

Consumer Acceptance of AI-Generated Artwork

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Abstract

This research investigates consumer acceptance and adaptation of AI-generated artwork, examining the factors influencing perceptions, valuation, and emotional responses to AI-created visual content. The study will examine consumer attitudes toward the authenticity, creativity, and commercial viability of AI-generated art in comparison to human-created pieces. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research will identify key drivers of acceptance/adaptation and resistance. The expected outcomes include insights into the role of trust, transparency, and artistic context in shaping consumer perceptions, with implications for artists, marketers, and the broader creative industries.

Project Outline

The rise of artificial intelligence has disrupted various industries, including the creative arts, where AI-generated artwork is increasingly being used in digital and traditional artistic applications. While AI has demonstrated its ability to generate visually compelling artwork, consumer purchase perceptions remain divided (Braguez, 2023; Latikka et al., 2023; Moura et al., 2023). Some view AI-generated art as innovative and valuable, while others question its authenticity and creative merit.

Prior research indicates that AI-created art is often perceived as less creative and valuable than human-made art (Bellaiche et al., 2023; Hong & Curran, 2020; Horton et al., 2023; Ragut et al., 2019). However, research on the psychological, cultural, and contextual factors influencing consumer acceptance remains limited. There is a need to explore how emotional responses, authenticity cues, and perceived artistic intent shape consumer attitudes (Yu et al., 2024). This study aims to bridge the gap by providing empirical insights into the determinants of AI-generated artwork acceptance and adaptation (Bala & Venkatesh, 2016; Roy et al., 2025), offering practical guidance for industry stakeholders.

This PhD research will adopt a mixed-methods approach to examine consumer acceptance of AI-generated artwork. The study will include:

- **Qualitative Phase:** In-depth interviews and focus group discussions with artists, collectors, and consumers to explore perceptions, expectations, and emotional responses to AI-created artwork.
- **Quantitative Phase:** Large-scale surveys and experimental designs testing consumer willingness to pay, perceived creativity, and authenticity of AI-generated art under different conditions (e.g., labelled vs. unlabelled AI art, different artistic contexts).
- **Behavioural Experimentation:** Potential use of eye-tracking or neuromarketing techniques to analyse subconscious reactions to AI vs. human-generated art.

This study will contribute to the academic literature and industry practice by identifying the psychological, cultural, and contextual factors that drive consumer acceptance and provide recommendations for integrating AI-generated art into commercial and cultural settings.

Research Questions

This project will address key research questions, including but not limited to:

1. How do consumers perceive the authenticity and creativity of AI-generated artwork compared to human-created art?
2. What factors influence consumer willingness to pay for AI-generated artwork?
3. How does transparency (e.g., labelling AI-generated artwork) impact consumer acceptance and valuation?
4. What emotional and psychological mechanisms influence the acceptance or rejection of AI-generated art?
5. How do cultural and demographic factors shape consumer attitudes towards AI-generated artwork?
6. How can AI-generated art be positioned and marketed to align with consumer expectations and enhance commercial viability?
7. Identifying consumers' adaptation behaviours related to AI-generated artwork.

Expected Contributions

This PhD research will contribute to the development of a conceptual model that identifies the key determinants influencing the acceptance of AI-generated artwork. It will provide empirical insights into how consumers differentiate between AI and human-created art, offering guidance on best practices for disclosure and marketing. The findings will have practical implications for artists, marketers, and digital platforms, helping them integrate AI-generated artwork into creative and commercial contexts while maintaining consumer trust and engagement. Additionally, this research will contribute to the ethical debate on AI in the arts, addressing issues of authenticity, ownership, and the evolving role of human creativity in a technology-driven landscape. Through an interdisciplinary approach, this study will advance knowledge in marketing, consumer behaviour, and digital art, offering valuable insights for academia, practitioners, and policymakers navigating the intersection of AI and creativity.

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