



Anthropomorphism as a catalyst: an empirical approach on smart phone sales

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Abstract: The study aims at assessing the role of demographic factors in shaping the impact of anthropomorphism on purchase intention of smart phone. It is an attempt to know the effect of anthropomorphism on purchase intention of smartphone. The data were elicited from the respondents using structured questionnaire. The Kruskal Wallis H test and Mann Whitney U test were used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. It is found that there is no significant difference in the purchase intention due to anthropomorphism across categories of age, educational level and annual income.

Index Terms – Anthropomorphism, demographic, purchase intention.

INTRODUCTION

In the ever-evolving world of advertising, marketers are continuously seeking innovative strategies to connect with their target audience. One such approach that has gained significant attention in recent years is anthropomorphism in advertising. Anthropomorphism involves imbuing non-human entities, such as animals, objects, or even inanimate products, with human-like traits and characteristics. This technique aims to establish an emotional connection between consumers and the product, ultimately influencing their purchase decisions. Among the numerous products subject to anthropomorphic advertising, smartphones have emerged as a prime candidate, particularly among the tech-savvy youth demographic.

Anthropomorphism is defined as 'the tendency to imbue the real or imagined behaviour of nonhuman agents with human like characteristics, motivations, intention or emotions', (Epley waytz & Cacioppo, 2007). The attribution of human like qualities to non-human entities has a significant impact on consumers purchase intention. By endowing product with human like traits, company can create an emotional connection between the product and consumer, they by appeal and received value of product. From product design, advertising and marketing with the use of anthropomorphic elements can play a crucial role in shaping consumer's perception and buying decision.

Anthropomorphic advertising leverages innate human tendency to anthropomorphize objects by making smartphones appears more relatable and personable. Through the use of animated characters, mascots or personified smartphones advertisers aim to create emotional connection with consumers, ultimately influencing purchase intention.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aims to investigate the impact of anthropomorphism on the purchase intention of smartphones among youth. Anthropomorphism refers to tendency of individuals to attribute human like characteristics to non-human entities such as products or brands. Understanding how anthropomorphism appeals influence youth's attitudes toward smart phone brands and their purchase intentions is essential for marketers seeking to design effective advertising strategies and enhance consumer brand relationships in the highly competitive market segment. The study will explore the relationship between anthropomorphism and purchase intention provides valuable insight for marketers in tailoring their approaches to target this demographic effectively.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted with the following objectives:

- To examine the effect of anthropomorphism on purchase intention of smartphone.
- To determine the relationship between anthropomorphism and brand loyalty.
- To explore the role of demographic factors (age, gender, income, educational level, current status) in shaping the impact of anthropomorphism on purchase intention of smart phone.

HYPOTHESES

The study is based on the following hypothesis:

- The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of gender.

- The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of age.
- The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of educational level.
- The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of annual income.

METHODOLOGY

a) Sampling:

The study is both descriptive and analytical in nature. The effect of anthropomorphism on purchase intention of smartphone assessed by eliciting data using structured questionnaires. Convenience sampling process were used for selecting the samples for the study. A sample of 100 students was collected.

b) Data collection:

Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires. Secondary data were collected from the magazines, books, journals etc. The opinion of respondents was marked on five point Likert-type scale.

c) Tools used:

The data collected were analysed using SPSS. The Kruskal Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test are used to test the hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that there is no significant difference in the purchase intention due to anthropomorphism across categories of gender. The p value of .719 at 5% level of significance from the perceptions of 100 respondents is shown as under:

TABLE 1
purchase intention due to anthropomorphism across categories of gender

HYPOTHESIS	CATEGORY	N	Mann Whitney U	P Value
The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of gender	MALE	52	1196.500	.719
	FEMALE	48		
	TOTAL	100		

Source: Computed from Survey Data

Mann Whitney U Test

The results obtained from the analysis of the data accept the first null hypothesis, “The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of gender”.

The results from the study also show that there is no significant difference in the purchase intention due to anthropomorphism across categories of age, educational level and annual income. The p values at 5% level of significance from the perceptions of 100 respondents are shown as under:

TABLE 2
Purchase intention due to anthropomorphism across categories of age, educational level and annual income

HYPOTHESES	CATEGORY	N	Kruskal Wallis H	Df	P Value
The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of age	UNDER 18	5	.374	3	.946
	18 – 24	40			
	25 – 34	36			
	35 – 44	19			
	44 ABOVE	100			
	TOTAL	100			
The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of educational level	HIGH SCHOOL	33	7.238	3	.065
	BACHELORS	36			
	DEGREE	29			
	MASTERS DEGREE	2			
	TOTAL	100			
The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of annual	LESS THAN 2 LAKHS	46	6.495	4	.165
	2 LAKHS - 3 LAKHS	28			
	3 LAKHS – 4 LAKHS	22			
	4 LAKHS -5 LAKHS	1			

income	MORE THAN	5	3			
	LAKHS					
	TOTAL		100			

Source: Computed from Survey Data

Kruskal Wallis H Test

The p value of .946 at 5% level of significance from the analysis of the data accepts the second null hypothesis, “The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of age”.

The study also accepts the third hypothesis, “The distribution of purchase intention due to anthropomorphism is the same across categories of educational level”. Hence it is inferred that there is no significant difference in the purchase intention due to anthropomorphism amongst the respondents with different educational level.

An attempt made to study impact on the distribution of purchase intention is same across the categories of Annual Income, Kruskal Wallis H test was utilized.

As per p value is greater than .05 significant level, alternative hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can infer that there is no significance difference in the purchase intention due to anthropomorphism amongst the respondents with different annual income.

CONCLUSION

The impact of anthropomorphism in ads on the purchase intention of smartphones among youth is a significant and relevant area of study in today's advertising landscape. Anthropomorphism, which involves attributing human-like characteristics to non-human entities, has the potential to create emotional connections with consumers and influence their purchase decisions. Through anthropomorphism, advertisers can transform smartphones into relatable and engaging characters, fostering a sense of companionship and attachment with the device. This emotional connection can lead to increased brand loyalty and positive attitudes toward the advertised smartphones.

Furthermore, anthropomorphic ads may resonate particularly well with the youth demographic, as they are more open to novel and imaginative approaches in advertising. By creating relatable and memorable ad campaigns, brands can capture the attention of the youth and increase the likelihood of purchase intention. However, it is crucial to strike a balance in using anthropomorphism in ads. Overuse or poorly executed anthropomorphic elements may lead to skepticism or perceived manipulation, negatively affecting purchase intentions. Advertisers should be cautious and ensure that the anthropomorphic approach aligns with the brand identity and does not undermine the product's functionality and features.

Therefore, anthropomorphism in ads can play a significant role in influencing the purchase intention of smartphones among youth. When appropriately implemented, it has the potential to establish strong emotional connections, increase brand loyalty, and positively impact consumer attitudes towards the advertised products.

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