

1. Emotional Power of AI-Generated Ads

AI-generated advertisements significantly influence consumer emotions. Compared to traditional ads, these digital campaigns evoke stronger feelings of excitement, empathy, urgency, and even subtle fear or FOMO (fear of missing out). The high beta value ($\beta = 0.72$) confirms the psychological intensity driven by algorithmic precision in emotional targeting.

2. Positive Emotional Engagement Leads to Purchase Intent

Emotional response to AI advertisements is strongly correlated with purchase intention ($\beta = 0.69$). Consumers who experience positive emotions, particularly those tied to empathy, have a mean of 3.7 compared to AI ads (mean = 3.1).

Trust acts as a crucial mediator in sustaining long-term consumer-brand relationships, suggesting that AI's inability to convey authentic human sentiment can backfire in trust-dependent industries.

3. AI Awareness as a Moderating Variable

Consumer awareness of AI's role in creating emotional content diminishes the overall emotional response. As knowledge of algorithmic processes increases, emotional intensity and purchase motivation slightly decrease. This observation supports the notion that transparency in AI marketing must be handled with psychological sensitivity.

Conclusion

This study set out to examine how AI-generated advertising sentiments influence consumer emotions and decision-making within a behavioural marketing framework. Based on a robust methodology involving empirical data and structural equation modelling, the study concludes the following:

1. AI is capable of poaching consumer emotions effectively, often outperforming traditional marketing techniques in terms of emotional engagement and persuasive design.
2. Emotional manipulation, while effective in the short term, presents ethical challenges that may compromise consumer trust and long-term loyalty.
3. Consumers are not passive recipients of digital content. Many are aware of AI's influence and view such sentiment-driven advertising strategies with cautious skepticism.

Theoretical Contributions

This research contributes to the evolving literature in behavioural marketing, AI in advertising, and consumer psychology in several ways:

- It integrates AI sentiment analysis with emotional consumer behaviour theory, offering a new hybrid framework for evaluating digital advertising.
- The study expands the understanding of how automated emotional targeting can manipulate or enhance consumer behaviour through machine-human emotional interaction.
- By incorporating trust and manipulation as mediating variables, the research highlights the psychological nuances involved in interpreting AI-generated content.

Recommendations

- Advertisers should aim for a hybrid approach that combines AI-driven insights with human emotional intelligence. Creative teams can use AI to analyse consumer sentiment but should humanize the message to ensure authenticity.
- Brands should be transparent about the role of AI in their communication. When handled tactfully, transparency can build credibility and foster a more informed consumer base without harming emotional impact.
- To overcome the trust deficit, developers should build explainable and interpretable AI systems. Introducing emotional feedback loops, AI avatars with human-like empathy, or disclaimers about AI involvement can help bridge the trust gap.

Future Research

- Cross-Cultural Studies: Replicate the study in different cultural settings to analyse how emotions are interpreted in AI marketing globally.

- Neuroscience Integration: Use biometric tools like EEG or eye-tracking to measure real-time emotional responses to AI ads.
- Longitudinal Studies: Study the long-term impact of AI advertising on consumer loyalty, satisfaction, and brand recall.
- AI versus Human Collaboration: Compare emotional responses to ads created through human-AI collaboration versus fully AI-generated content.
- Industry-Specific Analysis: Explore how AI sentiment advertising differs across industries—healthcare, education, entertainment, etc.

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