



GENERATIVE AI MARKETING AND PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG GENERATION Z: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND PERCEPTION

B. Chitra¹, Dr. S. Shanmugapriya²

¹Doctoral Fellow, PG and Research Department of Commerce, NGM College, Pollachi

²Associate Professor, PG and Research Department of Commerce, NGM College, Pollachi

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ABSTRACT

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is reshaping digital marketing by enabling personalised, scalable, and innovative content, while simultaneously raising concerns regarding authenticity and consumer trust. This study examines how Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation influence Brand Perception and Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers, with Brand Perception serving as a mediating mechanism. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was employed using data from 425 Generation Z consumers collected through a structured questionnaire based on five-point Likert-type scales. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson and Spearman correlations, multiple regression, variance inflation factors, HC3 robust standard errors, and bootstrapped mediation analysis based on 5,000 resamples. The findings indicate that Perceived Authenticity ($\beta = .234$), Perceived Personalization ($\beta = .160$), and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation ($\beta = .407$) significantly and positively influence Brand Perception. Brand Perception significantly predicts Purchase Intention ($\beta = .520$). Significant indirect effects were observed for Perceived Authenticity ($\beta = .122$), Perceived Personalization ($\beta = .083$), and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation ($\beta = .212$) through Brand Perception. The findings demonstrate that consumer responses to GenAI marketing translate into purchase intention substantially through broader brand evaluations. The study highlights the importance of combining AI-enabled innovation and personalization with authenticity and consistent brand positioning.

KEY WORDS: Generative AI Marketing; Brand Perception; Purchase Intention; Generation Z

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) is transforming digital marketing by enabling brands to produce content that is faster, scalable, personalised, and responsive to changing consumer preferences. Unlike earlier consumer-facing AI applications that were primarily associated with recommendation systems and automated services, GenAI increasingly participates directly in the creation of advertising and brand communication (Longoni & Cian, 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Smith & Hutson, 2024). Generative AI enables marketers to develop dynamic and personalised messages based on consumers' preferences and behavioural patterns, while also reducing production costs and improving marketing efficiency (Kshetri et al., 2023; Israfilzade & Sadili, 2025). These capabilities create considerable opportunities for brands to improve consumer engagement and purchase-related outcomes (Mehta et al., 2022; Sivathanu et al., 2022).

However, the increasing use of AI in marketing also creates an important consumer-perception challenge. Although AI-generated content can generate positive responses through novelty, usefulness, and personalisation (Mayahi & Vidrih, 2022; Ratta et al., 2024), consumers may simultaneously question its authenticity, credibility, and emotional quality (Sharma & Lal, 2024; Aljarah et al., 2024). Awareness or disclosure of AI

involvement has been associated with reduced empathy, credibility, and favourable advertising attitudes in some contexts (Arango et al., 2023; Baek et al., 2024). Such concerns are particularly important because authenticity is closely associated with consumer trust, brand relationships, and purchase decisions (Zhang & Patrick, 2021; Cascio Rizzo et al., 2023; Wahyuni & Zulfikar, 2024). At the same time, well-designed AI-generated content may strengthen brand credibility and consumer engagement, indicating that consumer responses to AI-generated marketing are not uniformly positive or negative (Feuerriegel et al., 2024; Hendrayati et al., 2024). Generation Z is especially relevant in this context because this consumer group may scrutinise machine-generated content more critically (Wortel et al., 2024).

Against this background, the present study examines the relationships between Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, Perceived Usefulness/Innovation, Brand Perception, and Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. Specifically, the study aims to examine whether perceived authenticity, personalization, and usefulness/innovation influence brand perception; assess whether brand perception significantly influences purchase intention; and determine whether brand perception mediates the relationships between these AI-marketing perceptions and purchase intention.



The study therefore moves beyond examining the direct effects of AI-generated marketing perceptions by identifying brand perception as a potential mechanism through which consumer evaluations translate into purchase intention. This focus addresses the need for greater empirical understanding of how consumers process AI-generated marketing and subsequently form behavioural intentions. The following section reviews the relevant literature and establishes the theoretical basis for the proposed relationships. The conceptual framework and hypotheses are then developed, followed by the methodology, empirical results, discussion of findings, theoretical and practical implications, conclusion, limitations, and directions for future research.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The development of consumer-facing artificial intelligence has transformed digital marketing from conventional predictive and analytical applications toward increasingly interactive and generative forms of consumer engagement. Before the public launch of ChatGPT in December 2022, consumer-facing AI was largely associated with recommender systems and automated service provision (Longoni & Cian, 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Rizomyliotis et al., 2022). Subsequent applications have expanded to AI chatbots, service robots, virtual influencers, and other interactive systems. Consumers may respond to AI chatbots as parasocial entities (Lee & Park, 2022), while human-like characteristics in service robots can generate favourable responses (Blut et al., 2021). Similarly, perceived empathy in chatbots (Liu-Thompkins et al., 2022), humorous emojis (Liu et al., 2023), and virtual social media influencers (Thomas & Fowler, 2021) have been associated with positive consumer responses. These developments indicate that consumer reactions to AI are shaped not simply by technological functionality but also by how consumers interpret the characteristics and quality of AI-mediated interactions.

One particularly important dimension of these evaluations is perceived authenticity. Consumers value authenticity and honesty in their interactions with organisations and are more likely to engage with marketing messages perceived as genuine and emotionally resonant (Zhang & Patrick, 2021; Cascio Rizzo et al., 2023). Brand authenticity has also been identified as an important consideration in consumers' purchasing decisions (Brandwatch.com, 2023). This issue becomes particularly relevant when marketing content is generated by AI because research has produced mixed evidence regarding consumer responses. While AI-generated content may generate positive reactions through novelty and complexity (Mayahi & Vidrih, 2022; Ratta et al., 2024), other studies identify concerns relating to authenticity and emotional connection (Sharma & Lal, 2024; Aljarah et al., 2024). Awareness that content has been generated by AI can reduce empathy and emotional engagement (Arango et al., 2023), while disclosure of AI-generated content has been found to negatively influence perceived credibility and advertising attitudes (Baek et al., 2024). Consequently, transparency and authenticity may play an important role in

determining how consumers evaluate AI-generated marketing content (Campbell et al., 2022; Zelch et al., 2023).

The importance of authenticity is particularly evident in social-media-based brand communication, where perceived authenticity contributes to stronger brand identities and relationships with followers (Campagna et al., 2023; Leung et al., 2022). Consumers' authenticity perceptions may depend on how content is produced (Audrezet et al., 2020), and the increasing use of Generative AI for automated content creation may therefore jeopardise perceptions of brand authenticity (Wahid et al., 2023). Silver et al. (2021) similarly proposed that changes in perceived brand authenticity may help explain consumer aversion to the automation of activities traditionally performed by humans. More recent research further associates perceived authenticity with reduced scepticism, stronger emotional connections, and enhanced purchase intentions (Wahyuni & Zulfikar, 2024). Transparent, ethical, and consistent communication has also been emphasised as important for developing consumer trust, particularly among value-driven Generation Z consumers (Lee, 2025; Fitriyana, 2025). Accordingly, perceived authenticity has been identified as an important determinant of both trust and purchase intention (García-Salirrosas & Rondon-Eusebio, 2022; Wahyuni & Zulfikar, 2024).

Alongside authenticity, personalization has become a central feature of Generative AI-enabled marketing. AI enables marketers to analyse large volumes of consumer information and generate dynamic, personalised advertising messages tailored to individual preferences and behavioural patterns (Smith & Hutson, 2024; Israfilzade & Sadili, 2024). Generative AI can also accelerate content production, reduce production costs, and enable marketers to respond more rapidly to changing consumer expectations and market conditions (Kshetri et al., 2023). Israfilzade and Sadili (2025), in their review of Generative AI in e-commerce, highlighted its ability to facilitate hyper-personalised recommendations, dynamic content generation, and immersive visual experiences, while also identifying ethical, data-quality, and scalability challenges. These developments suggest that personalization may strengthen consumers' evaluations of AI-enabled brand communication, although its effectiveness depends on how consumers perceive the resulting content and brand interaction.

A related dimension is perceived usefulness/innovation, which reflects the extent to which consumers recognise functional value and innovative characteristics in AI-enabled marketing experiences. AI-generated content can improve digital marketing performance and consumer engagement, although its direct and indirect influence on purchase intention remains subject to further empirical validation (Hendrayati et al., 2024; Sands et al., 2022). AI can analyse extensive consumer data to produce content that resonates with target audiences, potentially increasing favourable responses and purchase intentions (Mehta et al., 2022; Sivathanu et al., 2022). AI involvement may also increase perceptions of novelty, particularly for high-involvement products, although novelty can sometimes be accompanied by lower perceived quality (Moura et al., 2023). Further, perceived anthropomorphism, trust, and usefulness of AI-powered



platforms have been found to positively influence purchase intentions (Israfilzade, 2025), while AI-enabled social-media engagement can enhance customer satisfaction and purchase intent (Babayev & Israfilzade, 2023). Similarly, psychosocial factors such as faith, consciousness, and perceived control can improve AI-enabled ease of use, which subsequently enhances purchase intention (Lopes et al., 2024). These findings collectively indicate that consumers' functional and innovative evaluations of AI may contribute to favourable downstream behavioural outcomes.

The literature also suggests that these individual perceptions may operate through broader brand-related evaluations. Brand credibility, reflecting consumers' perceptions of a brand's reliability and trustworthiness, reduces uncertainty and plays an important role in purchase decisions (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Although Generation Z consumers may scrutinise machine-generated content more critically (Wortel et al., 2024), well-designed AI-generated content can strengthen brand credibility and consumer engagement (Feuerriegel et al., 2024; Hendrayati et al., 2024). The Theory of Planned Behavior proposes that behavioural intentions are shaped by consumers' attitudes and beliefs (Ajzen, 1991), while empirical research indicates that credible brands are more likely to be selected because credibility reduces uncertainty and increases confidence in purchase decisions (Lee & Chen, 2021; Mohamed & Ünsalan, 2025; Silalahi et al., 2022; Yang & Hu, 2022). Thus, the way consumers perceive AI-generated marketing may first influence their evaluation of the brand before translating into behavioural intentions.

The relationship between brand-related evaluations and purchase intention is further supported by research on product involvement and advertising. Product involvement can shape purchase intentions and moderate the influence of brand diversity, product information, and trust on online purchase intentions (Kim et al., 2005). Wirya and Syah (2022) reported a positive relationship between product involvement and purchase intention in advertising, whereas Butt (2014) found no significant direct relationship between product involvement and purchase intention but identified a mediating role for brand attitude. These findings are relevant to the present study because they suggest that consumer responses to marketing stimuli may not translate directly into purchase intention; rather, brand-related evaluations may serve as an intervening mechanism.

Overall, the literature establishes that AI-generated marketing can generate both favourable and unfavourable consumer responses. On the one hand, AI offers personalization, usefulness, novelty, efficiency, and engagement (Mehta et al., 2022; Sivathanu et al., 2022; Smith & Hutson, 2024; Israfilzade & Sadili, 2025); on the other hand, concerns about authenticity, credibility, emotional connection, and the disclosure of AI involvement remain evident (Arango et al., 2023; Baek et al., 2024; Brüns & Meißner, 2024). Brüns and Meißner (2024), in particular, found that Generative AI social-media content was associated with lower perceived brand authenticity and negative follower responses. At the same time, the literature demonstrates that trust, usefulness, ease of use, credibility, and other consumer

evaluations can ultimately influence purchase intention (Erdem & Swait, 2004; Israfilzade, 2025; Lopes et al., 2024). However, the existing literature has largely examined these relationships separately, and comparatively limited empirical attention has been given to how perceived authenticity, personalization, and usefulness/innovation jointly shape brand perception and how brand perception subsequently translates these perceptions into purchase intention. This provides the basis for examining Brand Perception as a mediating mechanism between consumers' perceptions of AI-generated marketing and their purchase intention.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

The conceptual framework proposes that consumers' perceptions of AI-generated marketing—Perceived Authenticity (PA), Perceived Personalization (PP), and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation (PU)—influence Brand Perception (BP), which subsequently shapes Purchase Intention (PI). Although AI-generated advertising can improve efficiency and personalization (Smith & Hutson, 2024; Kshetri et al., 2023; Israfilzade & Sadili, 2025), concerns regarding credibility and authenticity may influence how consumers evaluate the brand (Puntoni et al., 2020; Brüns & Meißner, 2024). Evidence that perceived authenticity mediates the relationship between media richness and value co-creation in AI-powered branded applications further suggests that consumer perceptions can operate through intervening mechanisms (Vo et al., 2024). Similarly, the introduction of AI-generated content may produce negative initial responses, while brand perception and perceived effort can mitigate these effects (Rhee & Lee, 2024). Concerns regarding AI disclosure and its effect on brand trust further highlight the importance of how consumers interpret AI involvement (Lefkeli et al., 2023). Accordingly, the study proposes that PA, PP, and PU positively influence BP, while BP positively influences PI. The framework further proposes that BP mediates the relationships between the three AI-marketing perceptions and PI. This framework leads to the following hypotheses.

H1: Perceived Authenticity has a significant positive effect on Brand Perception.

H2: Perceived Personalization has a significant positive effect on Brand Perception.

H3: Perceived Usefulness/Innovation has a significant positive effect on Brand Perception.

H4: Brand Perception has a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention.

H5: Brand Perception significantly mediates the relationship between Perceived Authenticity and Purchase Intention.

H6: Brand Perception significantly mediates the relationship between Perceived Personalization and Purchase Intention.

H7: Brand Perception significantly mediates the relationship between Perceived Usefulness/Innovation and Purchase Intention.



4. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the relationships among perceived authenticity (PA), perceived personalization (PP), perceived usefulness/innovation (PU), brand perception (BP), and purchase intention (PI) in the context of AI-generated marketing. The study focused on Generation Z consumers, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire using five-point Likert-type scales. A total of 425 usable responses were retained for analysis. Each construct was measured using multiple items: PA and PP with six items each, PU with six items, and BP and PI with eight items each. Composite scores were computed using the mean of the respective items, with higher scores indicating stronger perceptions or intentions.

Data analysis was conducted using R. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the constructs, while Cronbach's alpha assessed internal consistency. Pearson's correlation was employed to examine associations among the constructs, with Spearman's correlation used as a robustness check. Multicollinearity was assessed using variance inflation factors (VIF). Multiple regression models were estimated to examine the predictors of brand perception and purchase intention. Since heteroscedasticity was detected in the regression diagnostics, HC3 heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors were used for robust statistical inference. Finally, the mediating

role of brand perception was examined through an observed-variable path mediation model using 5,000 bootstrap resamples; indirect effects were considered significant when their 95% bootstrap confidence intervals excluded zero. The results of these analyses are presented in the following section.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics and internal consistency of the study constructs. The mean scores range from 3.12 for Perceived Authenticity to 3.28 for Perceived Usefulness/Innovation, indicating moderately positive evaluations across all constructs. Perceived Usefulness/Innovation recorded the highest mean ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 0.87$), while Perceived Authenticity recorded the lowest ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.82$). The relatively close mean and median values across the constructs suggest no substantial asymmetry in the central tendency. Skewness values (-0.28 to -0.07) and kurtosis values (-0.36 to 0.07) indicate broadly balanced distributions without pronounced departures from symmetry. Internal consistency was strong for all constructs, with Cronbach's α ranging from .87 to .93, exceeding conventional reliability requirements. Overall, the measures demonstrate satisfactory descriptive characteristics and strong internal consistency for subsequent correlation, regression, and mediation analyses.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of the Study Constructs

Construct	M	SD	Median	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's α
Perceived Authenticity(PA)	3.12	0.82	3	1	5	-0.16	0.07	0.87
Perceived Personalization (PP)	3.24	0.88	3	1	5	-0.19	-0.36	0.92
Perceived Usefulness/ Innovation (PU)	3.28	0.87	3.17	1	5	-0.28	-0.23	0.91
Brand Perception (BP)	3.23	0.81	3.12	1	5	-0.10	0.06	0.93
Purchase Intention (PI)	3.17	0.84	3	1	5	-0.07	-0.07	0.93

Note. $N = 425$. All constructs were measured using five-point Likert-type scales, with higher scores indicating stronger perceptions or intentions. Cronbach's α represents internal consistency reliability. PA, PP, PU 6 items and BP, PI 8 items.

Source. Primary data.

5.2 Correlation

Table 2 shows that all study constructs are positively and significantly correlated with one another ($p < .001$). The strongest association is between Brand Perception and Purchase Intention ($r = .734$), indicating that more favourable brand perceptions are strongly associated with higher purchase intention. Among the antecedent variables, Perceived Personalization and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation show the strongest relationship ($r = .695$),

while Perceived Authenticity is also positively associated with Brand Perception ($r = .590$) and Purchase Intention ($r = .551$). Overall, the results provide preliminary support for the proposed relationships and justify further regression and mediation analysis. The Spearman correlation results produced a similar pattern, with coefficients ranging from .542 to .717, providing a robustness check for the Pearson correlations.

Table 2 Pearson Correlations Among Study Constructs

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Perceived Authenticity	3.12	0.82	—				
2. Perceived Personalization	3.24	0.88	.661***	—			
3. Perceived Usefulness/Innovation	3.28	0.87	.615***	.695***	—		
4. Brand Perception	3.23	0.81	.590***	.598***	.662***	—	
5. Purchase Intention	3.17	0.84	.551***	.541***	.639***	.734***	—

Note. $N = 425$. *** $p < .001$. Pearson's product-moment correlations are reported as the primary analysis. Spearman correlations produced a substantively similar pattern, with coefficients ranging from .542 to .717.

Source. Primary data.



5.3 VIF- Brand Perception

Table 3 presents the variance inflation factors (VIF) for the predictors of Brand Perception. The VIF values range from 1.94 to 2.33, with the highest value observed for Perceived Personalization (VIF = 2.33). All values are well below commonly applied thresholds for problematic multicollinearity,

indicating that Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation do not exhibit serious multicollinearity. Therefore, the predictors can be included simultaneously in the multiple regression model, allowing their individual effects on Brand Perception to be estimated with reasonable confidence.

Table 3 Variance Inflation Factors for Predictors of Brand Perception

Predictor	Tolerance	VIF
Perceived Authenticity	—	1.94
Perceived Personalization	—	2.33
Perceived Usefulness/Innovation	—	2.11

Source. Primary data.

5.4 Multiple Regression Predicting Brand Perception

Table 4 indicates that the multiple regression model significantly predicts Brand Perception, $F(3, 421) = 142.20$, $p < .001$. The model explains 50.3% of the variance in Brand Perception ($R^2 = .503$; adjusted $R^2 = .500$), indicating substantial explanatory power. As shown in Table 5, all three predictors have significant positive effects. Perceived Usefulness/Innovation is

the strongest predictor ($\beta = .407$, $p < .001$), followed by Perceived Authenticity ($\beta = .234$, $p < .001$) and Perceived Personalization ($\beta = .160$, $p = .005$). Thus, while all three perceptions contribute significantly to Brand Perception, consumers' perceived usefulness/innovation of AI-generated marketing has the greatest relative influence. These findings support H1, H2, and H3.

Table 4 Model Summary Predicting Brand Perception

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE	F (3, 421)	p
1	0.71	0.503	0.5	0.574	142.2	< .001

Table 5 Regression Coefficients Predicting Brand Perception

Predictor	B	HC3 SE	β	t	p
Constant	0.79	0.18	—	4.36	< .001
Perceived Authenticity	0.23	0.064	0.234	3.66	< .001
Perceived Personalization	0.15	0.052	0.16	2.81	0.005
Perceived Usefulness/Innovation	0.38	0.056	0.407	6.76	< .001

Note. $N = 425$. Dependent variable = Brand Perception. HC3 = heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors (Type 3). Standardized β coefficients are based on the conventional OLS model; HC3 affects the standard errors and inferential statistics, not the estimated coefficients.

Source. Primary data.

Table 6 presents the diagnostic assessment of the Brand Perception regression model. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicates a departure from normally distributed residuals ($W = .917$, $p < .001$), while the heteroscedasticity test also indicates non-constant error variance, $\chi^2(1) = 36.74$, $p < .001$. Accordingly, HC3 heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors were used to provide more reliable statistical inference for the regression coefficients. The maximum Cook's distance (0.22) does not indicate severe

overall influence, and the maximum leverage (0.07) does not suggest an extreme leverage problem. In addition, the VIF values (1.94–2.33) confirm the absence of serious multicollinearity. Overall, although residual normality and homoscedasticity assumptions were not fully satisfied, the use of HC3 robust standard errors provides an appropriate adjustment for inference, while the influence and multicollinearity diagnostics do not indicate major estimation concerns.

Table 6 Regression Diagnostics for the Brand Perception Model

Diagnostic	Statistic	p	Interpretation
Residual normality	Shapiro–Wilk $W = .917$	< .001	Departure from normality
Homoscedasticity	$\chi^2(1) = 36.74$	< .001	Heteroscedasticity detected
Maximum Cook's distance	0.22	—	No severe overall influence indicated
Maximum leverage	0.07	—	No extreme leverage indicated
Multicollinearity	VIF = 1.94–2.33	—	No serious multicollinearity

Note. Because heteroscedasticity was detected, HC3 heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors were used for inferential testing of the regression coefficients.

Source. Primary data.



5.5 Simple Regression Predicting Purchase Intention from Brand Perception

Table 7 shows that Brand Perception significantly predicts Purchase Intention, $F(1, 423) = 494.35$, $p < .001$. The model explains 53.9% of the variance in Purchase Intention ($R^2 = .539$; adjusted $R^2 = .538$), indicating substantial explanatory power. As presented in Table 8, Brand Perception has a positive and

statistically significant effect on Purchase Intention ($B = 0.76$, $HC3\ SE = 0.041$, $t = 18.41$, $p < .001$). The 95% confidence interval for the coefficient $[0.680, 0.842]$ excludes zero, further confirming the robustness of the relationship. Thus, higher Brand Perception is associated with higher Purchase Intention, providing support for H4.

Table 7 Model Summary Predicting Purchase Intention from Brand Perception

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE	F (1, 423)	p
1	0.73	0.539	0.538	0.572	494.35	< .001

Table 8 Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	HC3 SE	t	p	95% CI for B
Constant	0.72	0.141	5.06	< .001	[0.438, 0.993]
Brand Perception	0.76	0.041	18.41	< .001	[0.680, 0.842]

Source. Primary data.

5.6 Full Regression Model Predicting Purchase Intention Interpretation

Table 9 indicates that the full regression model significantly predicts Purchase Intention, $F(4, 420) = 148.90$, $p < .001$. The model explains 58.6% of the variance in Purchase Intention ($R^2 = .586$; adjusted $R^2 = .582$), demonstrating substantial explanatory power. Table 10 shows that Brand Perception is the strongest significant predictor of Purchase Intention ($\beta = .520$, $p < .001$), followed by Perceived

Usefulness/Innovation ($\beta = .231$, $p = .009$). In contrast, Perceived Authenticity ($\beta = .098$, $p = .143$) and Perceived Personalization ($\beta = .005$, $p = .934$) do not have significant direct effects when Brand Perception and the other predictors are simultaneously included. This pattern suggests that the influence of authenticity and personalization on purchase intention may operate primarily through Brand Perception, providing an important basis for examining its mediating role in the subsequent analysis.

Table 9 Model Summary Predicting Purchase Intention

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE	F (4, 420)	p
1	0.77	0.586	0.582	0.543	148.9	< .001

Table 10 Regression Coefficients

Predictor	B	HC3 SE	β	t	p
Constant	0.37	0.142	—	2.61	0.009
Perceived Authenticity	0.1	0.069	0.098	1.47	0.143
Perceived Personalization	0.01	0.056	0.005	0.08	0.934
Perceived Usefulness/Innovation	0.22	0.085	0.231	2.63	0.009
Brand Perception	0.54	0.085	0.52	6.32	< .001

Note. $N = 425$. Dependent variable = Purchase Intention. HC3 = heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors. Standardized coefficients are from the conventional OLS model.

Source. Primary data.

Table 9 presents the bootstrapped mediation analysis examining whether Brand Perception mediates the relationships between Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, Perceived Usefulness/Innovation, and Purchase Intention. The three antecedents significantly predict Brand Perception: Perceived Authenticity ($\beta = .234$, $p < .001$), Perceived Personalization ($\beta = .160$, $p = .004$), and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation ($\beta = .407$, $p < .001$). Brand Perception, in turn, has a significant positive effect on Purchase Intention ($\beta = .520$, $p < .001$). Importantly, all three indirect effects are statistically significant because their 95%

bootstrap confidence intervals exclude zero: $PA \rightarrow BP \rightarrow PI$ ($\beta = .122$, 95% CI $[.060, .190]$), $PP \rightarrow BP \rightarrow PI$ ($\beta = .083$, 95% CI $[.025, .141]$), and $PU \rightarrow BP \rightarrow PI$ ($\beta = .212$, 95% CI $[.119, .301]$). The direct effects of PA and PP on PI are not significant, whereas PU retains a significant direct effect ($\beta = .231$, $p = .007$). Thus, Brand Perception provides an indirect-only pathway for PA and PP, while the relationship between PU and PI shows partial mediation, with both direct and indirect effects remaining significant.



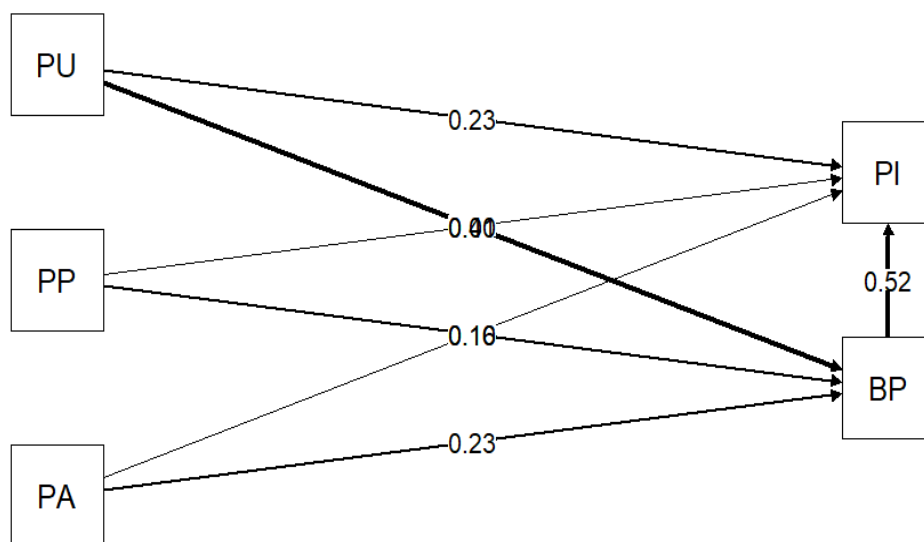
Table 9 Bootstrapped Mediation Effects of Brand Perception on Purchase Intention

Effect	B	SE	β	z	p	95% Bootstrap CI
PA → BP	0.23	0.063	0.234	3.73	< .001	[.109, .356]
PP → BP	0.15	0.051	0.16	2.87	0.004	[.049, .244]
PU → BP	0.38	0.056	0.407	6.77	< .001	[.268, .490]
BP → PI	0.54	0.082	0.52	6.6	< .001	[.368, .687]
PA → BP → PI	0.13	0.033	0.122	3.86	< .001	[.060, .190]
PP → BP → PI	0.08	0.029	0.083	2.68	0.007	[.025, .141]
PU → BP → PI	0.2	0.047	0.212	4.38	< .001	[.119, .301]
PA → PI (direct)	0.1	0.067	0.098	1.52	0.129	[-.028, .235]
PP → PI (direct)	0.01	0.055	0.005	0.09	0.932	[-.107, .108]
PU → PI (direct)	0.22	0.082	0.231	2.71	0.007	[.061, .385]

Note. $N = 425$. Bootstrap = 5,000 resamples. BP = Brand Perception; PA = Perceived Authenticity; PP = Perceived Personalization; PU = Perceived Usefulness/Innovation; PI = Purchase Intention. Indirect effects were considered statistically significant when their 95% bootstrap confidence intervals did not include zero.

Source. Primary data.

Figure 1 Conceptual Mediation Model of Brand Perception



5.7 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 10 summarises the empirical decisions for the seven hypotheses. H1, H2, and H3 are supported, confirming that Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation significantly and positively predict Brand Perception. H4 is also supported, establishing a significant positive relationship between Brand Perception and Purchase

Intention. The mediation results further support H5, H6, and H7, as the bootstrap confidence intervals for all three indirect effects exclude zero. Overall, the findings demonstrate that Brand Perception is an important mechanism through which consumers' perceptions of AI-generated marketing translate into Purchase Intention, with the strongest indirect effect observed for Perceived Usefulness/Innovation ($\beta = .212$).

Table 10 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Proposed relationship	Statistical evidence	Decision
H1	Perceived Authenticity → Brand Perception	$\beta = .234, p < .001$	Supported
H2	Perceived Personalization → Brand Perception	$\beta = .160, p = .004$	Supported
H3	Perceived Usefulness/Innovation → Brand Perception	$\beta = .407, p < .001$	Supported
H4	Brand Perception → Purchase Intention	$\beta = .520, p < .001$	Supported
H5	PA → BP → PI	$\beta = .122, 95\% \text{ CI } [.060, .190]$	Supported
H6	PP → BP → PI	$\beta = .083, 95\% \text{ CI } [.025, .141]$	Supported
H7	PU → BP → PI	$\beta = .212, 95\% \text{ CI } [.119, .301]$	Supported



Note. β = standardized coefficient. Indirect effects are based on 5,000 bootstrap resamples. A mediation hypothesis is supported when the bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect excludes zero.

Source. Primary data.

6. DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that consumers' perceptions of AI-generated marketing are significantly associated with how they evaluate the brand and subsequently form purchase intentions. Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation all positively influence Brand Perception, with Usefulness/Innovation showing the strongest effect ($\beta = .407$). This suggests that although authenticity remains important in AI-generated communication, consumers' recognition of the functional and innovative value of AI may play a particularly important role in shaping favourable brand evaluations. This is consistent with previous research showing that AI can enhance personalization, efficiency, engagement, and consumer responses (Smith & Hutson, 2024; Kshetri et al., 2023; Israfilzade & Sadili, 2025). Brand Perception also has a strong positive effect on Purchase Intention ($\beta = .520$), supporting the view that favourable brand evaluations reduce uncertainty and strengthen consumers' confidence in purchase decisions (Erdem & Swait, 2004). Most importantly, the mediation results demonstrate that Brand Perception acts as an important mechanism linking AI-marketing perceptions with Purchase Intention. The indirect effects of Authenticity and Personalization are significant while their direct effects are nonsignificant, indicating indirect-only mediation, whereas Usefulness/Innovation retains a significant direct effect alongside its indirect effect, indicating partial mediation. These findings extend existing research by showing that consumer responses to AI-generated marketing do not necessarily translate directly into purchase intention but may operate through consumers' broader evaluations of the brand.

7. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study concludes that Perceived Authenticity, Perceived Personalization, and Perceived Usefulness/Innovation are important determinants of Brand Perception in AI-generated marketing, while Brand Perception is a strong predictor of Purchase Intention among Generation Z consumers. The findings particularly highlight Brand Perception as the central mechanism through which consumer perceptions of AI-generated marketing influence behavioural intention. Theoretically, the study contributes by integrating three dimensions of AI-marketing perception into a single framework and demonstrating the mediating role of Brand Perception. Practically, marketers should not focus exclusively on the technological capabilities of Generative AI; they should ensure that AI-generated content remains authentic, relevant, useful, and consistent with the brand's identity. Personalisation should create consumer value without compromising perceived genuineness, while the functional benefits of AI should be communicated clearly. The study is subject to limitations arising from its cross-sectional design, self-reported measures, and focus on Generation Z consumers, which restrict causal interpretation and broader

generalisation. Future research could employ longitudinal or experimental designs, examine other consumer generations and contexts, compare AI-generated and human-generated content, and investigate additional mediators or moderators such as trust, transparency, perceived credibility, or AI disclosure.

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