Impact of Artificial Intelligence-Generated Content on Brand Perception among Nepalese Generation Z

أثر المحتوى المُولَّد بالذكاء الاصطناعي على إدراك العلامة التجارية لدى جيل Z النيبالي

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Abstract:
The marketing content exerts tremendous influence on brand perception, shaping the behavioral dimension of clients in the market favorably. Recent evidence demonstrated the prospect of artificial intelligence creating promotional content. However, its investigation linking to brand perception among Generation Z is rare. Therefore, this research attempts to address this research gap and aims to investigate the influence of artificial intelligence-generated content on brand perception among the Nepalese Generation Z. The study adopted a descriptive and explanatory research design. The research employed 148 useful cross-sectional data points collected from Generation Z in Kathmandu, embracing a purposive sampling technique. The predictor variables encompass awareness of artificial intelligence-generated content; perceived authenticity; and trust with transparency, including brand perception as the outcome variable. Moreover, the data were processed in Excel, JASP software, and the ADANCO 2.4.1 version of the software to compute descriptive statistics and the impact of predictors on the outcome variable. The findings of the study reflected a favorable influence of awareness of artificial intelligence-generated content on brand perception but found it insignificant. The perceived authenticity was found to have a positive and significant impact on brand perception. Similarly, trust with transparency revealed a positive and significant impact on brand perception. This depicts that business entities embracing the artificial intelligence-generated content in marketing strategy fosters building a favourable brand perception among Generation Z. Further, the result of this study contributes to the existing theoretical foundation, revealing novel empirical evidence from the Nepalese context, and can be useful for business organisations to customise and adopt compatible marketing and promotional strategies integrating artificial intelligence to gain a competitive advantage with the perpetual survival of business. Additionally, this study establishes a foundation for the academic researcher, which offers a foundation with empirical evidence.

Keywords: *Brand perception, Generation Z, marketing, perceived authenticity, trust with*

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transparency
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الملخص:

يمارس المحتوى التسويقي تأثيرًا هائلًا على إدراك العلامة التجارية، مما يشكّل البعد السلوكي للعملاء في السوق بشكل إيجابي. وقد أظهرت الأدلة الحديثة إمكانية قيام الذكاء الاصطناعي بإنشاء محتوى ترويجي. غير أن البحث الذي يربط ذلك بإدراك العلامة التجارية لدى جيل Z نادر. لذلك، يسعى هذا البحث إلى معالجة هذه الفجوة البحثية ويهدف إلى التحقيق في تأثير المحتوى المُولَّد بالذكاء الاصطناعي على إدراك العلامة التجارية لدى جيل Z النيبالي. واعتمدت الدراسة تصميمًا بحثيًا وصفيًا وتفسيريًا. واستخدم البحث 148 نقطة بيانات مقطعية مفيدة جُمعت من جيل Z في كاتماندو، معتمدًا على تقنية العينة الهادفة. وتشمل المتغيرات المتنبئة الوعي بالمحتوى المُولَّد بالذكاء الاصطناعي؛ والأصالة المُدركة؛ والثقة مع الشفافية، بما في ذلك إدراك العلامة التجارية كمتغير النتيجة. علاوة على ذلك، تمت معالجة البيانات في برنامج Excel وبرنامج JASP والإصدار 2.4.1 من برنامج ADANCO لحساب الإحصاءات الوصفية وتأثير المتنبئات على متغير النتيجة. وعكست نتائج الدراسة تأثيرًا إيجابيًا للوعي بالمحتوى المُولَّد بالذكاء الاصطناعي على إدراك العلامة التجارية، لكنه وُجد غير معنوي. ووُجد أن الأصالة المُدركة لها تأثير إيجابي ومعنوي على إدراك العلامة التجارية. وبالمثل، أظهرت الثقة مع الشفافية تأثيرًا إيجابيًا ومعنويًا على إدراك العلامة التجارية. ويوضح ذلك أن الكيانات التجارية التي تتبنى المحتوى المُولَّد بالذكاء الاصطناعي في استراتيجية التسويق تعزز بناء إدراك إيجابي للعلامة التجارية لدى جيل Z ، كما تسهم نتيجة هذه الدراسة في الأساس النظري القائم، بكشفها عن أدلة تجريبية جديدة من السياق النيبالي، ويمكن أن تكون مفيدة لمنظمات الأعمال لتخصيص واعتماد استراتيجيات تسويقية وترويجية متوافقة تدمج الذكاء الاصطناعي لتحقيق ميزة تنافسية مع استمرارية بقاء الأعمال. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تؤسس هذه الدراسة قاعدة للباحث الأكاديمي، إذ توفر أساسًا مدعومًا بأدلة تجريبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية *:إدراك العلامة التجارية، جيل Z ، التسويق، الأصالة المُدركة، الثقة مع الشفافية.*

تصنيف *JEL: M31، M37، O33*

1. Introduction

Brand perception reflects the assessment and utilization of brands by clients appraising standard, credibility, and required ingredients(Uddin et al., 2026; Wang et al., 2021). It is a source of numerous advantages to the customer beyond the physical products and develops a favorable image in the mind of the customer, shaping their buying behavior (Allen et al., 2018). Similarly, brand perception is influenced by artificial intelligence-driven marketing endeavors while embracing promotional campaigns (Armutcu & Tan, 2023). Moreover, brand perception stimulates the cognitive position of the consumer while making decisions about the use of products Rather et al. (2021). In contrast, the behavioral dimension of the customer is fundamentally affected by brand perception that ultimately drives towards product and service buying decisions with adaptive behavior (Chen et al., 2022).

Similarly, artificial intelligence has manifested as a transformative lever that crafts compatible behavior of consumers in the modern marketing atmosphere for information accessibility, personalized services, and effective interaction (Armutcu, 2026; Armutcu & Tan, 2023). Business entities, on the other hand, adopt artificial intelligence (AI) as a useful mechanism for several purposes to create content, analyze large data, and respond to online clients, which bridges the gap

between business and customers (Camilleri, 2024). Therefore, the effective embrace of artificial intelligence in content creation in marketing efforts builds public commitment and gratification among users that elevates the entire image of the brand with higher credibility in the market (Shen et al., 2025; Uddin et al., 2026).

Furthermore, Generation Z (Gen Z) encompasses the people born during 1995 to 2010 who embody the digital era, depicting adoptability of digital innovation, and pursue a conscious nature as consumers (Armutcu, 2026). Thus, the behavioral dimension of Gen Z is deeply inclined with a digitalized atmosphere, with escalating adaptation of artificial intelligence, and engagement mostly in social networks, which ultimately constructs distinct brand preferences and a brand appraisal system (Kheiri et al., 2026). The modern AI-based promotional programs in marketing strategy play a vital role that structure the psychology of Gen Z consumers, as AI platforms offer several advantages, including effective information, options available for customisation, a platform for proper interaction, and due to its seven days and twenty four hours accessibility that ultimately works as an external stimuli for the Gen Z customers (Armutcu & Tan, 2023).

Additionally, awareness of artificially generated content is multidimensional, which reflects a rational and conscious discovery of the origin of the information by Gen Z consumers (Seeger et al., 2026). Interestingly, a positive brand perception of clients relies on feelings, mindset, and ethical dimension in which favorable brand perception develops with several facilities associated with AI-based content such as quality of the content, customized personal services, effective interaction, and accessibility of service that inspire clients for the perpetual attachment with brand (Chivkula & Pokhriyal, 2026; Shen et al., 2025). Therefore, awareness is vital for brand inclination that gradually shapes a supportive and constructive cognitive favor for brands (Kheiri et al., 2026). However, evidence depicts user reluctance to AI-generated content, assessing its output inversely while content appears as AI-generated (Dietvorst et al., 2015; Longoni et al., 2019).

Next, perceived authenticity is a valuable aspect in AI-generated marketing endeavors, reflecting a genuineness of brand, reliability, and sincerity of the information regarding the products and services, which serves as vital in customer psychology, creating trust in the brand and driving brand loyalty (Ngo et al., 2026; Rodrigues et al., 2024). However, the perceived risk unfavorably leads to brand perception, which discourages digital connectivity, reluctance, and avoidance of a digital foundation for transactions, interaction, and information exchange; ultimately, it creates detachment from the brand of products and services in the market (Uddin et al., 2026).

Moreover, the transparency in AI-generated content depicts a fair, honest, positive, and visible interaction with its users that creates a reliable environment, manifesting the content as a human-created one and maintaining trust among the clients, building favorable brand perception (Afreen et al., 2025; Seeger et al., 2026). Similarly, transparency of content created by artificial intelligence with the source of information, standard of content, and its credibility enhances clients' attachment with the brand as transparency builds trust among the clients (Camilleri, 2024; Kang et al., 2024; Kheiri et al., 2026). However, earlier evidence revealed that failure to maintain transparency, frequent errors in AI-generated content, and vague information negatively influence brand perception (Arya et al., 2026; Sansome et al., 2026).

In the Nepalese context, artificial intelligence research encompasses consumer engagement through AI (Niraula et al., 2024); linking digital marketing and business growth (Thapa & Bista, 2025); exploring the association between AI and client contentment (Shahi, 2026); and information technology with client decision (Bhandari, 2025). However, studies on AI-generated content and brand perception among Gen Z are rare in the Nepalese context. Further, previous evidence revealed

by previous studies on brand experience, brand selection, and brand trustworthiness is incompatible and not sufficient, necessitating further empirical examination. Therefore, this investigation attempts to address this research gap. Thus, this research aims: To identify the status of AI-generated content and brand perception among Gen Z, to assess the relationship between awareness of AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, trust with transparency, and brand perception, and to investigate the influence of AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency on brand perception among Gen Z.

The remainder of the research encompasses a literature review, which reflects the theoretical foundation and empirical evidence. Next, the methodology section comprises the detailed pathway of research accomplishment. Similarly, the results and discussion section integrates the outcomes of the empirical exploration of this research and finally consists of the conclusion section reflecting implications, limitations, and directions for future studies.

2. Literature Review

Brand perception of Gen Z is influenced by several factors comprising the awareness of artificial intelligence (AI) generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency (Longoni et al., 2019; Rodrigues et al., 2024; Seeger et al., 2026). AI-based promotional endeavors of business entities contribute to making quality publicity, with significant roles undertaken by AI-based mechanisms (Ford et al., 2023). Moreover, the use of AI is appropriate in content marketing that involves content dissemination through digital platforms (Kirkby et al., 2023). Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Brand Equity Theory reflect major foundations for evaluating brand perception in the evolving technological era (Davis, 1989). The Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM), as developed by Friestad and Wright (1994), reflects a psychological structure to explore the ways in which clients perceive, explore, describe, and adjust to persuasion attempts. This doctrine depicts that customers evolve their individual awareness and wisdom through traditional learning to understand the strategies of marketers (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The Signaling Theory, as developed by Michael Spence, depicts how individuals analyze information using observable signals to reflect the hidden standard and qualities relating to the AI-generated content; it shows how individuals act as signals that customers use to analyze the trustworthiness of the brand (Spence, 1973). Finally, the Micro-institutional Theory describes that trust with transparency and its analysis are influenced by rationality and perception of trustees within the socially acceptable boundary. In the context of AI-generated content, it may assess the legitimacy of the brand and the content of the creator, ultimately linking with brand perception (Ocasio, 2023).

2.1 Awareness of AI-Generated Content and Brand Perception

Awareness of AI-generated content represents the context in which individuals identify and get familiar with the content generated through artificial intelligence (Wang et al., 2023; Wittenberg et al., 2025). Moreover, the association between awareness of artificial intelligence (AI) generated content and brand perception exerts diverse consequences, as credibility of content and quality preference of customers are important to users (Laudon & Traver, 2013). Similarly, when publicity exists with AI-based creation maintaining reliability, it fosters supportive brand perception among users of the product (Uddin et al., 2026). It discloses that consumers demonstrate more willingness to embrace adaptive tendencies while an AI-based foundation offers tremendous advantages that ultimately enhance brand perception (Kousar et al., 2025). Interestingly, the integration of artificial intelligence in content creation assures quality content that creates favorable brand perception among the clients (Zhang & Gosline, 2023). Next, the empirical evidence revealed that digital

platform-based practices using AI influence the brand position among consumers in favorable ways, as behavioral consequences change inclination with brand perception (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Wattoo et al., 2025).

Additionally, the customer being aware of false AI-generated content exerts an inverse influence on brand participation (Aljarah et al., 2025). Another piece of evidence showed that consumers found favorable attitudes toward AI-generated information in the promotional process (Chen et al., 2024). Moreover, the number of online source followers for AI content favorably influences perceived credibility, linking with supportive brand perception among consumers (Jin et al., 2025). Furthermore, evidence advocates that deeper attachment is found for products when consumers are more aware (Jung et al., 2025). Therefore, it reflects that consumers being familiar with AI-generated content helps in building positive brand attachment that fosters credibility of products and services, creating brand loyalty. Based on the aforementioned empirical basis, the following hypothesis has been proposed for the study:

H_1: There is a positive and significant association between awareness of AI-generated content and brand perception among Gen Z.

2.2 Perceived Authenticity and Brand Perception

Authenticity reflects the supportive favor of business entities to maintain truth, actual content, and visibility to the clients while observing the content that creates positive brand perception among the individuals (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Consequently, perceived authenticity builds trust among the clients for perpetual brand attachment (Moulard et al., 2015). Moreover, the previous empirical evidence depicted that AI does not exert inverse outcomes on brand perception regarding its content authenticity. Individuals perceive AI-created content as more valuable than content crafted by human beings, and clients are more inclined to be brand loyal, expecting authenticity and standards (Kim et al., 2021; Kirkby et al., 2023). Similarly, when people perceive that AI-based content is more authentic than content generated by human beings, it ultimately develops the importance of the publicity of the brand attachment of customers (Baek et al., 2026). Next, earlier findings manifested that individual customers act less negatively against artificially generated content when this content is basically generated by human beings with the support of AI without completely replacing human creativity with AI (Brüns & Meißner, 2024). Therefore, it reveals that brand perception is found favorable only for authenticity in information, demonstrating the importance of authenticity in AI-generated content for marketing (Kirk & Givi, 2025). It depicts that AI models are better at content creation and attract clients when content is published that develops positive brand perception (Wen & Laporte, 2025). On the basis of these empirical reviews, the following hypothesis has been drawn for the study:

H_2: There is a positive and significant association between perceived authenticity and brand perception among Gen Z.

2.3 Trust with Transparency and Brand Perception

Transparency in the use of AI-generated publicity reflects a process of conveying to its users information about its products and services in reliable, clear ways, assuring the data and privacy of clients in effective ways (Baek et al., 2026; El Ali et al., 2024). Moreover, transparency and usefulness of artificially generated items play vital roles in developing perceived trust, with transparency for positive brand perception (Jia et al., 2026). The findings from the previous empirical studies showed that perceived trustworthy content in marketing affects the attitude of the

individual consumer, crafting favorable brand attachment (Kumar et al., 2026). Similarly, AI-generated content reflecting trust with transparency, maintaining clear information, is perceived positively by users, including a positive image of the organization, leading to favorable brand perception (Buckley et al., 2025). Moreover, transparent AI-based content develops brand credibility in the market and establishes a positive brand perception (Kousar et al., 2025. Additionally, the findings showed a positive link with brand perception when users realized a good impression, creating trust with transparency (Koning & Voorveld, 2025). Based on the empirical exploration, the following research hypothesis has been developed:

H_3: There is a positive and significant association between trust with transparency and brand perception among Gen Z.

2.4 Brand Perception

Brand perception refers to the process of evaluation of consumers and their brand utilization, which assesses the standard of the brand, its credibility, and transparency (Allen et al., 2018). Similarly, it is a cognitive perception regarding products and services among consumers (Hsieh et al., 2004). Furthermore, it represents the set of entire characteristics of individuals towards the product or services that appraise the preferences of customers associated with brands (Dzyabura & Peres, 2021; Malär et al., 2012). Additionally, the AI-based marketing campaigns comprising awareness with AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency foster supportive brand perception (Pogacar et al., 2021). Therefore, a favorable brand perception is essential to retain clients in the business sector for the perpetual stability of the organization.

2.5 Research Framework

The research framework depicts the structure of the research work, building a path for the research work. Therefore, this research embraces its independent variables as awareness of AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency. Similarly, the outcome variable represents the brand perception in this study. The following graphical presentation represents the research framework for the study:

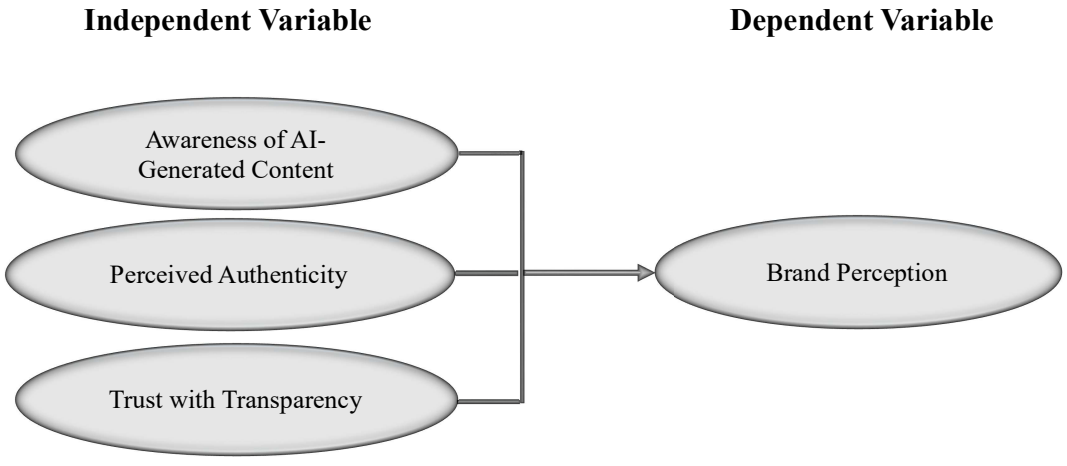


Figure 1. Research framework

Figure 1 depicts the research framework designed for the study. This graphical presentation of the framework encompasses three predictors consisting of awareness of AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency. Similarly, the outcome variable in the research comprises brand perception among the Gen Z customers.

3. Methods

The study examined the impact of artificial intelligence-generated content on brand perception among Nepalese Generation Z. The research employed a descriptive and explanatory research design, as a descriptive research design summarises the landscape of phenomena relating to respondents' profiles (Cooksey, 2020; Murphy, 2021; Swatzell & Jennings, 2007). Similarly, an explanatory research design was employed in the study to investigate the cause and effect of predictor variables on the outcome variable (Cornelissen & Werner, 2026; Pfister et al., 2023). Moreover, a cross-sectional 148 useful data points were employed in the study, collected from respondents in Kathmandu, Nepal, based on structured questionnaires. The questionnaire integrated two distinct sections, comprising the demographic profile of respondents in the first section that reflects age group, gender profile, occupation category of respondents, level of income, and status of using social media by the survey participants. Similarly, the second segment of the questionnaire involved opinion-based five-point Likert scale items to reveal the opinion of the respondents regarding AI-generated content and brand perception. For this purpose, the research employed three predictor variables, including awareness of AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency. Similarly, the outcome variable involves brand perception.

Furthermore, the construct awareness of AI-generated content was adopted from earlier research (Koning & Voorveld, 2025). This comprises four-item statements "I frequently notice AI-generated ads/posts from Nepali brands on social media", "I engage more with brands that balance AI and human-created content", and so on. Additionally, the construct “perceived authenticity” was adopted from the previous research (Brüns & Meißner, 2024), which manifests four-item statements representing “I believe AI-generated content can maintain authenticity if aligned with brand values”, “I find AI-driven content reliable when it aligns with the brand’s values”, and so on. Next, the construct trust with transparency” was adopted from the earlier research work by Koning and Voorveld (2025) and Swatzell and Jennings (2007) that integrates three item statements reflecting “Accurate AI-generated content enhances my trust in a brand”, “Ethical use of AI tools can build positive brand-consumer relationships”, and so on. The construct brand perception was embraced from the previous study (Kirkby et al., 2023; Spears & Singh, 2004) that includes four item statements: “AI content creation improves the speed and quality of service I receive from brands”, “AI-generated content has changed my overall perception of some brands”, and so on.

Next, a purposive sampling technique was embraced as this sampling reflects its credibility and a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Campbell et al., 2020; Tongco, 2007). The accumulated data were processed in an Excel file and analyzed using JASP 0.95. 4.0 software for descriptive statistics, and the ADANCO 2.4.1 version of software was employed to accomplish empirical analysis. In addition, the descriptive statistics were computed, including frequency and percentage for demographic-based data, and further computed Loading, reliability, and convergent validity, Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), cross-loading, Indicator multicollinearity, Explanatory power and model fit, and path analysis.

Results

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

Demographic Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group	14-17	15	10.10
	18-21	59	39.90
	22-25	68	45.90
	26-28	06	4.10
Gender	Female	70	47.30
	Male	78	52.70
Occupation	Self-Employed	09	6.10
	Student	106	71.60
	Unemployed	02	1.40
Income Level	Below Rs 15000	90	60.80
	Rs 15000-Rs29999	27	18.20
	Rs. 30000-44999	09	6.10
	Rs. 45000-59999	07	4.70
	Rs. 60000 & Above	15	10.10
Use of social media	Facebook	21	14.19
	Instagram	23	15.54
	YouTube	28	18.92
	TikTok	46	31.08
	Others	30	20.27
	Total	**148**	**100**

Table 1 depicts the demographic profile of the respondents. A total of 148 survey participants were involved in the study. Age group 14 to 17 contains 15 (10.10 percent) respondents, the 18 to 21 age group 59 (39.90 percent), the 22 to 25 age group 68 (45.90 percent), and respondents of age group from 26 to 28 contain 06 (4.10 percent). The largest group of survey participants involves the age group between 22 and 25, with 39.90 percent of involvement, and the smallest group of respondents comprises the age group between 26 and 28, with 4.10 percent of participation. Similarly, the male participants remained the leading group with 78 (52.70 percent), and the female participants depicted 70 (47.30 percent). Moreover, the self-employed group of respondents, as an occupation, depicts 09 (6.10 percent), the student group 106 (71.60 percent) as the largest group, and the unemployed 02 (1.40 percent), which is the smallest group. The income level of respondents below NPR 15000 reflects 90 (60.80 percent) as the leading group of respondents; income ranging between NPR 15000 to 29999 depicts 27 (18.20 percent); income between NPR 30000 to 44999 contains 27 (18.20 percent), NPR 45000 to 59999 involves 09 (6.10 percent); and income above NPR 60000 represents 15 (10.10 percent). Next, the use of social media among respondents belonging to Facebook contains 21 (14.19 percent), Instagram 23 (15.54 percent), YouTube users 28 (18.92 percent), TikTok users 46 (31.08 percent), and other user status comprises 30 (20.27 percent).

Table 2 encompasses the constructs, indicators, loadings, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and Average Variance Extracted.

Table 2

Loading, Reliability, and Convergent Validity

Construct	Indicator	Loading	rho (ρA)	CA	AVE
Awareness of AI-Generated Content	AAGC1	0.6414	0.8527	0.8408	0.5713
	AAGC2	0.8750			
	AAGC3	0.6873			
	AAGC4	0.7975			
Perceived Authenticity	PA1	0.6741	0.8576	0.8525	0.5932
	PA2	0.7721			
	PA3	0.8290			
	PA4	0.7970			
Trust with Transparency	TT1	0.7877	0.8250	0.8252	0.6111
	TT2	0.7776			
	TT3	0.7799			
Brand Perception	BP1	0.7406	0.8180	0.8180	0.5289
	BP2	0.7118			
	BP3	0.7185			
	BP4	0.7375			

Note: AAGC – awareness of AI-generated content, PA - perceived authenticity, TT - trust with transparency, BP – brand perception, rho (ρA)- composite reliability, CA – Cronbach's alpha, AVE – average variance extracted

Table 2 shows the factor loading, reliability, and convergent validity. The awareness of AI-generated content as a construct consists of four indicators. Perceived authenticity and brand perception include four indicators. Next, trust and transparency contain three indicators. The factor loading exceeds 0.70 for all indicators, excluding the first and third indicators of awareness of AI-generated content constructs and the first indicator of perceived authenticity. It shows that the factor loading of all indicators remained above 0.60. Furthermore, the factor loading reflects that items within a construct are highly converged, and a loading value more than or equivalent to 0.50 or higher is acceptable (Mohd Dzin & Lay, 2021).

Additionally, Dijkstra-Hensseler's rho (ρA) tests the consistency of constructs, and it reflects a reliability coefficient (Henseler et al., 2016). A composite reliability score above 0.70 is acceptable (Hair et al., 2011). The rho (ρA) value for all the constructs remained above the threshold criteria, which assures reliability. Furthermore, the value of Cronbach's alpha relating to all the constructs remained above 0.70. Next, this alpha value represents an average measure of internal consistency and item reliability, in which a value exceeding 0.70 is acceptable, depicting internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Similarly, average variance extracted (AVE) is the grand mean score of the squared loadings divided by the number of indicators. The score of AVE exceeds 0.50. The threshold acceptable value of AVE is 0.50, which depicts the construct explains 50 percent or more of the indicators' variance that make up the construct (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Table 3

Fornell-Larcker Criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Construct	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)				Fornell-Larcker Criterion			
	AAGC	PA	TT	BP	AAGC	PA	TT	BP
AAGC					**0.7558**			
PA	0.8519				0.7157	**0.7702**		
TT	0.8574	0.8168			0.7199	0.6562	**0.7817**	
BP	0.7506	0.8327	0.8363		0.5785	0.6923	0.7028	**0.7273**

Note: AAGC – Awareness of AI-generated content, PA - Perceived authenticity, TT - Trust with transparency, BP – Brand perception

Table 3 shows the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The discriminant validity was assessed with Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2016). Further, Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) demonstrates the extent to which a construct better describes the variance in its own indicators, compared to the variance of other constructs. Similarly, an HTMT ratio found less than 0.90 assures adequate discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2021). Additionally, the Fornell-Larcker Criteria exhibit the diagonal values representing the square root of the average variance extracted. As the diagonal values remain higher than the corresponding off-diagonal associations, it establishes discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Thus, the entire value of the diagonal line is depicted as greater than other corresponding correlations, confirming discriminant validity.

Table 4

Cross Loading

Indicator	AAGC	PA	TT	BP
AAGC1	**0.6414**	0.5819	0.5856	0.4878
AAGC2	**0.8750**	0.6962	0.7153	0.6655
AAGC3	**0.6873**	0.6286	0.6777	0.5227
AAGC4	**0.7975**	0.6507	0.5916	0.6066
PA1	0.6737	**0.6741**	0.6335	0.5609
PA2	0.7646	**0.7721**	0.6278	0.6424
PA3	0.6298	**0.8290**	0.6600	0.6898
PA4	0.5533	**0.7970**	0.5815	0.6631
TT1	0.6755	0.5863	**0.7877**	0.6604
TT2	0.6776	0.6866	**0.7776**	0.6520
TT3	0.6368	0.6277	**0.7799**	0.6539
BP1	0.5484	0.5867	0.6653	**0.7406**
BP2	0.5199	0.6120	0.5966	**0.7118**
BP3	0.5689	0.6334	0.5446	**0.7185**
BP4	0.5748	0.5896	0.6301	**0.7375**

Note: AAGC – Awareness of AI-generated content, PA - Perceived authenticity, TT - Trust with transparency, BP – Brand perception

Table 4 exhibits cross-loading. This result of cross-loading shows the relation of the indicators with other constructs, in which each indicator of the constructs needs to retain the highest loading on its own assigned factors relating to the remaining. This result indicates that all items exhibit higher loading values on their respective constructs compared to all other constructs, which assures discriminant validity through cross-loading results (Hair et al., 2014). Additionally, cross-loading of items in awareness of AI-generated content constructs depicts 0.6414, 0.8750, 0.6873, and 0.7975

loads, respectively, which hold higher scores compared to all other items and constructs such as perceived authenticity, trust with transparency, and brand perception. Moreover, the cross-loading values of items relating to perceived authenticity manifest as 0.6741, 0.7721, 0.8290, and 0.7970, respectively, which exceed cross-loading scores of other remaining items and constructs. Similarly, the cross-loading score of items in trust with transparency exhibits 0.7877, 0.7776, and 0.7799, respectively, which exceed the scores of other items and constructs. Finally, the cross-loading score of brand perception was found to be 0.7406, 0.7118, 0.7185, and 0.7375, respectively, which exceeds the cross-loading score of other items and constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

Table 5

Indicator Multicollinearity

Indicator	AAGC	PA	TT	BP
AAGC1	2.1413			
AAGC2	2.5567			
AAGC3	2.1234			
AAGC4	1.6638			
PA1		2.0306		
PA2		2.3562		
PA3		2.2544		
PA4		2.0171		
TT1			1.6676	
TT2			2.1705	
TT3			1.9747	
BP1				1.5897
BP2				1.7632
BP3				1.7634
BP4				1.7972

Note: AAGC – Awareness of AI-generated content, PA - Perceived authenticity, TT - Trust with transparency, BP – Brand perception

Table 5 reflects indicator multicollinearity. The variance inflation factors (VIF) of the indicators were found to be less than 3, which ensures the condition of no multicollinearity; consequently, a VIF score below 3 implies the situation of not having multicollinearity issues, which shows that its value ranging from 3 to 5 can be acceptable (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Table 6

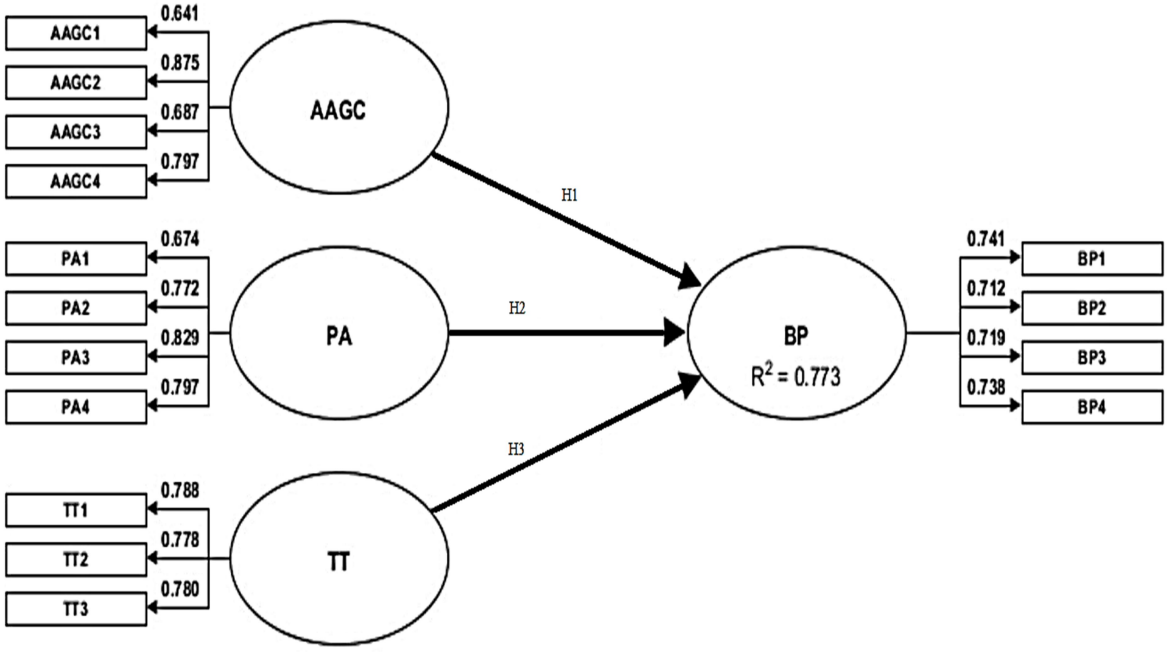
Explanatory Power and Model fit

Explanatory Power with R^2			Model fit with SRMR	
Construct	R-square	R-square adjusted	Fit Indices	Value
BP	0.7730	0.7683	SRMR	0.0641

Note: BP – Brand perception, SRMR – standardized root mean square

Table 6 manifests the explanatory power and model fit. The R-square value as reflected in the result, 77.30 percent for brand perception, denotes that all the predictors comprising awareness in AI-generated content, perceived authenticity, and trust with transparency explain 77.30 percent of the variation in brand perception. Similarly, the standardized root mean square (SRMR) was 0.0641, which is less than 0.08, indicating a good fit (Hair et al., 2020).

Figure 2. *Graphical Presentation of the Model*



Note. AAGC – Awareness of AI-generated content, PA - Perceived authenticity, TT - Trust with transparency, BP – Brand perception

Figure 2 shows the graphical presentation of the model. This shows the directional path, which provides a foundation for the analysis of the proposed hypothesis in the study. This graphical model encompasses independent variables such as awareness of AI-generated content (AAGC), perceived authenticity (PA), and trust with transparency (TT). Similarly, the dependent variable is brand perception (BP).

Hypothesis Testing

The data were analyzed employing the PLS algorithm to investigate the estimated hypotheses of the study. Moreover, a path coefficient in the study was obtained with a 10,000-subsample.

Table 7

Path Analysis

Factors/Hypothesis	Beta	t statistics	p–values	Result
H1: AAGC -> BP	0.0952	1.17	0.244	Not supported
H2: PA -> BP	0.346	4.45	0.001	Supported
H3: TT -> BP	0.3072	4.4	0.001	Supported

Note: AAGC – Awareness of AI-generated content, PA - Perceived authenticity, TT - Trust with transparency, BP – Brand perception

Table 7 shows the path analysis. The beta of awareness of AI-generated content shows ($\beta = 0.0952$, $p > 0.05$). It depicts the positive influence of awareness of AI-generated content on brand perception, but it was found to be insignificant. It means that as awareness of respondents rises, the brand perception favorably increases among the clients, but it is depicted as insignificant. Moreover, a one-unit increase in awareness of AI-generated content changes the brand perception by 0.0952 units. The proposed hypothesis H_1: There is a positive and significant association between

awareness of AI-generated content and brand perception among Gen Z, is rejected. Similarly, the beta coefficient for perceived authenticity was found ($\beta = 0.346$, $p < 0.05$). It reflects a favorable impact of perceived authenticity on brand perception. It means that as perceived authenticity increases among the clients, it leads to an increase in positive brand perception. Furthermore, a one-unit increase in perceived authenticity changes brand perception by 0.346 units. This confirms that the proposed hypothesis H_2: There is a positive and significant association between perceived authenticity and brand perception among Gen Z is accepted. Additionally, the beta coefficient for trust with transparency was found ($\beta = 0.3072$, $p < 0.05$). It reveals a favorable effect of trust with transparency on brand perception. It means that as trust with transparency rises among the clients for AI-generated content, it leads to an enhancement in positive brand perception. One unit increase in trust with transparency brings changes in brand perception by 0.3072 units. Thus, the hypothesis H_3: There is a positive and significant association between trust with transparency and brand perception among Gen Z is accepted.

Discussion

This study examined the impact of artificial intelligence-generated content on brand perception among Nepalese Generation Z. The data analysis was conducted to test the proposed hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed a favorable influence of awareness of AI-generated content on positive brand perception among Generation Z in Kathmandu. It advocates that as the level of awareness of AI-generated content spreads, it enhances a favorable brand perception. This finding is compatible with previous findings of (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006; Zhang & Gosline, 2023; Wattoo et al., 2025; Aljarah et al., 2025; Jin et al., 2025; Jung et al., 2025). However, these findings contradict the earlier empirical evidence stating that customers perceived AI-generated content with their awareness avoids the inclining intention (Arango et al., 2023). Similarly, the result of this study depicted a positive impact of perceived authenticity on brand perception. It shows that as perceived authenticity of AI-generated content increases, it enhances a favorable brand perception among Generation Z in Kathmandu. These findings align with previous empirical findings (Kim et al., 2021; Kirkby et al., 2023; Brüns & Meißner, 2024; Kirk & Givi, 2025; Wen & Laporte, 2025; Baek et al., 2026). However, these findings contradict findings stating that artificially generated content exerts poor influence on brand perception compared to the traditional promotional system (Ali et al., 2025). Moreover, the result showed a supportive and favorable effect of trust with transparency on brand perception. It reflects that as trust with transparency rises for AI-generated content, it helps foster brand perception among Generation Z. This consequence is compatible with empirical evidence from earlier research (Hsieh et al., 2004; Malär et al., 2012; Allen et al., 2018; Dzyabura & Peres, 2021; Pogacar et al., 2021). However, it inversely correlates with the results of previous findings revealing that individuals give less priority and value to the artificially generated items and information (Amos & Zhang, 2024). Next, the appearance of AI in content creation reduces the value of marketing promotion, eliminating the deteriorating brand perception (Bui, 2026).

Conclusion

This research investigates the influence of artificial intelligence-generated content on brand perception among Nepalese Generation Z. The results of this study reveal a supportive link between AI-generated content and brand perception. It advocates that AI-generated content supports developing an attractive brand perception. The outcome manifests a favorable connection between AI-generated content and brand perception. It means the rising trends in AI-based content creation contribute to fostering brand perception among Generation Z in Kathmandu. This concludes that a

corporate house with the involvement of AI for promotional content creation boosts supportive brand perception. Thus, strategic concentration on embracing Artificial Intelligence in the modern era fosters brand attachment. Similarly, the result depicts a favorable effect of perceived authenticity on brand perception. It means that as perceived authenticity escalates among Generation Z, it supports crafting brand perception. It concludes that entities involved in the practice of AI-generated content, through enhancing perceived authenticity, perpetually construct brand perception. Thus, a rational move for business firms is to retain clients with a supportive brand perception. Next, the outcome of this study reveals a favorable impact of trust with transparency on brand perception. This demonstrates that as trust with transparency builds for AI-generated content, it constructs a foundation to develop constructive brand perception. It concludes that organizational endeavor in developing trust with transparency perpetually enhances the inclination of users towards AI-based content. The result of this investigation further contributes to the existing theories by providing novel evidence from the Nepalese Generation Z context.

Additionally, the result of this research lays a foundation for business practitioners, as these findings can link to the strategic promotional scheme embracing Artificial Intelligence-based efforts to develop a supportive cognitive perception towards brand attachment. Moreover, these findings can be useful to the academic sector as this study manifests empirical evidence that establishes a foundation for researchers to examine the field of study. However, this study has certain limitations as this research is based on a small sample size, which could additionally contribute to robust results. Next, the cross-sectional data employed in the study excludes a longitudinal experiment. Furthermore, few predictors were employed in the investigation, which excludes other highly impactful factors for the study. Moreover, the study was confined only to the Generation Z of Kathmandu, which excludes the other potential geographical areas that could depict diverse outcomes. Therefore, future studies can take place, comprising a large sample size representing diverse geographical territories, including other predictor variables affecting brand perception.

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