

The influence of AI generative advertising attitude on Brand Equity: The mediating role of brand attitude

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Abstract: *The current study aims to analyze the consumers' response to AI generative Ads and its subsequent role in building Brand attitude and Brand Equity. Data was collected from 204 respondents. Structural Equation Modelling through Amos 21 was applied to analyze it. The current research highlights the significance of cultivating a favourable brand attitude through marketing communication. It also emphasizes the relevance of AI generated Ads in this regard. Nonetheless the study also shows that technology driven AI ads do not make a direct impact on brand equity unless mediated by factor like brand attitude. The results indicate that consumers' attitude towards advertising strongly influence their attitude towards the brand. Additionally the study suggests that the effect of ad attitude on brand equity is fully mediated by brand attitude. This underscores the importance for managers to focus on cultivating favorable Brand Attitude using advanced technologies like AI in advertising aiming to maximize the impact on Brand Equity. The findings suggesting the relevance of AI technologies in advertisement strategies underscore the fact that it is essential for managers to continuously monitor and adapt their strategies so as to keep pace with fast changing advertising landscape.*

Keywords: *Advertising Attitude, Brand Attitude, Brand Equity*

Introduction

With the advancement in technology companies are exploring new ways to reach out to consumers through their advertisements. One such major shift in building consumer brand connect through advertisement is the use of AI generative ads. Globally consumer goods companies like Nestle and Mondelez have already teamed up with WPP, the world's biggest advertising agency for AI generative ad campaigns. Back in India WPP partnered with Mondelez in creating the popular AI generated Cadbury campaign. The ad featured Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan asking viewers to shop at 2000 local stores during

Diwali[23]. Globally as companies continue to ramp up investment on AI to reach out to consumers, a predicted growth in market revenues of AI in marketing from 27.4 billion U.S Dollars in 2023 to 107.4 billion dollars in 2028 should not come as a surprise [41]. Even in the field of research the importance of AI driven marketing efforts has been explored in several ways. Researchers agree that in the present scenario companies need to make use of AI for stronger consumer brand connect[20]. Specifically in the field of branding studies have been made to explore the use of AI technologies for brand building efforts (11,24,49). Researchers are also

trying to assess consumer's response to the involvement of AI technologies in areas like marketing efforts [20], advertisement platforms [21], use of chatbots [48] or AI generated brand related information [25]. However analyzing consumer's attitude specifically to generative AI advertisements is yet to get explored by researchers. The existing body of literature lacks studies that explore how consumer's attitude towards AI generated ads influence brand attitude and brand equity. Examining consumer's response in this regard would be of great help in interpreting consumers' overall perception to technology driven marketing communications. While numerous studies have been made on the analysing the impact of ad attitude on brand attitude, not much has been done to include AI driven ads in the same framework. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining consumers' attitudes to dimensions of AI ads in terms of hedonism, consumer connectivity and creativity. The study surveyed 204 consumers who had viewed AI generative ads of 5 popular consumer goods brands. The responses helped in analyzing the impact of AI generative ad content on brand attitude and brand equity constructs. The study aims to investigate the role of AI-driven marketing efforts in strengthening consumer brand connect the purpose of the study can be outlined as under:

- To study the impact of AI generative ad attitude on brand equity
- To analyze the impact of AI generative ad attitude on brand attitude
- To examine the mediating role of brand attitude in the relation between AI ads and brand equity.

Literature Review

AI generative Ads and Brand Equity

Brand Equity represents the value of a brand perceived by customers depending on the products or services offered by the brand [47]. It is the relative value of a brand in the eyes of a customer compared to other similar brands [44]. Over the years studies have identified brand

awareness, brand loyalty, brand association/ image and perceived quality as the key components of brand equity [8,42,4]. Most of these noted works have identified advertisement having a major impact on the brand equity variables [26,7,51]. Furthermore the impact of advertisement does not stay limited to just brand equity dimensions but can also influence purchase intentions [12]. Studies have already identified the distinct advertising appeals that create perceptions about an advertisement in consumer's mind and also influence his purchase intention [31]. Existing marketing literature consider such ad related perceptions as advertising attitude which can be both positive or negative. Hence Advertising attitude can be defined as consumer's positive or negative perception for a particular advertisement influenced by several factors [28]. The study further stated that such advertisement perception can have a positive impact on a brand if the information in the advertisement is presented in an interesting way. Several elements such as impactful sounds, compelling visuals, informational or entertainment snippets can help in making the brand related information interesting [37].

Creativity

Creativity is one such element that plays a crucial role in creating a positive advertising attitude [14,27]. This not only generates brand awareness but also influences purchase intention [38,1]). Recent studies have pointed out that creative ads pay greater attention to visual aspects of advertised brand [10]. Creativity as a dimension of AI generative ad attitude remains largely overlooked. Exploring this dimension can result in capturing attention and deeper engagement.

Hedonism

Hedonism as an advertising dimension represents an individual's perception about an advertisement's value in terms of entertainment, amusement or enjoyment [45]. Studies have identified many such positive moods being generated by ad content [36]. These positive responses towards advertising content also help

in building strong consumer brand relationship[43]. Based on these findings it can be assumed that by inclusion of hedonism in AI driven ads can lead to greater emotional response and brand engagement.

Consumer Brand Connectivity

Creativity in ads not only help consumer to connect with a brand but also helps him to relate himself with the brand[33,]. This represents ad consumerconnectivity or association [5].However not much studies have been made on this aspect influencing consumer's ad attitude[4,5,38,39,46].To build better consumer brand connectivity inclusion of AI technologies in ads can bring about a certain degree of personalization resulting in better user brand interactions.These advertising dimensions not only build advertising attitudes but also impact brand equity and its dimensions such as brand awareness[27,18].

Consumer's response to the dimensions in AI generative communications have been mostly studied in terms of chatbot services[20]or AI generated brand information [25].Thus existing literature lacks studies examining the impact of AI based ad attitude on Brand Equity. Howeverbased on previous general advertising related findings it may be inferred that consumer's attitude towards AI generative ads may also influence the dimensions of brand equity.

This leads us to our first hypothesis:

H1:AI generative Ads have a significant and positive impact on Brand Equity

AI generative Ad attitude and Brand attitude

Brand attitude is the consumer's evaluation of a brand which in turn influences his behavior [40].Researchers view it as a consumer's own

emotional response towards the advertising of a company's brand[2].Several studies have identified attitude towards an advertisement having a strong impact on the attitude towards the brand[15,34,50,2,19,29,32].Studies have also been made on the factors defining attitude towards advertisements having an impact on brand attitude[30].While not much has been done to analyse this in the context of AI based ads, studies on AI generative language and chatbots state that chatbot interactions result in positive brand attitude and trust [48]. This leads us to our second hypothesis

H2:AI generative Ad attitude has a significant and positive impact on brand attitude.

Brand attitude and Brand Equity

Researchers have defined brand attitude in relation to various brand attributes like characteristics, ease of use and overall effectiveness[1].Studies have found brand attitude as not only influencing brand equity but also acting as a mediator in the relationship betweenbrand image and brand equity [6].Even in the field of services marketing brand attitude has been recognized as a fundamental factor contributing to brand equity [9].

These findings can be taken together to contend that brand opinions in form of brand attitude can have an impact on brand equity.

This leads us to the following hypothesis:

H3:Brand attitude has a significant and positive impact on Brand Equity

H4:Brand attitude mediates the relationship between AI generative ads and Brand Equity.

The Research Model and hypotheses proposed are presented in figure 1

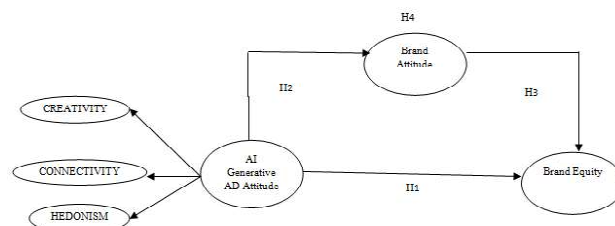


Figure1: Research Model

Source: Author

Research Methodology

Data Collection

The consumer group chosen for the study was limited to individuals aged 20-50 years & above. Respondents belonging to these age groups are generally the key decision makers in purchases. Mostly being tech savvy their responses would reflect their varied experiences related to both AI driven advertisements and brand knowledge. The questionnaire was

administered to 215 respondents, out of which 204 responded. On analyzing the demographic profile, it was found that most of the respondents were aged between 20-40 years old. Out of 204 respondents, 66 percent were male (n=135) and 34 percent were female (n=69). The administered questionnaire consisted of links to videos of AI generative Ads of 5 popular brands. Respondents were asked to watch the ads and submit their responses to questions related to three variables under the study: AI generative ads, Brand attitude and Brand Equity. Description of the ads and their links have been provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Brands and URLs of AI generative Ads

Sl.No	Brand	URLs
1	Coca Cola	https://youtu.be/VGa1imApfdg
2	Heinz	https://youtu.be/LFmpVy6eGXs
3	Nike	https://youtu.be/7UMm1TYqzVk?si=QoLvPFUSeTCEi8DS
4	Cadbury	https://youtu.be/5WECsbqAQSk
5	boAT	https://youtu.be/EKGcDxtRXuw?si=IwfOuFN6XP1lVAzD

Source: Primary Data

Measurement Scales

All the variables were assessed on a five point Likert scale with 1 for Strongly Disagree and 5 for Strongly Agree. The measurement items for the variables under study were self developed. We adopted SEM approach involving CFA and path

analysis. Data analysis was done as suggested by (3) comprising of two steps. As a first step reliability and validity of the constructs were tested. Secondly the hypotheses stating the relationships among the variables were examined. We followed suggestion on model fit by (22) for both the measurement and structural model.

Table 2: Measurement Items for latent constructs

Sl No	Items	Standardized Factor Loadings	Chronbach's Alpha
1.	1. Attitude towards AI generative Ads (CR=0.83, AVE=0.49)		0.851
	a) Creativity:		
	i) Creativity in AI ad is highly appreciated.	0.61	
	ii) AI Ads surprise me with new story telling approaches.	0.52	
	iii) AI Ads introduce me to Brands in refreshing and unexpected ways.	0.71	
	b) Consumer Brand Connectivity:		
	i) AI Ads are memorable.	0.68	
	ii) AI Ads seem realistic and impressive.	0.63	
	iii) AI Ads make me think differently about the brands.	0.69	
	c) Hedonism:		
	i) It is fun and enjoyable to watch AI Ads	0.67	
	ii) The visuals and graphics capture my imagination.	0.59	
	iii) The ads seem more like forms of entertainment than promotional contents.	0.57	

2.Brand attitude(CR=0.74,AVE =0.51)		0.736
a) The brands shown in the AI Ads are very desirable.	0.61	
b) I enjoy interacting with the brands' advertising and marketing campaigns.	0.72	
c) The Brands stand out from their competitors.	0.77	
3.Brand Equity (CR=0.88,AVE=0.55)		0.876
The ads added to my Brand Awareness level.	0.69	
The ads will help me to recognize the brands in future.	0.68	
I will always recommend the brands to my family and friends.	0.74	
I would always consider the brands whenever I think of making a purchase.	0.76	
The brands seem highly functional and reliable.	0.76	
I believe the brands deliver on their promises.	0.74	
The brands match my values and beliefs.	0.63	
The brands seem to be dependable and caring for customer needs.	0.52	

Source : Primary Data

Source : Primary Data

Measurement Model

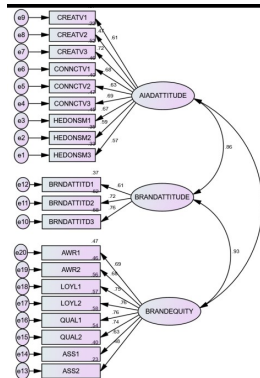
Chronbach's alpha coefficient was used to test the reliability of the measures. Chronbach's alpha for all the constructs were above 0.70, thus establishing initial reliability of the measures. To examine the goodness of fit of the measurement model confirmatory factor analysis using Amos software was performed. The measurement model with all the constructs confirmed to the values set for an acceptable model fit: $((508^2)/df = 1.668$, GFI

= 0.826; AGFI = 0.782; CFI = 0.905; RMR = 0.062, and RMSEA = 0.071). All factor loadings were significant ($p < 0.01$), and varied from 0.58 to 0.76 (17). The composite reliability for each variable was greater than the minimum acceptable value 0.70 (35). The average variance extracted (AVE) estimates varied from 0.48 to 0.55 thus almost satisfying the criteria of 0.50. Table 2 shows the Chronbach's alpha, factor loadings, composite reliability and average variance extracted. Further the correlation between any two construct is significantly below 1 thus proving the discriminant validity of each construct (Table 3).

Table 3: Correlation matrix

Variables	AI AD	BRAND ATTITUDE	BRAND EQUITY
AI AD	1		
BRAND ATTITUDE	0.692**	1	
BRAND EQUITY	0.715**	0.746**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)



Source: Primary data

Figure 2: Measurement Model

Source: Author

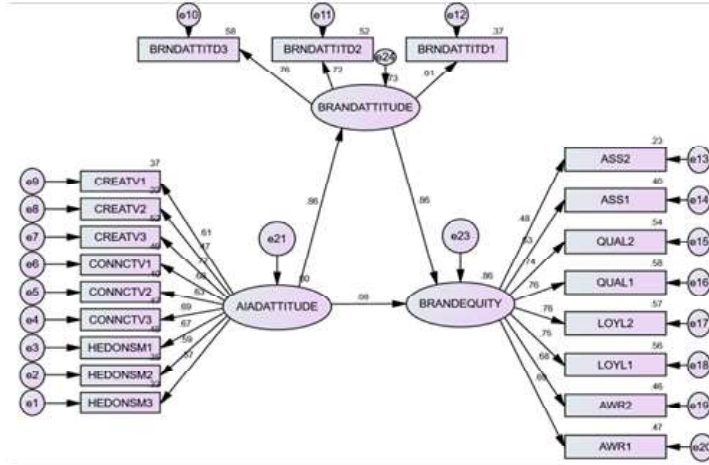


Figure 3: Structural Model

Source: Author

Results and Discussion

Direct Effect Analysis

The hypotheses proposed were tested on the basis of Structural Equation Modeling. All of the fit measures were satisfactory (CMIN = 1.688 ($p < 0.00$); GFI = 0.826; AGFI = 0.782; CFI = 0.905; RMR = 0.074, and RMSEA = 0.071). First the direct effect of AI Ad attitude on Brand attitude and Brand Equity were tested. In Table 4, we can observe that the impact on Brand attitude is positive and significant ($b = 0.846$, $t = 5.957$, $p = 0.000$) whereas the impact on Brand equity is not significant ($b = 0.045$, $t = 0.367$, $p = 0.713$). Similarly Brand Attitude also makes a significant positive impact on Brand Equity ($b = 0.485$, $t = 3.057$, $p = 0.002$).

Thus, our suggested hypothesis H1 is rejected whereas H2 and H3 stand supported.

Mediation Analysis

The study investigated the mediating role of Brand Attitude in the relationship between AI generative Ad Attitude on Brand Equity. Findings suggested that the indirect effect of AI generative Ad attitude on Brand Equity was positive and significant ($b = 0.410$, $p = 0.002$) thus supporting hypothesis H4. However the direct effect of AI generative Ad attitude on Brand Equity was not found to be significant ($b = 0.045$, $t = 0.367$, $p = 0.713$). Hence Brand Attitude fully mediates the relationship between AI generative Ad attitude and Brand Equity. The Mediation analysis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Mediation Analysis

Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Confidence Interval		P-value	Conclusion
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
AI generative Ad Attitude → Brand Attitude → Brand Equity	0.045 (0.713)	0.410	0.168	1.652	0.002	Complete Mediation

Source: Data Analysis

The objective of this paper was to investigate the role of brand attitude as a mediator in the relationship between consumer's attitude towards AI driven advertisements and brand equity. The statistical analysis revealed that brand attitude fully mediates the impact, thus confirming the result with previous findings on brand attitude impacting brand equity [6,9,13]. The results also reestablished the past findings which identified Ad attitude having a significant impact on brand attitude [15,34,50]. Furthermore the results can also be seen as a confirmation to previous findings on the influence of AI technologies on Brand attitude [48]. However in the context of Brand Equity the direct impact of AI driven ad attitude was not found to be significant. This underscores importance of developing positive Brand attitude which can leverage the impact of AI driven advertisement on Brand Equity.

Conclusion

This study holds several implications for managers. Since brand attitude fully mediates the relationship between consumer attitude towards AI-driven advertisements and brand equity, it is essential for managers to prioritize initiatives that improve brand attitude. This might require application of AI-driven advertising strategies enhancing brand perception and consumer engagement. Secondly the study highlights the importance of mediating factors for amplifying the impact of advertisement on brand equity. Managers are encouraged to identify and leverage these factors to maximize the effectiveness of their marketing efforts. Finally the findings suggesting the relevance of AI technologies in advertisement strategies underscore the fact that it is essential for managers to continuously monitor and adapt their strategies so as to keep pace with fast changing advertising landscape. Thus by incorporating these implications into their managerial strategies, businesses can better leverage AI-driven advertising to enhance brand equity and strengthen their competitive position in the market.

Future scope and Limitations

Similar to other studies the current research has its own set of limitations. Findings are limited to Consumers' opinions related to a few selected advertisements. Future studies can test the applicability of the model by including advertisements from diverse fields. Lastly the study adopted a limited approach by examining the impact of AI generative advertising and brand attitude on brand equity. The same framework can be applied to test the impact of other forms of advertisements and additional mediating factors on Brand Equity.

Summary

The current research highlights the significance of cultivating a favourable brand attitude through marketing communication. It also emphasizes the relevance of AI generated Ads in this regard. Nonetheless the study also shows that technology driven AI ads do not make a direct impact on brand equity unless mediated by factor like brand attitude. In short the study provides a new direction to future research in further exploring the role of brand attitude in influencing key business strategies.

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