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A Study on The Factors Influencing Consumers' Purchase Intention Toward Advertisements Created by Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of artificial intelligence (AI)-generated advertising has created new opportunities for cost-efficient and targeted marketing, yet consumer reactions remain mixed. While AI enhances productivity and allows quick creation of diverse content, many consumers perceive such ads as unnatural or unsettling, which may reduce their purchase intention. Using the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework, this study examines how key attributes of AI-generated advertising verisimilitude, vitality, imagination, and synthesis influence consumers' emotional responses and purchase intention. Two mediating emotional states were analyzed: perceived eeriness (negative affect) and perceived intelligence (positive affect). A survey of 410 consumers aged 18–60 was conducted using a five-point Likert scale. Findings confirm all proposed hypotheses, indicating that AI advertising attributes significantly shape emotional responses, which in turn influence purchase intention. The findings contribute to the emerging literature on AI-driven marketing by clarifying the psychological mechanisms through which consumers evaluate AI-generated advertising and by offering practical implications for organizations seeking to design effective and ethically responsible AI-based marketing strategies.

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has transformed the landscape of digital marketing, giving rise to AI-generated content (AIGC) as a new paradigm in advertising creation. AI-generated advertising refers to the automated production of promotional content through algorithms and natural language processing (NLP), enabling organizations to generate text, images, audio, and video with minimal human involvement. Scholars widely recognize AIGC as an advanced form of creative automation that reshapes how brands design, personalize, and deliver advertising messages across digital platforms. According to Zhang, Wang, and Xu (2022), AIGC synthesizes large-scale data to automatically generate creative content, while Gupta and Bhattacharya (2019) highlight its capacity to identify consumer patterns and produce personalized, targeted advertising. Similarly, Cao (2023) and Sun and Gu (2023) describe AIGC as a new generation of creative technology that mimics human-like creativity and enhances efficiency by reducing human input in the advertising development process. The growing adoption of AIGC within digital marketing is supported by technological progress and market trends. In 2024, the global AI market in digital marketing reached USD 2.48 billion and is projected to grow to USD 35.12 billion by 2034, with major developments occurring in mobile marketing, automated advertising, and creative content generation. Businesses increasingly apply AIGC in areas such as advertising design, product innovation, virtual influencers, and brand voice development (Gu et al., 2024). For firms seeking to reduce marketing costs, enhance productivity, and respond to rapidly changing consumer preferences, AI-generated advertising has become an attractive strategic tool.

Despite its advantages, AI-generated advertising also raises critical questions regarding consumer perception and emotional response. Unlike traditional advertisements created by human designers, AI-generated ads may evoke a sense of artificiality or unease among viewers. Many consumers describe such content as “unnatural” or “uncanny,” which can trigger negative emotional reactions and weaken advertising effectiveness. Emotional cues embedded in AIGC are especially important because sentiment-driven advertising has been shown to increase attention, engagement, and behavioral responses (Kapoor et al., 2018). At the same time, the creative novelty, realism, and lifelike movement produced by AI can also generate positive emotions, such as admiration or perceived intelligence, thereby enhancing consumer trust and purchase intention. Existing literature suggests that AI-generated advertising exhibits four key characteristics that shape consumer responses: (1) entertainment value, (2) informativeness, (3) innovation and creativity, and (4) verisimilitude and trust (Gantulga & Nyamgerel, 2025). When exposed to AI-generated advertisements, consumers primarily react to the message and emotional tone rather than the technical algorithms behind the content. These immediate psychological responses are therefore critical for understanding how AI-generated advertising influences consumer decision-making. Given the increasing reliance on AI in marketing and the mixed reactions it produces, it is essential to explore how AI-generated advertising affects consumers' purchase intention. This study examines the impact of AI advertisement attributes: verisimilitude, vitality, imagination, and synthesis on consumer emotions and purchase intention using the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework. Special attention is given to two contrasting emotional mediators: perceived eeriness (negative affect) and perceived

intelligence (positive affect). By clarifying these psychological mechanisms, the study contributes to academic understanding and provides practical insights for designing effective, consumer-centered, and responsible AI-based advertising strategies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Verisimilitude

Verisimilitude refers to the extent to which consumers perceive an advertisement as realistic, natural, or true-to-life (Campbell, Plangger, Sands, & Kietzmann, 2022). Prior studies have emphasized that higher perceived realism in product placement (Russell, 2002) and narrative advertising (van Laer, Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014) leads to more favorable consumer responses. AI-generated advertisements differ from human-created content because they lack the nuanced combination of human intuition and creative judgment. When consumers view an advertisement, they mentally construct internal imagery based on visual and auditory cues (MacInnis & Price, 1987; Heller et al., 2019). Such mental imagery plays a critical role in shaping purchase decisions, as it allows individuals to imagine themselves using the product or service (Hassabis & Maguire, 2007; Phillips, Olson & Baumgartner, 1995). AI-generated visuals that closely replicate real-world features—such as skin texture, lighting, and shadows—tend to enhance realism and increase consumer engagement. High levels of verisimilitude enable stronger narrative transportation, similar to immersive VR/AR environments (Bogicevic et al., 2019; van Laer et al., 2019). Narrative transportation, in turn, fosters positive attitudes and behavioral change (Green & Brock, 2002).

2.2 Vitality

Vitality refers to the extent to which an advertisement appears dynamic, lively, and human-like. With advances in deep learning, AI systems can generate vibrant and visually striking images (Goodfellow et al., 2014). However, compared to human-designed advertisements, AI-generated content often relies heavily on recombined data patterns, potentially lacking emotional depth and genuine human creative expression (Campbell et al., 2022). Despite technological progress, AI still faces limitations in reproducing authentic creativity (Blumer, 1969; Burgoon et al., 1978; Daft & Lengel, 1986). If AI-generated advertisements lack vitality, consumers may perceive them as dull, repetitive, or low-quality (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2008). Conversely, dynamic elements such as natural movement, facial expressions, voice modulation, or human-like gestures increase the advertisement's vitality and enhance emotional resonance (Zhou & Wong, 2008). When AI-generated characters smile, blink, or move in a natural, human-like manner, consumers tend to rate the advertisement as more intelligent, appealing, and emotionally expressive. However, vitality remains highly dependent on the quality of training data. Poor or insufficient data may result in distorted visuals or robotic movement, reducing overall appeal and contributing to a negative user experience.

2.3 Imagination

Imagination is the cognitive ability to visualize unreal, abstract, or future scenarios and generate novel ideas (Guilford, 1967). It serves as a fundamental driver of innovation and creativity in both arts and sciences (Boden, 2004). In AI-generated advertising, imaginative elements—unique concepts, futuristic designs, or unexpected visual combinations—can enhance consumer interest and positive evaluations. Creative advertisements are generally perceived as higher in quality and intellectual sophistication (Smith, Chen, & Yang, 2008; Dahl, Frankenberger, & Manchanda, 2003). The more

creative the advertisement appears, the more intelligent consumers perceive the AI system to be. However, low creativity or repetitive AI outputs may evoke negative reactions or perceptions of monotony (Steiner, 2012). AI reduces cognitive load by simplifying information (Sweller, 1994) and can generate novel content through deep learning techniques, which combine and recombine vast amounts of data (Goodfellow et al., 2014). This enables AI to expand the boundaries of human creativity (Colton & Wiggins, 2012). However, because AI creativity is data-dependent, excessive reliance on training datasets may lead to predictable or unoriginal outcomes (Campbell et al., 2022).

2.4 Synthesis

Synthesis refers to the visual and conceptual coherence of AI-generated advertisements. This includes the harmonious integration of text, sound, imagery, and overall design. High synthesis enhances clarity, improves message delivery, and strengthens consumer trust. AI-generated advertisements rely heavily on combining elements from stored datasets (Boden, 2004). While this allows for efficient content generation, it also introduces risks: mismatched elements, distorted figures, or uncanny visual combinations that disrupt aesthetic harmony (Campbell et al., 2022). Such inconsistencies reduce perceived quality and may cause consumers to perceive the content as artificial or untrustworthy (Kim & Sundar, 2021). High synthesis, on the other hand, produces a seamless and aesthetically pleasing composition. When an AI-generated advertisement appears well-structured and visually coherent, consumers are more likely to perceive it as thoughtful, reliable, and professionally crafted (Elgammal et al., 2017). Conversely, poor synthesis results in an artificial, emotionless impression, lowering brand credibility (Shin, Park, & Ju, 2023).

2.5 Perceived Eeriness

Perceived eeriness is a negative emotional reaction characterized by discomfort, unease, or fear. It often arises when AI-generated content looks almost but not entirely human, aligning with the “uncanny valley” effect. Imperfect realism, such as extra fingers, distorted limbs, or unnatural facial expressions, can produce eerie feelings (Song & Shin, 2022; Wu & Wen, 2021). Low vitality, robotic movement, or mismatched synthesis further intensify discomfort (Gu et al., 2024). Since AI systems reconstruct visuals by recombining dataset elements (Zhang et al., 2024), inconsistencies can easily emerge and trigger eeriness. Perceived eeriness negatively influences evaluations of AI-generated advertisements and reduces willingness to accept or trust them (Chiarella et al., 2022). Thus, it plays a critical mediating role in determining consumers' responses to AI-generated advertising.

2.6 Perceived Intelligence

Perceived intelligence refers to the admiration or awe consumers feel when they recognize the advanced capabilities of AI technology. If an AI-generated advertisement appears exceptionally realistic, creative, or emotionally expressive, consumers experience heightened respect for AI and attribute intelligence to the system (Sundar, 2020). High vitality, creativity, and synthesis reinforce this impression, making the advertisement appear more sophisticated. AI's ability to transcend human creative limitations and produce novel outputs also contributes to positive evaluations (Vakratsas & Wang, 2021). Research shows that perceived intelligence positively affects consumer attitudes and increases acceptance of AI-generated content (Moussawi & Koufaris, 2019; Wang & Li, 2022).

2.7 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is defined as an individual's future-oriented willingness or plan to buy a product or service (Ajzen, 1991; Chiu et al., 2018). It reflects consumers' evaluative judgments that eventually lead to actual purchasing decisions (Ganbold & Gantulga, 2023). Stronger positive attitudes toward a product translate into stronger intention to purchase it (Hoque et al., 2018a). From a psychological perspective, purchase intention represents a motivational state in which the consumer actively plans and organizes their decision-making behavior (Ratneshwar & Chaiken, 1991). In the context of AI-generated advertising, purchase intention is influenced by both negative emotional responses (perceived eeriness) and positive responses (perceived intelligence), demonstrating the dual psychological pathways through which AI-generated content affects consumer behavior.

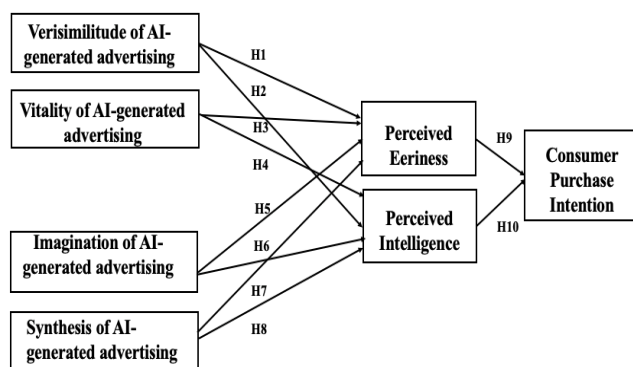
3. Research Methodology

3.1 Sampling and Data collection

This study collected data from 410 respondents aged 18–60 in Mongolia. The sample size is adequate for conducting multivariate analyses such as reliability testing (Cronbach's α), factor analysis (EFA/CFA), and multiple regression, as larger samples improve statistical stability for models with multiple constructs. A purposive–convenience hybrid sampling method was used due to practical considerations. During data collection, efforts were made to balance age and gender groups to obtain broader representation within the target population of active social media users exposed to AI-generated advertisements. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire. All construct items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree” to 5 = “strongly agree”). Each construct contained 3–6 items, adapted and revalidated for the Mongolian context.

3.2 Research Model

Figure 1. Proposed model



3.3 Research Hypotheses

- H1. The verisimilitude of AI-generated advertising negatively influences consumers perceived eeriness.
- H2. The verisimilitude of AI-generated advertising positively influences consumers perceived intelligence.
- H3. The vitality of AI-generated advertising negatively influences consumers perceived eeriness.
- H4. The vitality of AI-generated advertising positively influences consumers perceived intelligence.
- H5. The imagination of AI-generated advertising positively influences consumers perceived eeriness.

- H6. The imagination of AI-generated advertising positively influences consumers perceived intelligence.
- H7. The synthesis (aesthetic quality) of AI-generated advertising positively influences consumers perceived eeriness.
- H8. The synthesis (aesthetic quality) of AI-generated advertising positively influences consumers perceived intelligence.
- H9. Consumers perceived eeriness negatively influences their purchase intention.
- H10. Consumers perceived intelligence positively influences their purchase intention.

4. Research Analysis

4.1 KMO Test

A KMO value above 0.7 is considered acceptable, indicating that the sample size is sufficient to represent the population. Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was employed to determine whether the variables used in the factor analysis are sufficiently correlated. This test examines the null hypothesis that the variables are uncorrelated in the population. A p-value less than 0.05 indicates that the correlation matrix is significantly different from the identity matrix, meaning the variables are related and suitable for factor analysis. The findings confirm that the sample demonstrates sufficient representativeness and meets the statistical requirements necessary for conducting meaningful factor analysis.

Table 1. KMO test analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.904
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4763.625
	Df	253
	Sig.	.000

4.2 Reliability analysis

To assess the reliability of each variable, Cronbach's alpha coefficient values were examined. As shown in the table, all variables have Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.8, indicating high internal consistency and suggesting that the survey items reliably measure the underlying constructs.

Table 2. Reliability test analysis

	Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
1	Verisimilitude	0.823	3
2	Vitality	0.660	3
3	Imagination	0.841	3
4	Synthesis	0.833	4
5	Perceived eeriness	0.892	4
6	Perceived intelligence	0.828	3
7	Purchase intention	0.733	3

4.3 Hypotheses test analysis

The current study examined the impact of AI-generated advertisement characteristics on consumers' purchase intention, mediated by perceived eeriness and perceived intelligence. Regression analyses were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses, and the results are presented below. The results indicate that verisimilitude, or the degree to which AI-generated advertisements appear realistic, has a significant effect on consumer

perceptions. Specifically, higher verisimilitude was associated with a significant decrease in perceived eeriness (H1; $B = 0.001$, $\text{Beta} = -0.201$, $t = -2.022$, $p = .005$), suggesting that advertisements that appear more realistic make consumers feel less uneasy or “creeped out.” However, verisimilitude also showed a slight negative effect on perceived intelligence (H2; $B = -0.059$, $\text{Beta} = -0.145$, $t = -2.856$, $p = .005$), indicating that overly realistic advertisements may not always increase consumers’ admiration of AI’s capabilities. The analysis further revealed that vitality, defined as the liveliness and expressiveness of AI-generated advertisements, has a dual effect on consumer perceptions. Greater vitality significantly increased both perceived eeriness (H3; $B = 0.532$, $\text{Beta} = 0.512$, $t = 10.672$, $p < .001$) and perceived intelligence (H4; $B = 0.656$, $\text{Beta} = 0.375$, $t = 9.601$, $p < .001$). This suggests that while lively and expressive AI-generated ads can elicit admiration and enhance perceived intelligence, they may also evoke feelings of unease among consumers. Similarly, imagination, or the creative and innovative elements of AI-generated advertisements, positively influenced both perceived eeriness (H5; $B = 0.090$, $\text{Beta} = 0.100$, $t = 2.124$, $p = .034$) and perceived intelligence (H6; $B = 0.230$, $\text{Beta} = 0.227$, $t = 4.614$, $p < .001$). These findings indicate that creative AI content can simultaneously attract consumer attention and generate a sense of unfamiliarity or uncanniness. Synthesis, representing the aesthetic coordination of text, visuals, and audio within AI-generated

advertisements, also demonstrated a dual impact. Higher synthesis was associated with increased perceived eeriness (H7; $B = 0.370$, $\text{Beta} = 0.465$, $t = 10.343$, $p < .001$) as well as increased perceived intelligence (H8; $B = 0.004$, $\text{Beta} = 0.203$, $t = 2.085$, $p = .005$). This indicates that well-designed and cohesive advertisements can enhance consumer admiration for AI while simultaneously triggering feelings of discomfort if the presentation is perceived as “too perfect” or artificial. In line with expectations, consumer perceptions were found to significantly influence purchase intention. Perceived eeriness negatively affected purchase intention (H9; $B = -0.149$, $\text{Beta} = 0.169$, $t = 4.151$, $p < .001$), suggesting that advertisements that elicit unease reduce the likelihood of purchase. Conversely, perceived intelligence had a strong positive effect on purchase intention (H10; $B = 0.650$, $\text{Beta} = 0.562$, $t = 13.817$, $p < .001$), indicating that consumers are more likely to consider purchasing when they perceive the AI-generated advertisement as intelligent and skillfully designed. Overall, these results highlight the nuanced effects of AI-generated advertisement characteristics on consumer responses. While features such as verisimilitude, vitality, imagination, and synthesis can enhance perceived intelligence, they may also simultaneously induce perceived eeriness, which in turn negatively affects purchase intention. Therefore, advertisers must carefully balance realism, creativity, and aesthetic design to maximize positive consumer responses while minimizing unease.

Table 3. Hypotheses test analysis

Dependent variable (Purchase intention)	/Unstandardized Coefficients/		/Standardized Coefficients/	T statistics	P-value
	B value	Standard Error	Beta		
H1	.001	.059	-.201	-2.022	.005
H2	-.059	.069	-.145	-2.856	.005
H3	.532	.050	.512	10.672	.000
H4	.656	.068	.375	9.601	.000
H5	.090	.042	.100	2.124	.034
H6	.230	.050	.227	4.614	.000
H7	.370	.036	.465	10.343	.000
H8	.004	.049	-.203	2.085	.005
H9	.149	.036	.169	4.151	.000
H10	.650	.047	.562	13.817	.000

*** $p < 0.00$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.10$.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the effects of AI-generated advertisement characteristics verisimilitude, vitality, imagination, and synthesis on consumers’ purchase intention, with perceived eeriness and perceived intelligence serving as mediating factors. The results indicate that AI-generated advertisements have a dual influence on consumers: while they can enhance admiration and perceived intelligence, they may also trigger unease or eeriness. Specifically, realistic and well-designed AI advertisements reduce perceived eeriness and increase perceived intelligence, thereby positively influencing purchase intention. Conversely, overly lively or excessively creative content can simultaneously generate positive admiration and negative discomfort, highlighting the importance of balancing creativity, realism, and aesthetic appeal. The findings also confirm that consumer perceptions, particularly perceived intelligence and perceived eeriness, play a critical role in shaping purchase decisions. Overall, this study contributes to both theory and practice by demonstrating that AI-generated advertisements are not

universally effective; their impact depends on how consumers perceive realism, liveliness, creativity, and aesthetic coherence. Marketers seeking to leverage AI-generated content should carefully design advertisements that optimize perceived intelligence while minimizing discomfort, ensuring that AI-driven marketing strategies are both engaging and consumer-centered.

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