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The Rise of Posthumanism in Marketing: A Comprehensive Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze publication trends in posthumanism within the field of marketing, identify the most influential authors and journals, and explore the key themes and concepts frequently discussed. Employing a bibliometric review methodology, this study utilized data from three leading academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, and EBSCO, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of the literature. A systematic selection process yielded 19 relevant articles for bibliometric analysis after filtering out duplicates and irrelevant works. The findings reveal a significant increase in publication activity since 2020, primarily concentrated in Western countries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom. Influential authors include Venkatesh & Meamber (2006) and Campbell et al. (2010), whose contributions to Marketing Theory and Journal of Consumer Behaviour have garnered the highest citation counts. The key themes identified include agri-food networks, ethics of artificial intelligence, marketplace accessibility, and sustainability within green capitalism. These themes indicate a shift from traditional human-centered marketing approaches to a more inclusive perspective that recognizes the interdependence of human and non-human entities. This research not only highlights the evolving landscape of posthumanism in marketing but also underscores its implications for consumer engagement and brand interaction in a complex and interconnected world.

Keywords: *posthumanism, marketing, bibliometric analysis, publication trends*

Introduction

In recent decades, the concept of posthumanism has garnered increasing attention across various disciplines (Dedeoğlu & Zampaki, 2023; Forlano, 2017), including marketing. Posthumanism challenges traditional views that place humans at the center of all activities, introducing the idea that humans are part of a broader network involving technology, the environment, and other non-human entities (Ferrando, 2013; Sharon, 2013; Smart & Smart, 2017). In the context of marketing, this approach opens up new opportunities to understand how the interactions between humans, technology, and the environment shape consumer behavior and marketing strategies. The application of posthumanism in marketing shifts the focus from a human-centered approach to a more inclusive perspective that considers the crucial roles of technologies such as artificial

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intelligence (AI), big data, and algorithms in influencing consumer decisions (Fusté-Forné & Jamal, 2021; Hyman & Lukosius, 2024).

This research is essential for understanding how the concept of posthumanism has evolved within marketing literature. With the rapid advancement of technology, the boundaries between humans and technology are becoming increasingly blurred, creating hybrid entities where technology is an integral part of consumer identity and experience (Dincelli & Yayla, 2022; Gregory et al., 2018; Nagy & Koles, 2014; Papagiannis, 2017). Therefore, a deep understanding of how posthumanism is applied and explored in marketing research can provide new insights for academics and practitioners in developing marketing strategies that are more relevant to contemporary dynamics.

To comprehend how posthumanism has developed in marketing literature, this study conducts a bibliometric analysis aimed at identifying research trends, leading authors, key journals, and central themes related to posthumanism in marketing. Bibliometric analysis is a powerful method for evaluating and identifying patterns in scientific publications, including revealing collaboration networks among researchers and the most discussed topics. By employing this technique, this research will not only identify key contributions in this field but also provide insights into how the concept of posthumanism has influenced and will continue to impact the evolution of marketing theory and practice.

This study aims to address several key questions, including:

RQ1: What are the publication trends regarding posthumanism in the field of marketing?

RQ2: Who are the most influential authors and journals on this topic?

RQ3: What are the main themes and concepts frequently discussed?

By answering these questions, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the understanding of posthumanism in the context of marketing, as well as provide guidance for future research and practice.

Methods

Data Source

In this study, the primary data sources were obtained from three leading academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science, and EBSCO. These databases were selected for their credibility and wide coverage of academic literature, including in the fields of marketing and the humanities, which are relevant to the topic of posthumanism. Scopus, one of the largest citation databases globally, provides access to high-quality articles from reputable journals across various disciplines (Sangadji, 2023). Web of Science has a strong track record of offering peer-reviewed publications and enables comprehensive citation tracking (Pranckutė, 2021). EBSCO complements these two databases by providing access to a broader range of materials, including journal articles, reports, and media publications.

The selection of these three databases was made to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the collected data, as well as to maximize the breadth of bibliometric analysis. Scopus and Web of Science are known for their robust citation analysis features, which help identify publication trends, influential authors, and leading institutions in the study of posthumanism in marketing. EBSCO, with its extensive range of publications across disciplines, serves as a valuable complement, enriching the data obtained from Scopus and Web of Science. The combined use of these three

databases aims to provide a comprehensive and representative analysis of the development of posthumanism studies in marketing.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The criteria used for selecting articles in this study involved excluding duplicate articles, those that were not relevant to the topic, or those without accessible full-text versions. Articles that were included in the analysis were those deemed relevant to the research topic, specifically posthumanism in marketing. The results of the search and selection process from the Scopus, Web of Science, and EBSCO databases are as follows:

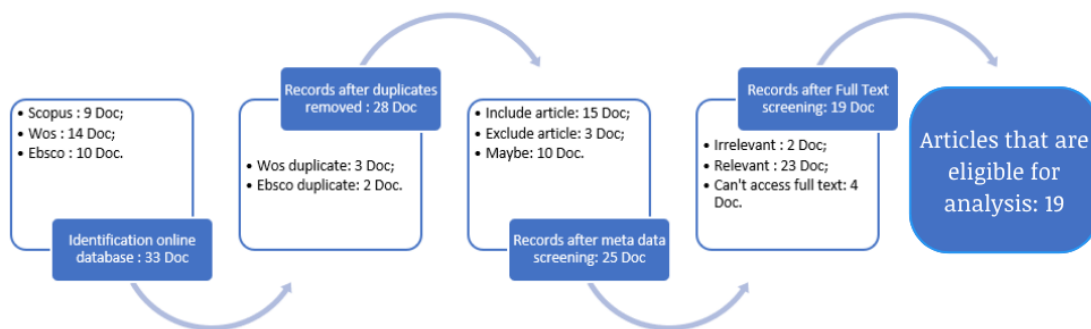


Figure 1. Article selection flowchart based on inclusion/exclusion criteria

Figure 1, the Article Selection Flowchart, illustrates the systematic process of selecting articles for this study based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The process began by identifying articles from three online databases: Scopus, Web of Science (WoS), and EBSCO. A total of 33 articles were retrieved, consisting of 9 documents from Scopus, 14 from WoS, and 10 from EBSCO. To manage potential duplicate entries, Rayyan – Intelligent Systematic Review software was used to filter out duplicates. During this step, 3 documents from WoS and 2 from EBSCO were identified as duplicates of the articles found in Scopus. After excluding the duplicate articles, 28 unique documents remained for further analysis.

These 28 documents were then subjected to metadata screening to assess their relevance to the research topic of posthumanism in marketing. Following this screening, 3 documents were excluded as their metadata indicated they were not relevant to the topic. The remaining 25 articles were then evaluated based on the availability of full-text versions. During this step, 2 documents were excluded due to irrelevance, and 4 additional documents were removed because their full texts were inaccessible. As a result, 19 articles were deemed eligible for inclusion in the bibliometric analysis of this study.

Analysis Procedure

The analysis procedure in this study followed a systematic bibliometric approach to examine the rise of posthumanism in marketing. The steps involved in the bibliometric analysis included data collection, cleaning, and the subsequent analysis of publication trends, citation patterns, and keyword co-occurrences. Initially, articles retrieved from Scopus, Web of Science, and EBSCO were filtered based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. After obtaining the final dataset, the bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer software to generate and visualize co-authorship networks, citation networks, and keyword co-occurrence maps. VOSviewer was chosen

for its ability to efficiently handle large-scale bibliometric data and create visualizations that help uncover the underlying structure of the research field.

Additionally, Microsoft Excel was used to organize the raw data, perform descriptive statistical analyses, and create graphs illustrating trends in publication counts, citations, and the geographic distribution of research on posthumanism in marketing. Excel was also employed to generate tables summarizing the most influential authors, and journals in this field. By combining VOSviewer's visualization capabilities with Excel's data management tools, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the bibliometric landscape in posthumanism research within the marketing discipline.

Results

The bibliometric analysis conducted in this study provides a detailed overview of the research landscape on posthumanism in marketing. This section presents the findings, including publication trends over time, the geographical distribution of research outputs, citation patterns, and keyword co-occurrence networks. These results are illustrated in the following tables and graphs.

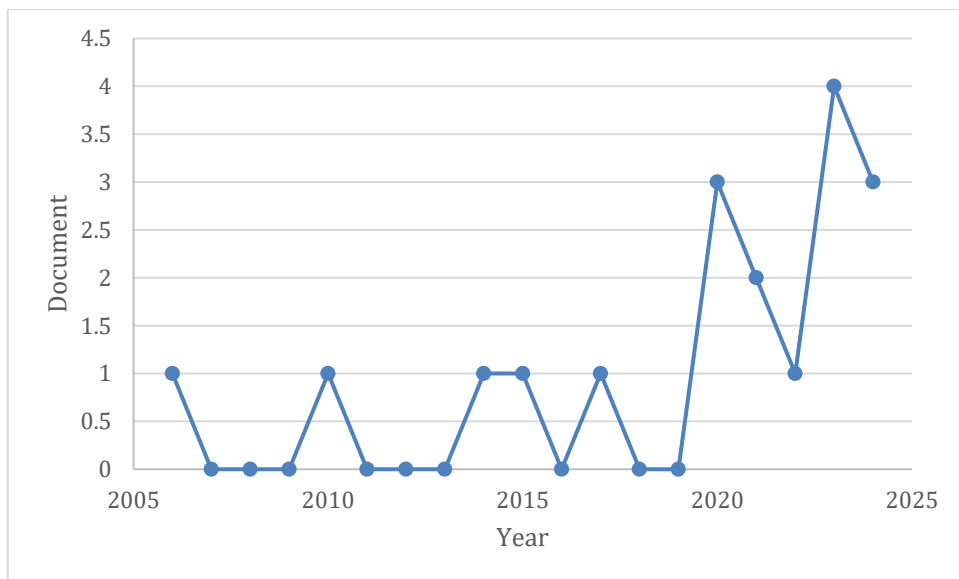


Figure 2. Trends in the Development of Research on Posthumanism in Marketing

Figure 2 illustrates the trends in the development of research on posthumanism in marketing from 2006 to 2024. The data shows a sporadic and gradual emergence of publications in the early years, with only a single document published in 2006, 2010, and 2015. There was minimal activity between 2007 and 2019, with multiple years showing no publications at all. However, starting in 2020, there was a noticeable increase in research output, with three documents published in 2020, two in 2021, and one in 2022. The growth continued with four publications in 2023, and a peak of three documents already published in 2024. This upward trend, particularly in recent years, suggests an increasing academic interest in posthumanism within the marketing field, reflecting its growing relevance and impact.

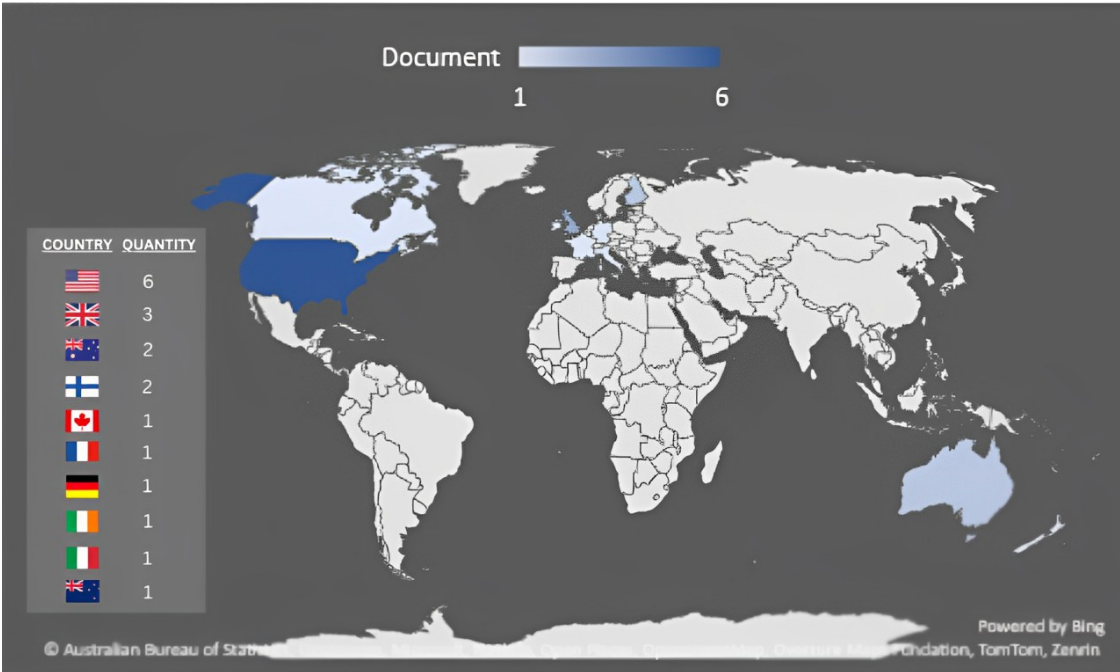


Figure 3. A Cross-Country Distribution of Posthumanism Marketing Research

Based on Figure 3, which illustrates the "Distribution of Research on Posthumanism in Marketing Across Several Countries," the United States emerges as the leader with six published documents, underscoring its dominant role in advancing posthumanism studies in marketing. The United Kingdom follows with three publications, while Australia and Finland each contribute two. Several other countries, including Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, and New Zealand, have each published one document on the topic. This indicates that research on posthumanism in marketing is predominantly concentrated in Western countries, with the United States and the United Kingdom being the most significant contributors. The global relevance of this research becomes evident as it not only expands academic knowledge but also provides fresh insights into the evolving relationships between humans, technology, and markets. Moreover, these works have been widely cited, underscoring their significance and influence in the broader academic discourse, as shown in the following table.

Table 1. Research on Posthumanism in Marketing cited in the Scopus database

| Authors & Year | Document title | Source | Citations |
|-----------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| (Venkatesh & Meamber, 2006) | Arts and aesthetics: Marketing and cultural production | Marketing Theory, 6(1), pp. 11–39 | 153 |
| (Campbell et al., 2010) | The posthuman: The end and the beginning of the human | Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 9(2), pp. 86–101 | 34 |

| Authors & Year | Document title | Source | Citations |
|------------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| (Botez et al., 2020) | Mapping the absence: a theological critique of posthumanist influences in marketing and consumer research | Journal of Marketing Management, 36(15-16), pp. 1391–1416 | 24 |
| (Bryant & Wolfram Cox, 2014) | Beyond authenticity? Humanism, posthumanism and new organization development | British Journal of Management, 25(4), pp. 706–723 | 16 |
| (Fox, 2023) | Green capitalism, climate change and the technological fix: A more-than-human assessment | Sociological Review, 71(5), pp. 1115–1134 | 12 |
| (Demo, 2017) | Hacking agency: Apps, autism, and neurodiversity | Quarterly Journal of Speech, 103(3), pp. 277–300 | 10 |
| (Fahn, 2020) | Marketing the prosthesis: Supercrip and superhuman narratives in contemporary cultural representations | Philosophies, 5(3), 11 | 6 |
| (Soro et al., 2020) | Towards a smart and socialised augmented reality | Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - Proceedings, 3383002 | 5 |
| (Buchanan-Oliver, 2015) | The spectre of posthumanism in technology consumption: The death of the human? | Death in a Consumer Culture, pp. 276–291 | 5 |
| (Arnould, 2024) | Praxeomorphology, ontology, and renewal of post-consumer personhood | Journal of Marketing Management, 40(7-8), pp. 635–641 | 3 |
| (Elton, 2023) | The relational agency of plants in produce supply chains during COVID-19: “Mother nature takes her course” | Journal of Rural Studies, 98, pp. 59–67 | 3 |

| Authors & Year | Document title | Source | Citations |
|---------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| (Husemann et al., 2023) | Marketplace accessibility: a service-provider perspective | European Journal of Marketing, 57(9), pp. 2544–2571 | 2 |
| (Muhlhauser et al., 2021) | Grilling Meataphors: Impossible™ Foods and Posthumanism in the Meat Aisle | Humanities (Switzerland), 10(1), 49 | 2 |
| (Hong, 2024) | Transcendence up for sale: cracking the onto-existential codes for Übermensch | Consumption Markets and Culture, 27(2), pp. 152–177 | 1 |
| (Bartosch, 2021) | The Transhumanist Creep: Posthumanism, Pedagogy, And The Praxeological Mangle | Open Library of Humanities, 7(2), pp. 1–20 | 1 |

The analysis of Table 1, Research on Posthumanism in Marketing cited in the Scopus database, highlights several key contributions to the field, with notable variation in citation impact across studies. The most highly cited work is by Venkatesh & Meamber (2006) with 153 citations, reflecting significant influence on the intersection of arts, aesthetics, and marketing. Campbell et al., (2010), exploring the philosophical dimensions of posthumanism, follows with 34 citations. Recent contributions, such as Botez et al. (2020) and Fox (2023), have fewer citations (24 and 12, respectively) but demonstrate growing scholarly attention to theological critiques and environmental assessments within the context of posthumanism. Other works, like Bryant and Wolfram Cox, (2014) and Demo (2017), show moderate influence with 16 and 10 citations, respectively, addressing authenticity and neurodiversity. Meanwhile, newer research, including publications by Husemann et al. (2023) and Hong (2024), has only begun to gain traction, reflecting the nascent but expanding interest in this field. Overall, the citation trends reveal that foundational studies continue to shape the discourse, while emerging research is gradually building its impact.

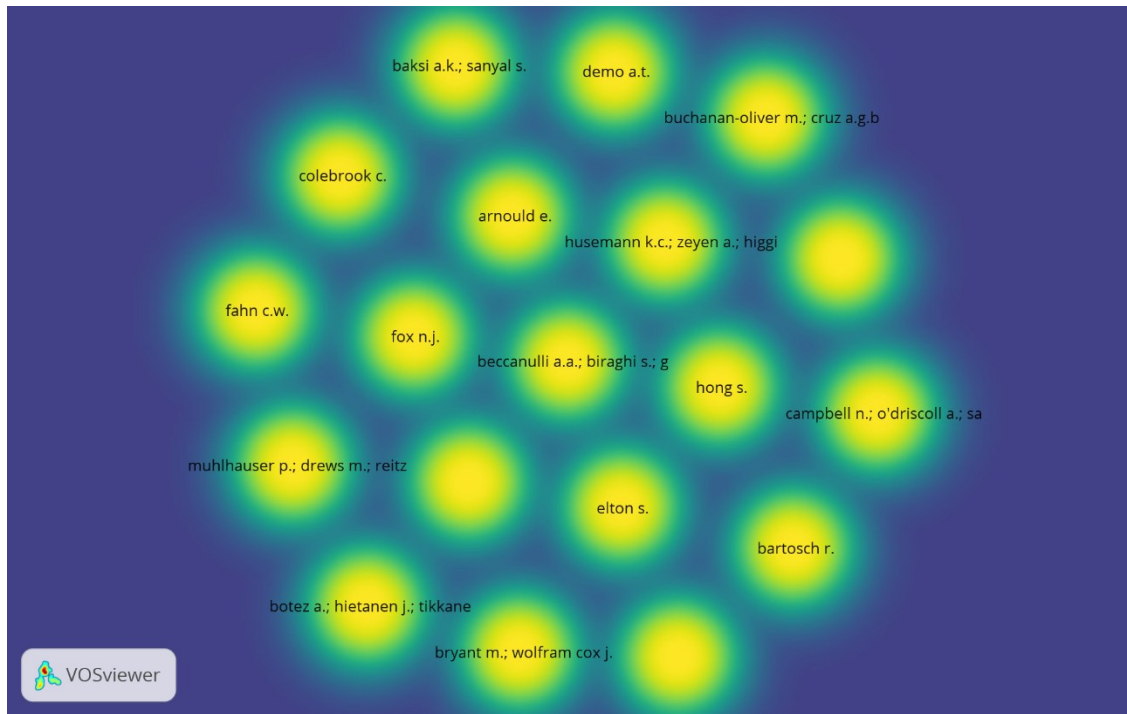


Figure 4. Density Visualization of Co-Authorship of Research on Posthumanism in Marketing

The visualization in Figure 4 illustrates the density of research authorship on posthumanism in marketing, depicting a network of authors and their contributions to the field. The heat map-style layout features yellow-green circular hotspots of varying sizes, each labeled with one or more author names, highlighting the concentration of research efforts. The size and brightness of the hotspots likely correspond to the volume or impact of each author's work, with larger and brighter spots representing more significant contributions. For example, research by Fahn (2020) on "Marketing the Prosthesis: Supercrip and Superhuman Narratives in Contemporary Cultural Representations" and by Husemann et al. (2023) on "Marketplace Accessibility: A Service-Provider Perspective" are among those represented by larger, brighter nodes, reflecting their alignment with key topics and their impact on the field. This visualization offers an overview of the research landscape, helping to identify leading authors, key collaborations, and the primary areas of focus within posthumanism in marketing.

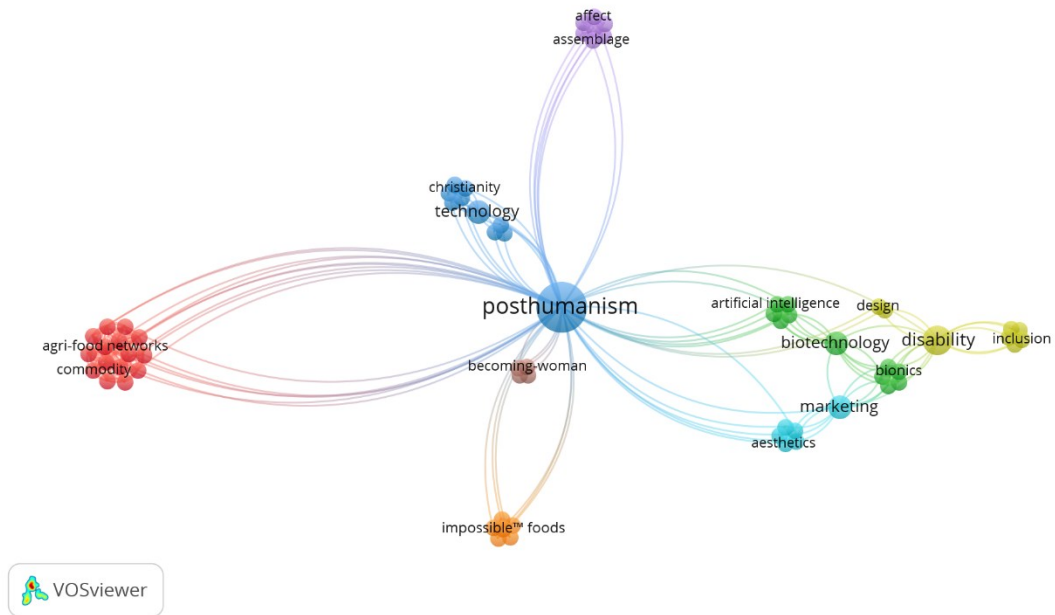


Figure 5. Keyword Network Visualization in Posthumanism Marketing Research

Figure 5 presents a network visualization of keywords from research on posthumanism in marketing, comprising 67 items grouped into 8 clusters. Each cluster highlights specific themes within this area of study. Cluster 1 focuses on agri-food networks and the economic impact of pandemics, emphasizing food supply chains and public health. Cluster 2 delves into topics such as artificial intelligence, ethics, and transhumanism, while Cluster 3 explores the body, consumer culture, and posthumanism within the context of religion and technology. Cluster 4 emphasizes design, marketplace accessibility, and disability, whereas Cluster 5 examines green capitalism and new materialism, particularly in relation to electric vehicles and non-human agency. Cluster 6 links aesthetics and cultural production to marketing, while Cluster 7 centers on plant-based meat, rhetoric, and sustainability. Finally, Cluster 8 highlights feminism, post-feminism, and nomadism.

Posthumanism's relevance to marketing lies in its challenge to traditional human-centered approaches, expanding the focus to include non-human entities and systems such as technology, animals, and the environment. In marketing, this shift influences how products, services, and consumer experiences are designed and communicated. Themes like sustainability (Cluster 7), accessibility (Cluster 4), and the integration of technology and artificial intelligence (Cluster 2) reflect posthumanist ideas by rethinking the role of consumers, products, and broader socio-economic systems beyond human-centered frameworks.

Discussion

The rise of posthumanism in marketing signifies a pivotal transformation in how scholars and practitioners perceive consumer behavior, brand interactions, and market dynamics. Traditionally rooted in a human-centered perspective, marketing has focused predominantly on human needs,

desires, and experiences. However, the increasing complexity of technology, globalization, and environmental concerns has led researchers to explore frameworks that transcend these human-centric views. Posthumanism challenges conventional paradigms by emphasizing the interconnectedness of humans, non-human entities, and the environment. This shift offers fresh insights into how marketing practices can adapt in response to these evolving relationships, making it a relevant field of study in today's context.

Based on the bibliometric analysis, research on posthumanism in marketing has experienced significant growth between 2020 and 2024. This development reflects the emergence of diverse perspectives that encompass a wide range of issues, from the impact of posthumanism on identity politics to its application in marketing technologies. Colebrook (2022) highlights how posthumanism, through the concept of "becoming-woman," creates a new conceptual space that transcends traditional identity politics. This perspective responds to the neoliberal co-option of feminism as a marketing tool, illustrating how posthumanism can reconstruct political discourse by adopting a more fluid and dynamic approach to identity. Such insights underscore the necessity for marketers to adapt their strategies to align with contemporary societal shifts in understanding identity and agency.

At its core, posthumanism posits that human beings are not the sole agents of meaning and value within society. Instead, it recognizes the agency of non-human entities, such as technology, animals, and ecological systems. Botez et al. (2020) contribute to this discourse by analyzing the theological elements that influence the application of posthumanism in marketing. They argue that parallels exist between Christian dogma and posthumanist frameworks, which can become hegemonic within marketing, providing a critique of posthumanism's potential to reinforce the very power structures it originally sought to challenge. This perspective is particularly relevant in marketing, where the rise of artificial intelligence and automation has transformed how brands communicate with consumers and how products are developed and delivered. By acknowledging the influence of non-human actors, marketers can create holistic strategies that consider broader implications, such as the environmental impact of production processes and the societal ramifications of technology.

Furthermore, posthumanism encourages a critical examination of consumer identity and agency in the digital age. Campbell et al. (2010) offer a fresh perspective on technology in marketing, proposing that posthumanism challenges the traditional view of technology as an external tool controlled by humans. They argue that understanding human existence in an increasingly complex and integrated technological era requires a posthumanist framework, introducing new ethical and metaphysical implications for marketing technology. In this context, consumers are no longer passive recipients of marketing messages; they are active participants shaping brand narratives. The proliferation of social media, for example, has created new forms of consumer engagement, enabling individuals to voice their opinions and influence brand perception. This shift from a static view of consumers to a more dynamic understanding can enhance brand loyalty and foster deeper connections between consumers and brands.

The thematic clusters identified in the bibliometric analysis, such as sustainability, technology, and ethics, further illustrate the relevance of posthumanism in marketing. As consumers become increasingly aware of global challenges like climate change, there is a growing demand for brands to adopt sustainable practices. Fox (2023) introduces a post-anthropocentric perspective related to green capitalism, pointing out that capitalist responses to the climate crisis through green technology remain insufficient. He argues that marketing green technology within a posthumanist framework often inadvertently reinforces capitalist mechanisms, potentially undermining the potential of

posthumanism to address environmental crises effectively. Posthumanist marketing strategies can respond to this demand by promoting products and services that prioritize ecological responsibility and ethical production. By positioning themselves as advocates for sustainability, brands can resonate more deeply with conscious consumers, leading to stronger emotional connections and long-term loyalty.

Moreover, integrating posthumanist principles into marketing enables the exploration of new narratives and storytelling approaches. Bartosch (2021) examines the differences between posthumanism and transhumanism, noting that these concepts often overlap in practice, including marketing applications. This raises various interpretations and potential uses in contemporary marketing, particularly as brands seek to create compelling narratives that resonate with diverse audiences. For instance, narratives could encompass themes of collaboration with nature, the role of technology in enhancing human experiences, and the ethical considerations of consumption. By leveraging the interconnectedness of human and non-human entities, brands can not only differentiate themselves in a competitive market but also contribute to a broader cultural discourse that challenges the status quo and advocates for more inclusive and responsible marketing practices.

Fahn (2020) deepens the discussion by analyzing prosthetic technology in the context of disability studies and posthumanism. He highlights how such technologies empower disabled bodies while underscoring the paradox of commodifying marginalized bodies within the technology market. This study reveals how marketing technology leverages posthumanism to craft empowerment narratives that are fraught with contradictions. Additionally, Demo (2017) focuses on the distribution of agency between humans and technology, particularly in autism applications, demonstrating that human-technology interaction creates a more complex distribution of agency than traditional marketing frameworks acknowledge. This complexity opens space for new interpretations of agency and subjectivity in marketing technology, further emphasizing the need for a posthumanist approach.

Conclusion

The integration of posthumanism in marketing signifies a paradigm shift that redefines traditional approaches to consumer engagement and brand interaction. This approach acknowledges the interdependence of human and non-human entities, enabling marketing strategies to evolve in response to the challenges of a rapidly changing landscape. This evolution fosters deeper connections and promotes sustainability in an increasingly complex world. A bibliometric analysis of posthumanism in marketing reveals a significant increase in publication trends since 2020, with a strong concentration of research in Western countries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom. Influential authors in this field include Venkatesh & Meamber, (2006) and Campbell et al. (2010), whose works published in *Marketing Theory* and *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* have received the highest citation counts. Key themes and concepts frequently discussed encompass agri-food networks, ethics of artificial intelligence, marketplace accessibility, and sustainability within green capitalism, reflecting a shift from human-centered perspectives toward the inclusion of non-human entities in marketing discourse.

Limitations & Directions for Future Research

While this bibliometric analysis provides valuable insights into the emerging field of posthumanism in marketing, several limitations must be acknowledged. Although the study utilized multiple databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and EBSCO, there may still be relevant publications

in niche or less-recognized journals that are not captured, potentially leading to an underrepresentation of certain perspectives or emerging voices within the posthumanism discourse. Additionally, the analysis focuses on publications from 2006 to 2024, which, while informative, may not fully reflect the rapidly evolving nature of the field, particularly in light of recent developments in technology and societal shifts.

Future research should aim to explore qualitative studies that delve deeper into specific marketing practices and consumer behaviors influenced by posthumanist principles. Interdisciplinary approaches that incorporate insights from fields such as sociology, philosophy, and environmental studies could further enhance the understanding of how posthumanism interacts with various aspects of marketing. Finally, longitudinal studies examining the long-term effects of posthumanism on marketing strategies and consumer engagement will be essential to assess its evolving impact in a complex and interconnected world.

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