

Chapter 12

Someone Like Us: Anthropomorphism in the Consumer Behavior in the Scope of Emerging Countries

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the development of anthropomorphism research in consumer behavior over the last three decades, with a particular focus on emerging countries. A dataset of 475 articles was collected from the Web of Science database, using the keywords “anthropomorph” and “consum*”. The study includes graphics related to annual scientific production, corresponding author’s country, most cited countries, most relevant sources, word cloud, word tree, trend topics, and thematic map, revealing the visualization technique. The meta-analysis aims to create a comprehensive framework for articles on anthropomorphism in consumer behavior published in the last 30 years, with a specific focus on emerging countries. The study will examine the anthropomorphism studies carried out in these countries separately and make suggestions for anthropomorphism applications that can be applied in consumer behavior in emerging countries, comparing the general findings to those from emerging countries.*

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) has become a major disruptor in emerging and developing countries, and one of the ways in which it is impacting these countries is through the development of anthropomorphic features (McDuie-Ra and Gulson, 2020). Anthropomorphism refers to the attribution of human-like characteristics and behaviors to machines, such as intelligent digital assistants and chatbots like Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant (Abercrombie et al., 2021). The use of AI and anthropomorphism in developing countries has both positive and negative impacts (Blut et al., 2021). On the positive side, AI can help optimize supply chains, reduce energy consumption, and improve the quality of healthcare services (Dash,

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2019). For example, AI can help medical professionals diagnose diseases more accurately and provide personalized treatment plans. It can also improve patient outcomes by monitoring and predicting health risks (Yeasmin, 2019; Omary et al., 2009). However, there are also concerns about job displacement due to the automation of certain tasks by AI. There is a need for skilled workers to design, build, and operate AI systems. Additionally, there are ethical concerns such as data privacy, bias, and transparency that must be addressed through the development of regulations and guidelines (Martin et al., 2022).

To guide future studies on the use of AI and anthropomorphism in developing countries, it is important to systematically classify studies on this subject. This will help identify the most studied topics, most cited authors, and trending topics by year. This information can help policymakers and business leaders make informed decisions about investing in education and skills development, developing regulations and guidelines, and making technology accessible to all to maximize benefits and reduce challenges. It is crucial that policymakers and business leaders take a proactive approach to AI and anthropomorphism in developing countries. This means investing in education and skills development to ensure that workers have the skills needed to design, build, and operate AI systems. It also means developing regulations and guidelines that address ethical concerns and ensure that AI is used for the benefit of society as a whole. Finally, it means making technology accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic status, to ensure that the benefits of AI are available to everyone.

BACKGROUND

Anthropomorphism

Anthropomorphism is a concept that refers to the attribution of human-like characteristics to non-human beings by humans (Milton, 2020). Studies conducted to measure people's perceptions of animals and non-human beings show that people easily attribute humanoid characteristics to non-human beings. In practice, it is seen that anthropomorphic studies are frequently made by engineers, designers, and programmers (Whitson, 2018; Waytz et. al., 2010). Products such as the world-renowned Honda Asimo Robot, Ameca by Engineered Arts, and Sophia by Hanson Robotics are some of the anthropomorphic works that mimic the human form. Anthropomorphism is also frequently used in the field of marketing and advertising (Laksmidewi et. al., 2017). Making non-living characters talk like human beings makes it easier for consumers to be convinced of the character. Some brands such as Michelin (Michelin Man), The Walt Disney Company (Mickey Mouse), and Monopoly (Rich Uncle Pennybags) appeal to consumers by humanizing their logos and mascots.

Anthropomorphism, which expresses human-like features exhibited by non-human beings, plays an important role in the effectiveness of artificial intelligence artifacts, greatly affecting the user experience during human-AI interaction (Yuan & Dennis, 2019). Because of the essential role of AI anthropomorphism in human-AI interaction, it is important to identify the antecedents that influence perceived anthropomorphism. When the studies on artificial intelligence and anthropomorphism in the literature are examined, it is seen that the humanoid features attributed to artificial intelligence are examined under 3 headings. The first of these is human images (human figures), the second is human identity features (human names, identities), and the third is human speech (imitating human language) (Cheng et. al., 2022; Go & Sundar, 2019).

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