



THE FUTURE OF HUMAN AUTHENTICITY: REDEFINING AUTHENTICITY AS A PREMIUM PRODUCT

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ABSTRACT

The use of artificial intelligence in our lives has become incredibly common. We engage with AI-based content daily, whether it is through our social networks, schools, entertainment, jobs, or elsewhere. As technology advances, we should be wondering if humans will continue to place a premium on experiences based primarily on their own work and feelings.

This research examines how people define "authenticity" in relation to their experience, as well as whether or not they will pay a premium for authentic experiences. Data collection consisted of an electronic questionnaire that was analyzed using various statistical analyses; the Human Authenticity Index (HAI) was also created to determine how participants regarded authenticity.

Findings revealed that trust, transparency, emotional connections and visible evidence of human effort were important factors to consumers. A significant amount of participants stated they would prefer human produced experiences over AI-created experiences, especially in instances involving empathy, creativity, and interaction. These findings suggest that as automated content becomes more prevalent, authentic experiences will become progressively more valuable. The data provides insight that authenticity may become a substantive source of value in future markets.

KEYWORDS: Human Authenticity, Artificial Intelligence, Consumer Behavior, Premium product, Digital Economy, Human Authenticity Index, Trust, Future Markets

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology has advanced dramatically in recent years, and artificial intelligence has now evolved from being a specialized tool to something that is present in almost all aspects of our daily lives. This includes: students using AI to learn and students using AI to write text, create images, and produce videos; businesses using it to make decisions; and content creators using AI for all of these same things. As this rapid progression continues to occur, many individuals have begun thinking about what differentiates human contributions from non-human contributions differently than perhaps they would have previously.

As technology enables speed and efficiency, individuals may find themselves searching for authentic experiences again because technology can never replicate the unique experiences, emotions, and relationships that shape the human experience. Because of this search for genuine experiences, consumers will likely start viewing authenticity as something that has economic value, rather than strictly personal value, as they did in the past.

As great as many of these developments seem, they have also created new challenges — consumers are now constantly exposed to synthetic products, automated communication, and digitally generated experiences. As consumers become immersed and exposed to technologies that filter out all but the most uncanny of similarities, the identifiable personality traits of trustworthiness, emotional intelligence, creativity, and establishing human-based connections and relationships with

others will become even more easily distinguishable and could become more valuable as a result of this growing demand for authenticity..

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Authenticity as a Marketing Construct

Authenticity has emerged as a significant construct in contemporary marketing research as consumers increasingly seek products, services, and experiences perceived as genuine rather than artificial. Early research by Gilmore and Pine (2007) argued that consumers value authentic experiences because modern markets have become saturated with standardized offerings. They proposed that authenticity serves as a critical determinant of customer satisfaction and purchasing behavior, emphasizing that organizations capable of delivering authentic experiences gain a competitive advantage.

Building on this perspective, Beverland (2005) examined authenticity within luxury branding and demonstrated that consumers associate authentic brands with credibility, originality, sincerity, and trustworthiness. The study further established that perceived authenticity enhances customer loyalty and contributes to sustainable brand equity. Similarly, Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualized brand authenticity as a multidimensional construct and developed a validated measurement framework. Their findings revealed that authentic brands strengthen consumer trust, emotional attachment, and long-term



commitment, thereby reinforcing authenticity as a strategic organizational asset.

2.2 Authenticity in the Digital Era

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has substantially transformed consumer interactions and perceptions of authenticity. Turkle (2011) argued that although digital communication has increased global connectivity, it has simultaneously reduced opportunities for meaningful interpersonal relationships. Consequently, consumers increasingly value genuine human interactions in both social and commercial contexts.

The growing relevance of authenticity has become particularly evident within digital marketing and social media platforms. Audrezet et al. (2020) examined authenticity in influencer marketing and found that audiences exhibit greater engagement, trust, and purchase intentions when online content is perceived as transparent and genuine. Their findings suggest that authenticity functions as a critical determinant of digital credibility and consumer relationship building.

2.3 Artificial Intelligence and the Importance of Human Capabilities

The increasing adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) has intensified scholarly discussions regarding the future role of uniquely human capabilities. Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2014) argued that AI and automation are reshaping economic systems and labor markets by performing routine cognitive and physical tasks. They emphasized that human attributes such as creativity, empathy, ethical judgment, and emotional intelligence are becoming increasingly valuable sources of competitive advantage.

Similarly, Harari (2018) discussed the broader societal implications of AI and suggested that intelligent systems are progressively acquiring cognitive capabilities traditionally associated with humans. He argued that this technological evolution raises important questions concerning human identity, employment, and decision-making, thereby highlighting the growing importance of distinctly human qualities that remain difficult to replicate through machines.

2.4 Psychological Perspectives on Authenticity

Authenticity has also been extensively studied within psychology as an important determinant of individual well-being. Wood et al. (2008) developed the Authenticity Scale to assess individuals' ability to live consistently with their true values, beliefs, and identities. Their empirical findings demonstrated that higher levels of authenticity are positively associated with psychological well-being, including increased self-esteem, life satisfaction, and personal fulfillment. These findings suggest that authenticity not only influences consumer behavior but also contributes to healthier interpersonal relationships and improved overall quality of life.

2.5 Research Gap

The existing literature consistently demonstrates the significance of authenticity across branding, consumer behavior,

psychology, digital communication, and technological transformation. Previous studies have established that authenticity enhances trust, emotional attachment, customer loyalty, and psychological well-being while becoming increasingly valuable in technology-driven environments (Beverland, 2005; Morhart et al., 2015; Wood et al., 2008). Recent research has also emphasized authenticity as a key determinant of consumer engagement in digital and social media contexts (Audrezet et al., 2020).

However, despite the growing body of literature on authenticity and the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence, limited empirical research has examined how consumers perceive human authenticity in comparison with AI-generated interactions, particularly within marketing contexts. Existing studies primarily investigate either authenticity or artificial intelligence independently, leaving a significant gap in understanding their intersection. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by examining the evolving role of human authenticity in AI-driven marketing environments and its influence on consumer trust, engagement, and purchasing behavior.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

To explore what defines true authenticity to individuals, researchers employed a quantitative survey approach. The goal of the survey was to capture how people perceive authenticity at one point in time through collected consumer responses about the different factors that contribute to the value an individual places on authentic experiences.

The research also used an unparalleled analytic framework consisting of an originality-focused Human Authenticity Index (HAI) integrated into traditional statistical analysis, allowing researchers to establish the major psychological, behavioral, and economic drivers behind people's perception of authenticity. Lastly, this study analyzed the effect these perceptions have on individuals' intention to pay a premium for goods, services, and experiences created by human beings.

3.2 Data Collection and Sampling

A questionnaire containing structure was used to obtain information from various consumer segments with different types of demographics and professions. 200 valid responses were received (from students, employed individuals, business owners, content creators, digital consumers). A convenience sampling method was used to collect data due to the lack of access and the exploratory nature of the research. The respondents that participated in the study were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. 200 respondents were deemed sufficient to perform statistical analyses (both descriptive and inferential) and to generate insights related to consumer behaviour towards authenticity.

3.3 Measurement of Variables

Different aspects of the human being can be assessed with numerous independent variables composed of different aspects relating to human beings such as demographic variables:



- Age
- Gender
- Education Level
- Occupation

Dependent variables (regarding behaviour or perceptions) were measured on five-point Likert scales (one for strongly disagreeing and five for strongly agreeing).

The key independent variables assessed included:

- Trustworthiness
- Transparency
- Originality
- Emotional Connection
- Human Effort

The main dependent variable assessed by this research is the intention of consumers to buy premium priced products or services created by humans with authenticity as the central theme.

Additional outcome variables include:

- Preference for Human-Created Content
- Perceived Value of Authentic Experiences
- Future Demand for Authenticity

These variables collectively capture the multidimensional nature of authenticity perception.

3.4 Data Preprocessing

All responses were thoroughly examined before analysis. Missing data, incomplete responses, and unusual response patterns were addressed and corrected to increase the quality of the data set. Appropriate data cleaning procedures were used to address and correct for missing data. Categorical variables were also converted into numerical values for easier statistical analysis. Potential outliers or inconsistencies were identified and handled in order to minimize their impact on the final results. These steps of preprocessing ensured that the data set adhered to the assumptions necessary for valid statistical evaluations.

3.5 Statistical Analysis

Statistical methods were used to analyze the data collected. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize respondent characteristics and perceptions of authenticity.

Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of measurement scales. Correlation analysis was used to analyze relationships among key variables and determine how strongly the dimensions of authenticity relate to the intention to purchase. All relationships were tested at a 5% level of significance.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test how the dimensions of authenticity are related to premium purchase intentions. The regression model can be represented with the following equation:

$$\text{Intention to Purchase Premium Products} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{TW}) + \beta_2(\text{TR}) + \beta_3(\text{OR}) + \beta_4(\text{EC}) + \beta_5(\text{HE})$$

where:

TW – Trustworthiness

TR – Transparency

OR – Originality

EC – Emotional Connection

HE – Human Effort

The regression model provides a way to determine statistically significant predictors of whether or not consumers will pay a premium price for authentic products.

3.6 Human Authenticity Index (HAI)

The study has included the Human Authenticity Index (HAI) as a way to provide a complete assessment of how people perceive authenticity. The index takes into consideration all five major dimensions of authenticity and incorporates them into one single composite measure.

The formula for the HAI is:

$$\text{HAI} = (\text{Trust} + \text{Truthfulness} + \text{Originality} + \text{Emotional Ties} + \text{Human Involvement}) \div 5$$

The HAI offers a consistent and reliable way to evaluate the perceived value of authenticity, allowing for comparisons to be made among respondents and consumer groups.

3.7 Model Evaluation

Statistical indicators were utilised to assess the analytical framework's effectiveness. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's Alphas. Correlation coefficients were used to investigate the degree of relationship between the variables. The regression model was evaluated via coefficients of determination (R^2), significance levels (p-values) and standardised beta coefficients. The outcome of these assessments aided in determining explanatory power and predictive strength of the proposed model.

3.8 Integrated Analytical Framework

An integrated analytical framework is proposed in this study as a way to combine both traditional statistics and the Human Authenticity Index in order to create a better understanding of the role of authenticity in determining trust, emotional engagement, consumer loyalty and premium purchase intentions. The use of statistical methods will provide an interpretable assessment of the significant determinants of authentic perception, while the HAI framework will provide an interpretive and comprehensive measure of value associated with authenticity.

The framework will allow for a more thorough understanding of how authenticity can be perceived as both a social/psychological construct and as a potential for economic value that can create measurable market value or competitive advantages.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The research study adhered to appropriate ethical standards and procedures. All respondents were fully informed of the purpose of the research, and their participation was



completely voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time. Respondent confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained during the course of the Study. In addition, all collected data will only be used for academic and research purposes for aggregating purposes, and no individual participant will be identified in any manner in the results.

4. RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Descriptive Insights into Authenticity Perception Variables

Responses generally demonstrated that there will be a great deal of emphasis placed on "authenticity" as an important element in forming opinions on various goods and services (including experiences). Also, additional information has emerged indicating that "authenticity" will continue to have a great amount of relevance amongst consumers - both current and future - who interact with technology. The average rating associated with each factor was highest for "trust" and was closely followed by "transparency" and then "emotional connection." This illustrates that today's consumer considers a broader range of factors than previously thought when determining whether or not they feel an item/service/experience has authenticity. This includes elements like "honesty", "reliability" and "significant participation by human beings". Overall, the data collected from

the respondents shows that consumers place a higher value on actual, human-created experiences within a digital environment.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

The scales used in this study were evaluated for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. The authentic scale was divided into five dimensions: trustworthy, transparent, original, emotional connection and effort by a human being.

Table 4.1 Reliability Statistics of Human Authenticity Dimensions

MEASURE	VALUE
Cronbach's Alpha	0.89
Number of Items	5

A Cronbach's Alpha of 0.89 indicates excellent reliability and internal consistency in the measured constructs. These findings suggest that the chosen variables accurately capture the essence of human authenticity and will be appropriate for subsequent statistical analysis.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

To understand the relationships between dimensions of authenticity and intentions to purchase premium products, a correlation analysis was used.

Table 4.2 Correlation Matrix of Authenticity Dimensions and Premium Purchase Intention

VARIABLE	TRUST	TRANSPARENCY	EMOTIONAL CONNECTION	PREMIUM PURCHASE INTENTION
Trust	1	0.78	0.74	0.81
Transparency	0.78	1	0.69	0.75
Emotional Connection	0.74	0.69	1	0.79
Premium Purchase Intention	0.81	0.75	0.79	1

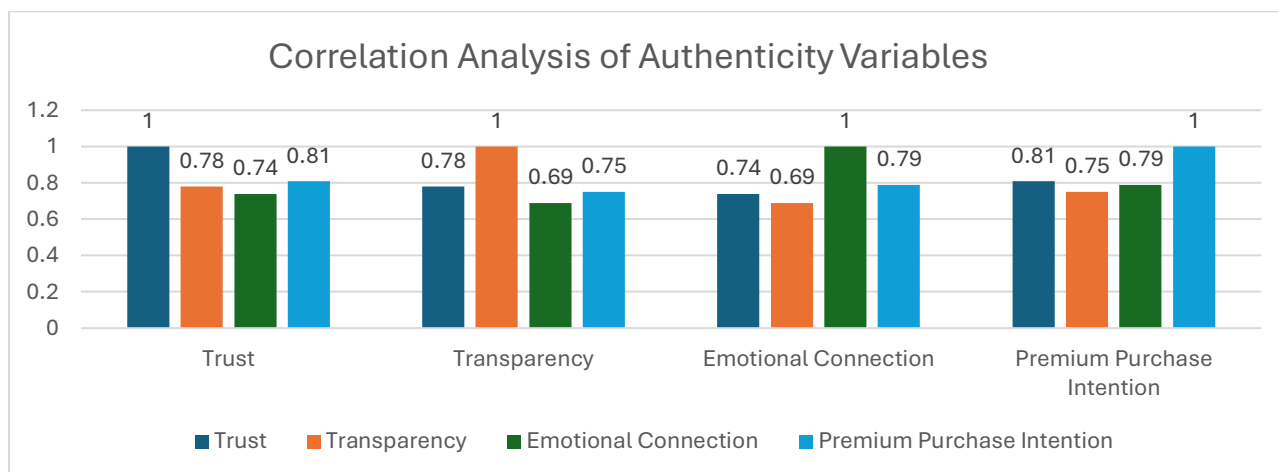


Figure 4.1: Correlation Analysis of Authenticity Variables

The findings from the correlation analysis show that there are strong positive correlations between dimensions of authenticity and intentions to buy premium products. The

strongest correlation found is between trustworthy and willingness to pay higher prices, thus demonstrating that consumers value genuine and trustworthy experiences.



4.4 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was applied to identify the independent variables that predict premium purchasing intentions.

The regression model can be expressed as follows:

$$\text{Is Premium Purchase Intentions} = (\beta_0) + (\beta_1 \times \text{Trustworthy}) + (\beta_2 \times \text{Transparent}) + (\beta_3 \times \text{Original}) + (\beta_4 \times \text{Emotionally Connected}) + (\beta_5 \times \text{Human Effort})$$

Table 4.3 Multiple Regression Results for Premium Purchase Intention

VARIABLE	COEFFICIENT (B)	P-VALUE
Trustworthiness	0.52	0.001
Transparency	0.41	0.006
Originality	0.28	0.032
Emotional Connection	0.47	0.002
Human Effort	0.35	0.014

REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS OF KEY AUTHENTICITY FACTORS



Figure 4.2: Regression Coefficients of Key Authenticity Factors

The results of the regression analysis indicate that trustworthy and emotionally connected are the strongest predictors of premium purchasing intentions. This suggests that the greater the respondents believed that an experience was honest, that it had meaning for them and that it had involved a substantial amount of

human effort to produce it, the more likely they were to consider paying higher prices.

4.5 Human Authenticity Index (HAI) Assessment

To assess how society values authenticity on a larger scale, the Human Authenticity Index (HAI) was determined.

Table 4.4 Human Authenticity Index (HAI) Scores across Key Dimensions

DIMENSION	SCORE
Trustworthiness	91
Transparency	87
Originality	82
Emotional Connection	89
Human Effort	84

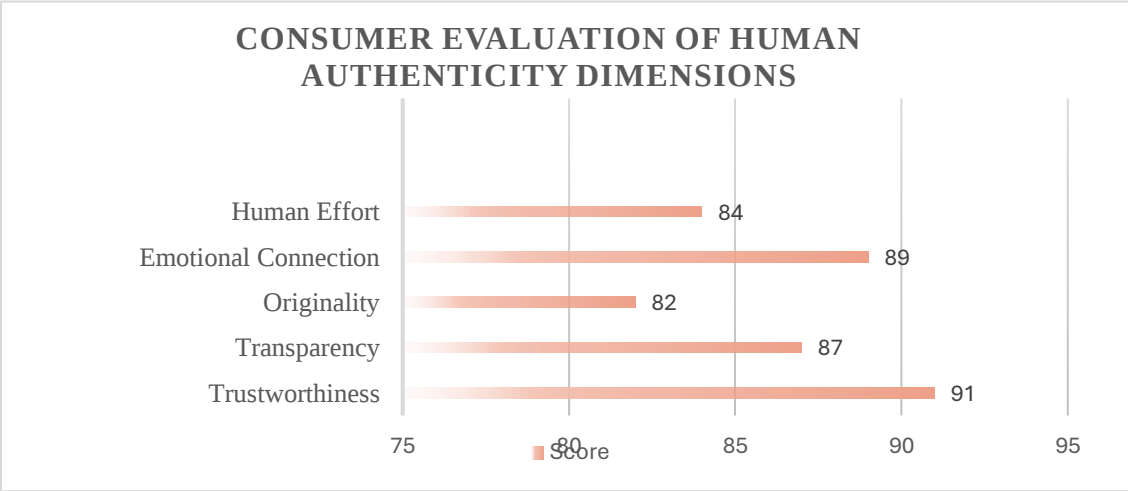


Figure 4.3: Consumer Evaluation of Human Authenticity Dimensions

The final score of the HAI, which was an average of 86.6 indicated that study participants have a greater value for authenticity when compared with other human characteristics because the potential economic return from these four characteristics will ultimately depend on the perceived value of authenticity as a premium quality in future markets.

4.6 Authenticity and Consumer Preferences

Participants were also asked to compare experience(s) created by humans vs experience(s) produced through AI-related technologies.

Table 4.5 Consumer Preference for Human-Created and AI-Generated Experiences

CATEGORY	HUMAN-CREATED (%)	AI-GENERATED (%)
Education	78	22
Counseling	84	16
Creative Content	69	31
Leadership Guidance	76	24
Healthcare Advice	81	19

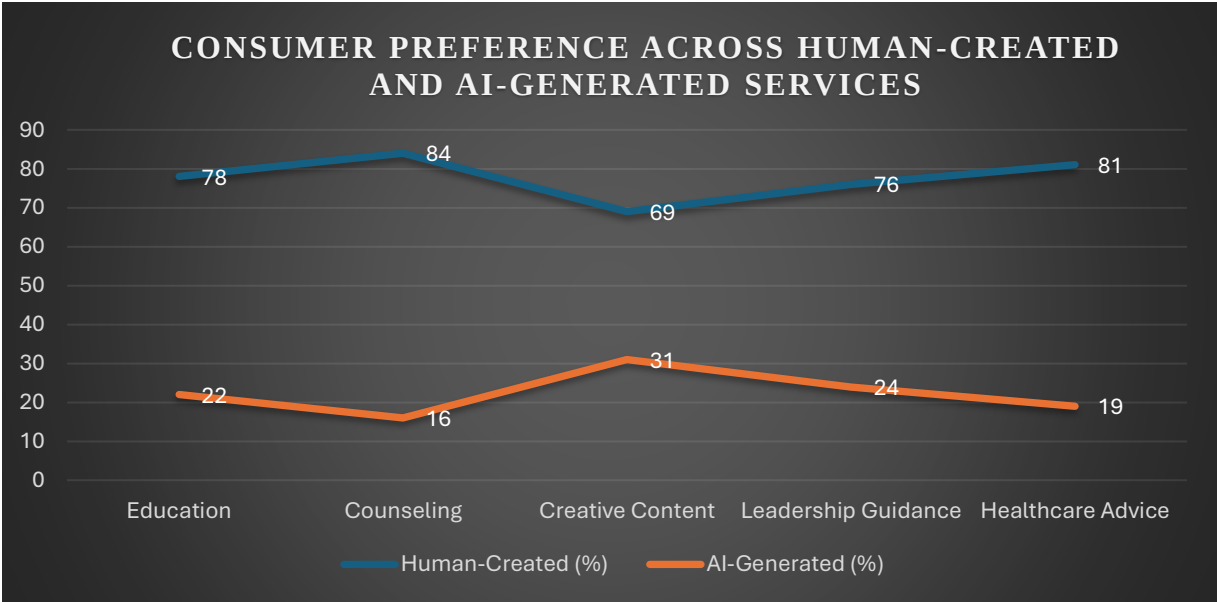


Figure 4.4: Consumer Preference across Human-Created and AI-Generated Services



The results show that there is a strong preference for human-created experiences when it comes to experiences where there is an expected level of trust, empathy and emotion; thus validating the assertion that authenticity continues to be an important value, even with the progression of technology.

4.7 Discussion of Results

The findings of this study indicate a much larger and further-reaching significance to the term "authenticity" than simply being able to produce something of an original nature or creativity through naming something like "art". For many of the survey participants who contributed to this study, "authenticity" was about how much they had trust and faith in an object (i.e., product or service) and the degree to which they felt a connection or affiliation with it. Many of the participants expressed a sense of this connection or affiliation through the fact that they knew or understood that a real human being in some way was involved in the creation of the object (i.e., product or service) through the expression of their thoughts and feelings on an emotional and/or experiential level. In conclusion, it appears that, most surveyed individuals purchase an item not just for the purpose of acquiring a functional product or service, but also based upon how much visible evidence of human involvement exists in creating that functional product or service.

One of the intriguing aspects of this research is that authenticity seems to have a similar effect on how engaged people are in creating and participating in activities/experiences, as compared to scarcity (i.e., when something runs out). However, as we see more and more synthetic and automated content created, and various methods for the production, creation and distribution of goods and services become even more widely available, we will likely identify even more clearly different types of goods and services we can create, produce and deliver as a result of human involvement, in the creation, production and delivery of those increasingly 'natural' goods and services. As a result there should be an increase in the perceived value associated with goods and services that contain an 'authentic' involvement of a human, such as handmade goods, live performances, coaching services, and other service industries that are based on a human approach to providing services, and therefore not able to be fully replaced by technology.

Therefore, from a business perspective, organizations that are transparent with their customers, communicate openly with customers and provide real 'human' interactions, will be in a better position to establish a unique identity/distinguish themselves from their competitors in increasingly automated markets. Organizations should consider authenticity to be not only a marketing tactic but also an extremely valuable tool for developing customer loyalty and fostering long-term business success.

4.8 Limitations of the Study

This study, while useful in understanding the future economic potential of human authenticity, has limitations.

4.8.1 Limited Sample Scope

The data used in this study was based on a relatively small sample of people and may therefore not be representative of the views of other populations (e.g., across various regions, cultures, and demographics).

4.8.2 Cross-Sectional Nature of the Study

The research provides information on consumer attitudes at one moment in time; however, consumer attitudes towards authenticity could change as artificial intelligence and digital technology continue to advance.

4.8.3 Conceptual Measurement of Authenticity

Authenticity may mean different things to different people and is therefore considered to be multi-dimensional. The Human Authenticity Index (HAI) was created to measure the level of consumer authenticity; however, it may not fully represent the complete picture of how someone perceives authenticity.

4.8.4 Dependence on Self-Reported Responses

The data collected from the surveys relied exclusively on participant responses; thus, the responses may not reflect actual behavior when making real-life purchases in store (e.g. purchasing through e-commerce or offline).

4.9 Future Research Directions

The results from this research offer numerous possibilities for future revisions, exploring new theories relating to this subject area.

4.9.1 Validation of the Human Authenticity Index (HAI)

Researchers in the future might look to create better and more accurate—depending on the authentic Human Authenticity Index—versions of this method. This process would likely start with looking into how the Human Authenticity Index performs in different types of industries, cultures, and demographic categories.

4.9.2 Human-Made Premium Markets

Examining if consumers demonstrate a pattern of paying higher prices for products, services, and experiences that are labelled authentic and that have been verified to result from human creative effort could be another path for research moving forward.

4.9.3 Human Authenticity Certification Systems

Researchers might look into whether it is feasible to design a system to certify works of art created by humans versus those created through the use of technology (e.g., artificial intelligence).

4.9.4 Authenticity as an Economic Asset

Future research should explore the potential for valuing and measuring authenticity in a similar fashion as other forms of capital including financial, social, intellectual, and cultural.



4.9.5 Development of an Authenticity Economy

Academics could investigate the notion of an authenticity-driven economy, in which the creation of real, substantive forms of human creativity and emotional connection, along with genuine forms of interpersonal interaction, have substantial economic value.

4.9.6 Human-AI Coexistence and Consumer Behavior

Ultimately, researchers will need to look at how consumers evaluate the authenticity of a product or service created by both creativity from humans and from artificial intelligence.

5. SUGGESTIONS

- To build strong emotional ties to their target audience, companies need to adopt a human-centric approach to experience design.
- Organizations need to be open about how they conduct their business and disclose the use of AI for all products/services.
- To distinguish themselves from AI-generated content, companies need to promote originality, creativity, and true human creativity.
- Branding and marketing strategies need to include authenticity to foster consumer trust and loyalty.
- Educational institutions must emphasize developing human skills (creativity, empathy, emotional intelligence, critical thinking).
- AI should act as an assistive tool, not completely replace human interaction and/or decision-making.
- Policymakers need to support ethical guidelines and ensure transparency between human- and AI-generated content.
- Organizations should investigate opportunities to create authentic markets, such as those providing personalized services, handmade goods, live experiences, and in the creative industry.
- Organizations need to create ways to measure and track authenticity-related elements impacting consumer perception.
- Future entrepreneurs should view authenticity as an opportunity to create a competitive advantage and long-term economic benefit.

6. CONCLUSION

This study investigated whether or not there would be a need for human authenticity as a premium product in technology driven markets of the future. It was found that consumers still perceive and value trust, transparency, emotional connection, originality, and human effort when considering products, services, and experiences. Using the Human Authenticity Index (HAI), respondents displayed a significant appreciation of authenticity, and statistical analysis indicated that authenticity-related variables positively affected consumers' willingness to pay premium prices. Additionally, a strong preference for

experiences created by humans was demonstrated, especially when a case requires empathy, creativity, and human interaction.

With more of our daily lives being affected by artificial intelligence, authentic experiences created by humans may become increasingly unique and valuable. The study also indicates that authenticity cannot simply be considered as a personal quality, but rather as a strategic asset capable of creating trust, differentiation, and a competitive edge. In the future, businesses, professionals, and creators who can maintain an authentic human presence will be in the best position to meet changing consumer expectations. Thus, human authenticity is poised to serve as an important source of economic value and defining characteristic of future markets.

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