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The Influence Of Non-AI And AI-Generated Tiktok True Story Content On Generation Z's Perceptions (A Study On Elaboration Likelihood Theory)

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the effect of TikTok True Story non-AI content and AI content on Generation Z's perceptions. This research is important considering the widespread use of artificial intelligence technology in digital content creation, which can affect the way audiences understand and assess information. The method used is quantitative with a descriptive approach, and data collection through online questionnaires to 200 respondents aged 19-28 years who follow TikTok accounts @ngmare (Non-AI content) and @aiwitness.id (AI content). The results show that both Non-AI and AI content have a positive and significant effect on the perception of Generation Z, with the effect of Non-AI content of 0.790 and AI content of 0.767. This finding suggests that clear, authentic, and emotional content (Non-AI) is processed more through the central pathway, while AI content is more influenced by visual appeal and processed through the peripheral pathway in accordance with Elaboration Likelihood Theory.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Content, TikTok Content, Perception, Generation Z.

Introduction

Changes in digital behavior in choosing information sources are increasingly evident in Generation Z, which now relies more on social media. Platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and X (Twitter) are not only for social interaction but also as the main channel for disseminating information and news that can shape public perception (Hariyani *et al.,* 2025). According to a report from Forbes.com (2024)A survey conducted with Talker Research shows that Gen Z ranks first, or 46% preferring social media as a source of finding information, compared to using search engines such as Google, while 35% are Millennials, 20% Gen X, and Boomers, and less than 10%. This is because Gen Z is more interested in visual, fast, and interactive searches in short video formats such as those offered by TikTok (Istia, 2024). Gen Z tends to prefer video-based forms of information because they are easier to digest (Nathania *et al.*, 2024) . Although there are various kinds of social media, there is one social media platform that is widely used by Indonesians to obtain information, namely by using TikTok.

Reporting from DataIndonesia (2025)In a survey conducted by We Are Social, Indonesia ranks second as the country with the most TikTok users in the world, reaching 107 million users, after the United States. The number of TikTok users in Indonesia certainly comes from various generations. Based on *Business of Apps data,* TikTok users in Indonesia are in the age range of 18-24 years with 34.9%, and ages 25-34 years 28.2%, and users 13-17 years 14.5% (Darmawan & Sari, 2024). The presence of TikTok as a social media in creating content such as short videos, music, and photos containing information, of course, is utilized by *content creators* to share this content with other users (Najihah & Septiani, 2024). Through the content disseminated on TikTok social media, people can interpret the information in the content they receive.

TikTok content creation in the era of technological development is not only produced by humans as a whole, but can also be produced by *Artificial Intelligence* (AI). *Artificial Intelligence* refers to the ability of a machine or technology to mimic some aspects of human intelligence (Rifky *et al.*, 2024, p. 02). According to Madhini *et al. (*2024), states that although accompanied by ethical challenges, AI supports creative innovation by optimizing content creation, voice cloning, and *deepfake* videos. For this reason, the use of AI requires a balance between technology and the rights of content creators, in order to avoid the risk of misuse and emphasize the importance of ethics and content protection. In the data presented by Goodstats.id (2024), Indonesia ranks third as the country with the most

users of AI technology in the world after the United States and India, with a total of 1.4 million visits. This phenomenon shows that Indonesia has high enthusiasm for the utilization of the latest technology, such as AI, including in the field of content creation. Along with the advancement of Artificial Intelligence, many *content creators* have begun to utilize this technology to produce content that is more interesting, interactive, and informative. This technology has brought new changes in social media content creation, allowing anyone to create interesting content and speed up the editing process in the form of images, videos, sounds, graphics, and others (Kurnia *et al.*, 2024)

Reporting from TikTok.com (2025)AI-generated content, such as visuals, videos, and artificial sounds, can reflect similarities at the level of reality with humans or depictions made with a certain artistic style. Although the generated content can reflect a certain level of reality, the accuracy of the information conveyed must be taken into consideration for the users receiving the information. This is because AI has the ability to process data quickly, but its limitations in understanding context and verifying facts can lead to misinformation or bias in the resulting content. Based on data from Arief (2024) In GoodStats.com, informative content is one of the most preferred content types by Gen Z and Millennials, or 65% of Gen Z and Millennials making informative content their content type preference. Content with a *true story* theme is included in the informative content category. Content that tells true stories (not fiction) provides information that is more meaningful and valuable to its audience (Eckardt *et al.*, 2024). According to Dr. Zaki Habibi, states that content produced based on true stories has a *captivating* side that makes the audience feel involved and curious about the continuation, and can persuade the audience to talk about certain issues *(Department of Communications*, 2024)

Storytelling content with *true* stories presents various information about phenomena, cases, and stories based on real experiences, which are retold by *content creators* with their own characteristics that can make the audience curious and easier to understand the information conveyed. Stories with true stories can attract attention and arouse audiences, this is because these stories describe certain events, characters who have goals, and clear cause and effect sequences, so that people can feel more connected, learn from their point of view, and understand a situation better (Walsh *et al.*, 2022). The difference in the way narratives are organized and delivered between those created by humans directly and those generated by AI has opened up room for further research, especially in the context of Gen Z's perception in processing and assessing such content. This requires concrete representations of both types of content that are relevant to Gen

Z's digital consumption habits. Based on these considerations, this research focuses on two TikTok accounts that create *true story-themed* content with contrasting narrative approaches, namely @ngmare and @aiwitness.id.

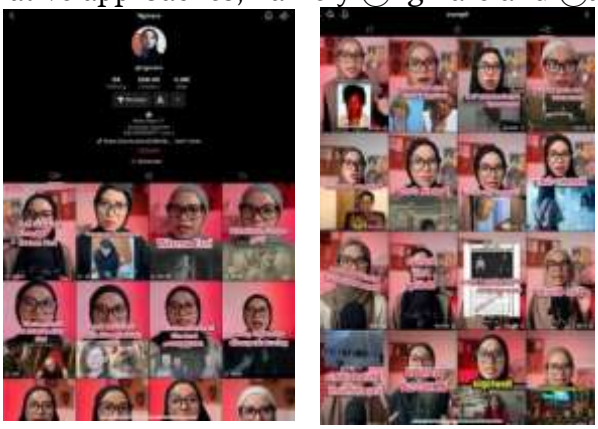

Figure 1. @ngmare TikTok account
Source: TikTok @ngmare

The @ngmare account is a *content creator* on TikTok social media that presents content based on real phenomena or events that have occurred. Figure 1 shows the TikTok @ngmare account profile, which has a total of 208,900 followers, with a total of 28 followers, and has obtained a total of 4.5 million likes. The @ngmare account is a *content creator* who consistently creates content by revealing interesting facts from an event or phenomenon that has occurred, as well as combining supporting visual and sound elements. The content created by @ngmare raises mysterious phenomena, horror, and factual news, to raise real events that have not been fully solved, and often invites the curiosity of its audience. It can be seen that the average content uploaded by the @ngmare TikTok account reaches more than 100,000 impressions, until there are some contents that reach 16 million views. So this shows that the content uploaded by @ngmare as a *real content creator* is able to reach and attract the attention of a wide audience.

Unlike the @ngmare account, which features humans, there are also *content creators* who utilize AI in making their content, namely an account with the username @aiwitness.id. The role of a human or *content creator* in this TikTok AI content is as someone who gives commands to the AI *tools* used, which then the AI will produce content that matches what the *user* instructs.

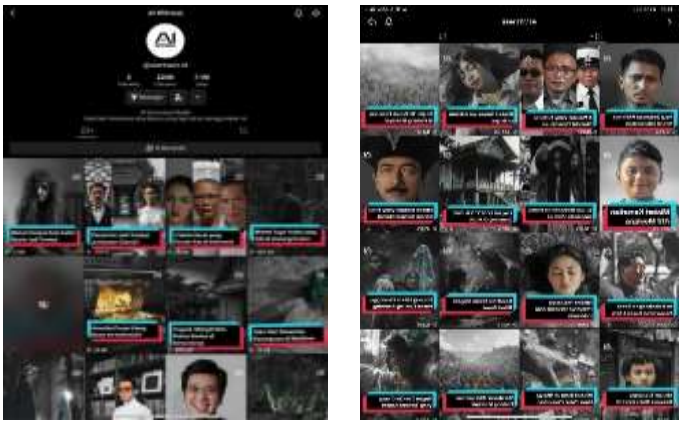

Figure 2. TikTok account @aiwitness.id
Source: TikTok @aiwitness.id

Figure 2 shows the TikTok @aiwitness.id account profile, which has 225,000 followers, with a follow count of 5, and the total likes obtained are 7.1 million. The TikTok @aiwitness.id account is a *content creator* who uses AI in creating content that tells stories about certain phenomena, cases, news, or events that have occurred. Unlike TikTok content in general, which features humans directly as communicators, the TikTok account produced by @aiwitness.id features certain characters to convey information about the phenomena or events they experience. Through AI support in creating its content, the characters are made as if they are real in terms of visuals, videos, and artificial sounds that are made as similar as possible to real characters. The use of AI in content creation can attract the attention of the audience. It can be seen that the average content uploaded by the @aiwitness.id account is getting more than 10,000 views, and there are even some contents that reach millions in views.

This phenomenon shows that content produced by humans or with the help of AI is able to spread information and reach a wide audience. Although it has a high number of impressions, it does not necessarily mean that AI content can fulfill the daily information needs of its audience. This difference in content type between non-AI and AI content can affect audience perceptions of the authenticity of the information conveyed. Various audience perceptions emerge regarding AI-generated content, such as some feeling optimistic because of its benefits, but some are worried about the risks it poses (Anderson, 2024). Perception is a process in which a person receives something through the five senses, then arranges and understands it so that individuals can realize and understand what they feel or experience (Hakim *et al.,* 2021). The occurrence of perception is due to

the selection process, the interpretation process, and finally a response that can be positive or negative, depending on which side a person pays attention to the object he receives (Hartiningtyas & Iflah, 2023). Based on this, it is important to conduct in-depth research to understand the effect of differences between non-AI content and AI content on perceptions among Generation Z.

As a generation that grew up in the digital era, Gen Z has access to vast and fast information, but they also face challenges in distinguishing credible and authentic content. According to a report from Goodstats.id (2024b) In a survey conducted by Ipsos AI Monitor, it was found that Gen Z has decreased trust in AI, which in 2023 amounted to 55%, but in 2024 it became 49%. AI content can provide fast and efficient information with attractive visuals, but it can create perceptions about the quality of the information delivered. Non-AI content is perceived to be more personalized, but not always supported by compelling visuals or delivery. While they appreciate the efficiency of AI, many are skeptical of the authenticity of the content produced (Chairunnisa & Amaniar, 2025) . Therefore, the difference between the two types of content may affect how Generation Z chooses, interprets, and trusts the information they consume on social media. To understand how non-AI and AI true story content affects Gen Z's perceptions, a theoretical foundation is needed that is able to explain the cognitive and cognitive and affective processes of receiving and interpreting communication messages. In this case, ELT is the main basis because it explains that each individual processes messages through two different pathways.

This study uses Elaboration Likelihood Theory to analyze the influence of TikTok True Story Non-AI and AI content on Generation Z's perceptions. This theory explains that attitudes can be formed more permanently or temporarily depending on the flow of message processing, which includes two routes, namely the central route and the peripheral route (Littlejohn *et al.*, 2021) . Developed by Richard Petty and John Cacioppo, this theory seeks to explain the two different ways recipients evaluate content. The central route is the path of receiving information by using critical thinking to assess the content of a message, and the attitude changes that occur are more permanent, while the peripheral route is that the recipient of the message does not pay much attention to the content of the message critically, but quickly makes judgments based on simple cues, and attitude changes tend to be temporary (Hapsari & Yoma, 2024) .

In the context of this research, the theoretical study of the central route is to see the effect of communication on TikTok *True Story* Non-AI and AI content on audience perceptions based on rational thinking or

based on data and facts supported by information. Meanwhile, the concept of peripheral routes is used in this study, namely to analyze the effect of communication on the TikTok *True Story* Non-AI and AI content seen in the emotional aspects of message recipients, or in the context of this study, namely followers of the @ngmare and @aiwitness.id TikTok accounts. Thus, the non-AI and AI content variables are closely related to the persuasion process described by ELT, where Gen Z perceptions are formed by a combination of message characteristics and cognitive attitudes formed during processing.

Looking at the series of phenomena or events that occurred, it is known that TikTok content created by humans and AI content have a relationship in influencing audience perceptions. It can be seen that although AI content is increasingly found on various digital platforms, there are still limitations in understanding how Gen Z forms perceptions of human-created and AI-generated true story content. This research is important because it seeks to measure the influence of two different types of content, namely non-AI and AI, on Gen Z's perception of the resulting content. Based on this, this study aims to explore the effect of TikTok True Story non-AI and AI content on perceptions in Generation Z. The formulation of the problem in this study is whether the effect of TikTok True Story non-AI and AI content on Gen Z's perceptions. The problem formulation in this study is whether there are differences in Gen Z's perceptions of true story content created by humans and that created by AI. From the formulation of the problem, a hypothesis is formed in this study consisting of (H1) there is a significant influence between TikTok true story Non-AI content on the perception of generation Z, the second hypothesis is (H2) there is a significant influence between AI true story content on the perception of generation Z, and the third hypothesis is (H3) there is a significant influence between TikTok true story Non-AI and AI content on generation Z's perception. Based on this, this study develops a conceptual framework that describes the relationship between two types of content (Non-AI and AI) on Gen Z perceptions.

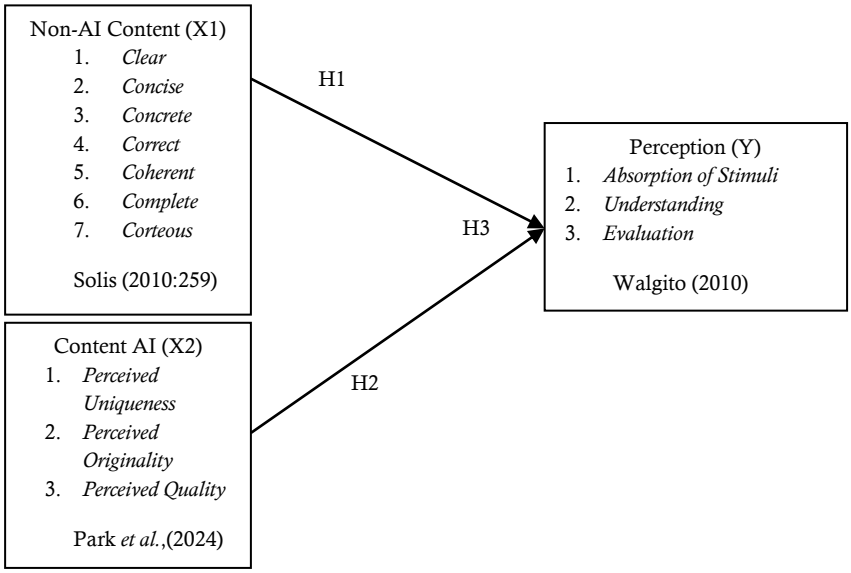

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

Research Method

The research method used in this research is a quantitative method. Quantitative research is a method used to examine a phenomenon or issue by testing a theory consisting of variables measured in numbers, and analyzed through statistical procedures to determine the predictive generalization of the theory (Ali *et al.*, 2022). This study is included in the descriptive research category because researchers want to analyze the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable and explain the findings of this study. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe in a systematic, precise, and fact-based way about a phenomenon in detail (Nugroho & Haritanto, 2022) .

The population used is a limited population, because the population to be taken is the followers of the TikTok accounts @ngmare (208.9k) and @aiwitness.id (225k), for a total is 433,900 *followers*. The selection of followers of the two accounts as the population in this study is carried out in a directed manner with strong consideration and relevance to the focus of the research. This study aims to analyze the effect of non-AI and AI trus story content on Gen Z perceptions, so it is important to reach respondents who have actually been exposed to and interacted directly with the content. Followers of both accounts are actual audiences who have consumed the content directly and have a high likelihood of forming perceptions based on their real experiences of the narratives delivered by each account. This allows researchers to obtain data that is more contextual, relevant, and

incisive, compared to respondents from the general Gen Z population who have not necessarily seen the content in question.

To minimize time, energy, and costs in research due to the large population used, the researcher will use sampling techniques from the population that has been determined, and the sample will then be used as a group that represents the population in the study. The determination of the sample in this study uses *Non Probability Sampling* technique with *purposive sampling. Non Probability Sampling* technique is a method used to determine the sample with each unit in the population does not have the same opportunity to be selected as a research sample (Silalahi, 2015: 393) . The choice of purposive sampling technique was carried out by considering that not all members of the population, namely followers of the two accounts, followed both accounts simultaneously. Therefore, the researcher determines the sample criteria related to this study, namely respondents aged 19-28 years, and following TikTok accounts @ngmare and @aiwitness.id simultaneously.

This approach is used to ensure that respondents have experiences that are relevant to the object of research, so that they can provide an appropriate assessment of the variables under study. By using the Slovin formula and an error rate of 7% of the total population of 433,900, a sample size of 200 respondents was obtained. Researchers determined the number of research samples based on the opinion of Ghozali in Simajuntak *et al.*,(2021) which states that the appropriate sample size with the Maximum Likelihood model is a minimum of 100 to 200 samples. Researchers with the principle of prudence determine the number of respondents as many as 200 people.

The data collection techniques in this study include primary data obtained from distributing digital questionnaires to 200 respondents via *google form*. Each variable has a different number of items, such as the Non-AI content variable which is measured by seven dimensions including *Clear, Concise, Concrete, Correct, Coherent, Complete, and Corteous*, and contains 12 items, the AI content variable which is measured by three dimensions including Perceived Uniqueness, Perceived Originality, and Perceived Quality, which consists of 12 items, and the perception variable which is measured by three dimensions including Absorption of Stimuli, Understanding, and Evaluation, which consists of 9 items. Furthermore, secondary data is obtained from various sources such as books, journals, social media, ebooks, and other information from the internet that is relevant to this research.

The data analysis technique in this study uses SPSS 22, because this software has features for quantitative statistical analysis, and has been

commonly used in socio-empirical research, so that the analysis results can be processed accurately and systematically. The testing stages carried out using SPSS 22 include the kolomogorov smirnov normality test through the Monte Carlo method with the condition that if the significance> 0.05 then the residual value is normally distributed, this test is used to ensure that the data is normally distributed, which is a prerequisite in multiple linear regression analysis used to test the effect of Non-AI and AI content on Gen Z perceptions. Furthermore, the heteroscedasticity test with Scatter Plot is used for inequality of variance in the regression model, and if this assumption is violated, the estimation results can be biased and unreliable, so this test is important to ensure the validity of the model in explaining the relationship between content and perception. Then a multicollinearity test is carried out with a decision if the VIF value < 10 and the tolerance value> 0.1, the regression model is said to be good and there is no multicollinearity, multiple regression analysis, correlation coefficient, coefficient of determination, and hypothesis testing with T test with t count> t table and significance value < 0.05 then the hypothesis is accepted, and F test with f count> f table and obtaining sig value < 0.05. All tests and analyses were conducted to support the objectivity and accuracy of result interpretation in explaining the influence of two different types of content on Gen Z perceptions.

Figure 4. Research design

Results and Discussion

This study aims to determine the effect of TikTok True Story non-AI content and AI content on Generation Z's perceptions. Data processing is using SPSS version 22 *software,* which is then presented in descriptive form. Statistically, out of 200 respondents, it is known that TikTok's true story non-AI content received higher ratings than AI content in several key dimensions. The following is a table of descriptive statistics for each research variable.

Variable	Dimension	Total Score	Percentage	Category
Content Non-AI	Clear	1.703	85%	Very High
	Concise	1.676	83%	High
	Concrete	1.667	83%	High
	Correct	1.685	84%	High
	Coherent	811	81%	High
	Complete	1.659	82%	High
	Courteus	1.663	83%	High
Content AI	Perceived Uniqueness	2.505	83%	High
	Perceived Originality	2.481	82%	High
	Perceived Quality	4.117	82%	High
Perception	Absorption of Stimuli	2.543	84%	High
	Understanding	2.538	84%	High
	Evaluation	2.498	83%	High

Figure 5. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables
Source: Data processing (2025)

Figure 5 shows that the Non-AI content variable with the Clear dimension gets the highest score of 85% and is included in the very high category. This shows that non-AI content is considered very clear, easy to understand, and able to convey messages effectively to the audience. Meanwhile, on the AI content variable, the dimension that obtained the highest score was Perceived Uniqueness, which amounted to 83% and fell into the high category, indicating that AI content is considered by respondents to have its own uniqueness that distinguishes it from other content. In the perception variable, the *Absorption of Stimuli* dimension obtained the largest score of 84% and fell into the high category, and this shows that respondents are able to absorb and respond to stimuli or messages conveyed through content quite well. This means that both AI and Non-AI content succeeded in attracting attention and cognitively and affectively engaging generation Z while watching.

The normality test technique is carried out to determine whether the value of the dependent variable and the independent variable can be normally distributed or not. The normality test carried out in this study is by using the IBM *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) 22 *software* with the *Exact Test Monte Carlo* method. A data is considered normally distributed if the Monte Carlo sig (2-tailed) value> 0.05. The values and results of the normality test that have been carried out by researchers are as follows:

Table 1. Kolmogorov Smirnov Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		200
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	,0000000
	Std. Deviation	,04426902

Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		,081
	Positive		,081
	Negative		-,062
Test Statistic			,081
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			,003[c]
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed)	Sig.		,133[d]
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	,124
		Upper Bound	,141

Source: Data processing (2025)

Based on the results of the data in Table 1 above, namely the results of the significance value in the normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S), an accurate *test (exact test)*, namely Monte Carlo, is carried out if the residual data is extreme. The Monte Carlo method allows accurate statistical results without affecting the assumptions made by the asymmetry method, even when large data sets are used (IBM.com, 2025). Based on the test results on the X1 and X2 variables on Y, the sig result is 0.133, where the value shows more than 0.05, or 0.133> 0.05. So, based on these results, it can be concluded that the data of all variables in this study are normally distributed and have met the normality of the data.

Next, the heteroscedasticity test is carried out, which aims to determine whether there is an inequality of variance and residuals from one observation to another. The heteroscedasticity test used in this study is the *scatterplot* test. A good *scatterplot* method is when there is no particular pattern on the graph. The following are the results of the Glejser test values in this study.

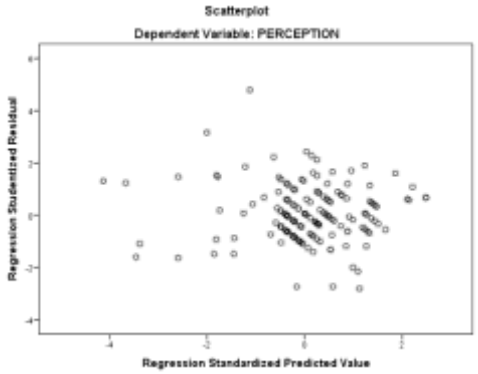

Figure 6. Heteroscedasticity Test Scatterplot
Source: Data processing (2025)

Based on the results in Figure 6. Above, it shows that the resulting pattern looks spread above and below the number 0 on the Y axis, and does

not form a clear pattern, so based on this, it shows that the regression model has no problems, and it can be said that there is no heteroscedasticity. This means that the variance of the residuals is constant, and the model fulfills one of the important assumptions of linear regression and can be interpreted validly and unbiasedly.

The multicollinearity test in this study was carried out with the aim of testing the correlation between the independent variables. A good regression model should not have a correlation between the independent variables. The basis for decision making in the multicollinearity test can be seen based on the *Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) value and the *Tolerance* value. VIF is used to measure how much the variance of the regression coefficient increases due to the correlation between the independent variables. Meanwhile, tolerance is a measure of how much the independent variable is not explained by other independent variables in the model. If the VIF value < 10 and the *tolerance* value> 0.1, then the regression model can be said to be good, and there is no multicollinearity. The following are the results of the multicollinearity test data processing.

Table 2. Multicollinearity Test

Coefficients [a]			
		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	NON-AI CONTENT	,393	2,546
	AI CONTENT	,393	2,546
a. Dependent Variable: PERCEPTION			

Source: Data processing (2025)

Based on Table 2, namely the results obtained from the multicollinearity test with a VIF value < 10 or 2,546 < 10, and the tolerance value of these variables> 0.1 or 0.393> 0.1. So, based on these results, it can be concluded that there are no symptoms of multicollinearity between the independent variables in the regression model, meaning that there is no multicollinearity in the independent variables. This means that the two independent variables can stand alone and explain the dependent variable validly.

Multiple linear regression analysis is used with the aim of determining the effect of the independent variables (X1 and X2) on the dependent variable (Y). The multiple linear test in this study is to determine the effect of TikTok non-AI content and AI content on Perception. The t-test used in this study aims to determine the partial and significant effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The basis for decision

making in the t-test is that if the p-value <0.05, the independent variable partially has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression Test and T Test (Partial)

Coefficients [a]						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	8,011	1,493		5,367	,000
	NON-AI CONTENT	,334	,044	,491	7,669	,000
	CONTENT AI	,258	,043	,384	6,007	,000

a. Dependent Variable: PERCEPTION

Source: Data processing (2025)

Based on the multiple linear regression results in Table 3, the equation model can be formulated as follows:

$$Y= 8.011+ 0.334\ X_1+ 0.258\ X_{(2)})$$

The result of data processing is a constant value of 8.011, which states that if there are no non-AI content variables and AI content, the perception value is 8.011. Based on the regression coefficient value, X1 is positive 0.334 on Y, then every increase in Non-AI content will increase perception by 0.334. And based on the X2 regression coefficient value is positive 0.258 against Y, then every increase in AI content will increase perception by 0.258. Based on the results of the t-test for the non-AI content variable, it obtained a t-count value of 7.669> 1.653 t-table with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. So it can be said that H1 is accepted, which means that there is a partial and significant influence of non-AI content on the perceptions of Generation Z. Furthermore, the t-test for the AI content variable is getting a t-count value of 6.007> 1.653 t table with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. So it can be said that H2 is accepted, which means that there is a partial and significant effect of AI content on the perception of generation Z. H3 is accepted with the difference in contribution between Non-AI and AI content to perception, it can be seen that Non-AI content has a numerically greater influence on perception than AI content.

The correlation coefficient analysis in this study uses Pearson's product-moment correlation with the aim of knowing the relationship between Non-AI content (X1) and AI content (X2) on perception (Y). The following are the results of the correlation coefficient analysis using IBM SPSS 22 *software*.

Table 4. Correlation Coefficient

Correlations

		CONTENT NON-AI	AI CONTENT	PERCEPTION
NON-AI CONTENT	Pearson Correlation	1	,779**	,790**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000
	N	200	200	200
CONTENT AI	Pearson Correlation	,779**	1	,767**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000
	N	200	200	200
PERCEPTION	Pearson Correlation	,790**	,767**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	
	N	200	200	200

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data processing (2025)

Table 4, which shows the results of the correlation coefficient value for the Non-AI content variable (X1) which obtained a value of 0.790. This value is in the coefficient interval 0.60 - 0.799, which means that the relationship between the non-AI content variable and perception is in the strong category. For the AI content variable (X2), the correlation coefficient value is 0.767, and this value is in the strong category. Both have a significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000, which means statistical significance at the 99% confidence level ($p < 0.001$). So based on these results, it can be said that there is a strong relationship between the TikTok true story content variables, Non-AI and AI, on Generation Z's perceptions. This means that both types of content have a real impact on the way Gen Z processes and understands narrative messages on social media. This high correlation value supports that the quality of content directly affects audience perceptions, so it needs to be considered in the production of true story-based content.

The coefficient of determination (R2) analysis is used to measure how well the model can explain the variation in the dependent variable. The basic concept of the coefficient of determination is that it has a value between zero and one. The criteria for analyzing the coefficient of determination are that if the coefficient of determination is 0, then the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is said to be weak. Meanwhile, if the coefficient of determination value is 1, then the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is strong. The following are the results of the coefficient of determination analysis.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary [b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,826[a]	,683	,680	1,654

a. Predictors: (Constant), AI CONTENT, NON-AI CONTENT
b. Dependent Variable: PERCEPTION
Source: Data processing (2025)

Table 5 shows the results of the R value of 0.826 and Adjusted R Square ($R^{2)}$of 0.683. The magnitude of the influence of the non-AI content variable (X1) and AI content (X2) on perception (Y) is indicated by the coefficient of determination the calculation using the following formula.

$$KD = r^2 x\ 100\%$$
$$= 0{,}683 \times 100\%$$
$$= 68{,}3\%$$

Based on the coefficient of determination, it shows that 68.3% of Generation Z's perception is influenced by non-AI content and AI content. In other words, non-AI and AI content together have a significant contribution in shaping Gen Z's perception. In contrast, the remaining 31.7% is influenced by other variables not examined in this study. So that this explicitly supports the third hypothesis (H3), namely that the two independent variables affect the dependent variable.

The F test was carried out with the aim of testing the significance of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable together. The significance level used in this F test is 5% (0.05), so that the basis for the decision taken is that if the significance value is less than 0.05, it can be said that the independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

Table 6. F Test (Simultaneous)

ANOVA [a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1161,533	2	580,767	212,162	,000[b]
	Residual	539,262	197	2,737		
	Total	1700,795	199			

a. Dependent Variable: PERCEPTION
b. Predictors: (Constant), AI CONTENT, NON-AI CONTENT
Source: Data processing (2025)

The results of the F test, namely obtaining the $F_{\text{count value}}$, are 212.162 with a significance level of 0.000. This shows that the value of $F_{(count)>F(table)}$or 212.162> 3.04. So, based on these results, H3 is accepted, which means that the non-AI content variable and AI content together have a significant influence on the perception variable. The Effect of TikTok True Story Non-AI Content on Generation Z Perceptions

The findings of this study indicate that TikTok's true story non-AI content has a positive and significant effect on the perception of Generation Z, with an effect size of 0.790, and is included in the strong category. This shows that the higher the quality of non-AI content consumed, the higher the perception formed in the minds of the audience, especially Generation Z, as an active and selective group of digital media users. The *Clear* dimension obtained the highest total score of 1,703 or 85% and was categorized as very high, which indicates that the clarity and understandability of the message is the dominant factor in shaping positive perceptions. In line with the results of research Novianti & Aulia (2023) *The Clear* dimension is the most influential on audience perceptions. This finding can also be attributed to the results of research by Wiyono & Windasari (2024) Which shows that the clearer and more relevant the content of content created by humans, it can generate audience trust and engagement. And in accordance with the characteristics of Generation Z, they tend to give better assessments to content that is delivered in a straightforward, structured, and easy-to-understand manner, which is often more visible in content created and delivered by humans directly.

Therefore, the influence of TikTok content on Generation Z's perceptions is strongest when the content is able to present a clear, authentic, and relevant story. This is in line with the ELT, which explains the role of central and peripheral routes in variables that can cause attitude change (Littlejohn *et al.*, 2021). Based on the results obtained, it shows that Generation Z tends to process information through the central route**.** They do not just look at the content in passing, but also absorb the content of the story, understand the message conveyed, and evaluate its meaning. The high Clear, Correct, Complete, and Coherent factors in Non-AI content reinforce the assumption that audiences engage in high cognitive elaboration**.** That is, they consider the content rationally and logically typical of central pathway processing in Elaboration Likelihood Theory. Attributes such as message clarity encourage rational understanding of the story content, while narrative authenticity triggers emotional engagement that strengthens the audience's cognitive engagement. When Gen Z judges content as relatable and realistic, they are compelled to assess, compare, and relate the information to their personal experience or knowledge, which is the essence of cognitive elaboration according to ELT (Littlejohn et al., 2021). In other words, non-AI content fulfills the psychological conditions that enable the process of in-depth evaluation of messages, resulting in longer-lasting perceptions and influencing attitudes in a more stable manner. Then, in the Courteous (81%) and Concise (82%) dimensions, which are included in the peripheral route because messages

are absorbed emotionally and not always through rational thinking. So this indicates that there are elements of peripheral cues in non-AI content that still contribute to shaping perceptions, such as natural expressions of emotion, a touching style of speech, or empathy built from real experiences.

The Effect of TikTok True Story AI Content on Generation Z Perceptions

The research findings on the AI content variable show that AI content has a positive and significant effect on the perception of Generation Z, with an effect size of 0.767 and is in the strong category, although with a slightly lower strength than non-AI content. This shows that AI content on the @aiwitness.id account is able to form a fairly strong perception in the audience, especially Generation Z, who are accustomed to interacting with digital technology and have an openness to new content formats. This influence is mainly influenced by the Perceived Uniqueness dimension, which obtained the highest score of 83%, followed by Perceived Originality and Perceived Quality at 82% each. The high scores on these three dimensions indicate that Generation Z perceives AI content as interesting, unusual, and having a new approach to storytelling. This appeal is driven by the distinctive visual elements, the systematically designed narrative flow by AI, and the innovative impression displayed in technology-based storytelling. This finding is in line with the results of research (Park *et al.*, 2024). Content generated by AI has an appeal that can attract the attention of the audience. As well as in line with research by Singh et al. (2025), visual AI is able to increase attractiveness and engagement, which affects audience perception.

Based on the results of the study, it can be said that the main attraction of AI content lies more in the visual aspects, innovation, and appearance of technology rather than the depth of content or meaning of the message. In the context of Elaboration Likelihood Theory, this suggests that Generation Z tends to process AI content through the *peripheral route*. This pathway involves superficial or automatic processing of messages, where audiences do not do much critical analysis, but are more influenced by surface c*ues* such as AI-generated visual sophistication, unique forms of storytelling, and a modern and aesthetically appealing impression. The peripheral pathways in ELT, the processing pathways that rely on heuristic cues, are explained. One of the key heuristic cues in the context of AI content is the novelty of the technology itself. Gen Z, as digital natives, are very accustomed to technological developments, but still show high interest in things that are considered new, advanced, or uncommon.

The technical novelty of AI content, such as voice cloning, animation, or automated story structures, may trigger a superficial cognitive response that relies on amazement, curiosity, or visual awe. This appeal thus becomes a shortcut for Gen Z to judge AI content as interesting, worth seeing, or even believing, even without deep processing of the arguments or story content. Perceptions formed through this pathway are usually not very strong and change easily, depending on the situation or external influences. Thus, the influence of AI content on Gen Z perceptions can be explained as the result of a technological novelty-based heuristic where AI is not just a tool, but also an evaluative cue in shaping attitudes and impressions towards messages.

Influence of TikTok True Story Non-AI Content and AI Content on Generation Z Perceptions

Non-AI content and AI content are shown to have a significant influence on Gen Z's perceptions. Despite the relatively high magnitude of influence of both, there are important differences in the way the content is received and processed by Gen Z. Non-AI @ngmare content that is narratively composed directly by humans is more likely to trigger processing in the central route as described in ELT. This process occurs because the content is perceived as vivid, authentic, and touches Gen Z's emotional side, thus encouraging them to consciously and critically evaluate the content of the message. When the message is understood as a reflection of real experience, the audience has a higher tendency to perform cognitive elaboration, which results in deeper, stronger, and more enduring perceptions.

Meanwhile, @aiwitness.id's AI content also proved capable of shaping positive perceptions, but through a different pathway, which tends to be the peripheral pathway. Based on ELT, this suggests that @aiwitness.id's AI content is processed through the peripheral pathway because Gen Z does not fully process the content of the message deeply, but responds based on heuristic cues such as visual appeal, uniqueness, and interest in technological sophistication. As stated by (2024), Gen Z likes those who present interesting and innovative visuals. The attractiveness and technical novelty offered by @aiwitness.id's AI content is a strong trigger for the formation of positive perceptions, although not always through a critical thinking process. This difference in mechanism shows that great influence is not always born from the depth of message processing, but can also arise from the effectiveness of initial impressions. This means that Gen Z can form perceptions through two different pathways, depending on how the type or characteristics of the content

match their cognitive and emotional needs at the time of receiving the content.

In line with research by Wiyono & Windasari (2024) There are significant differences in audience perceptions of human-made content with content created by AI. Thus, it can be concluded that non-AI content on @ngmare accounts tends to produce deeper and longer-lasting perceptions through central pathway processing**,** while AI content produces positive but shallower and transient perceptions through peripheral pathways**.** Both types of content are equally effective, but have different characteristics of influence on the way Generation Z thinks and responds. These findings have important implications for content creators. To shape deep and long-lasting perceptions, the non-AI content approach is superior and effective, especially for audiences who are highly motivated to engage cognitively. However, to reach audiences quickly and widely amidst dense digital content competition, AI content that emphasizes visual appeal and innovative formats will remain relevant.

Therefore, an effective communication approach should not only focus on meaningful and touching message content, but also consider the way it is delivered to make it visually appealing and involve the novelty of supporting technologies. The combination of narrative-quality content and innovative presentation formats will be better able to reach various types of audiences, including Gen Z, who have diverse ways of thinking and processing information. This strategy allows the message to be well received by those who tend to think critically and deeply, while still being responsive to initial impressions and engaging visuals.

Although the findings of this study align with the Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT) framework, it is important to realize that the application of ELT in the context of social media such as TikTok has certain limitations. ELT basically assumes that audiences process messages based on two main conditions, namely motivation and cognitive ability to elaborate on message content. However, in today's digital reality, especially among Gen Z, the motivation to engage deeply with any content is often low and highly situational.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research and discussion, TikTok's true story, non-AI content, and AI content have a positive and significant effect on the perceptions of Generation Z. The results of this study provide important implications for the future of TikTok. The results of this study provide important implications for the development of digital communication strategies, especially in designing content that is able to

shape the perceptions of young audiences such as Generation Z. The findings suggest that content type and delivery style have an influence on how audiences process information. Theoretically, this research reinforces the relevance of Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT) in explaining how Gen Z processes messages in the era of short video-based social media. This research extends the application of ELT by showing that in a fast-paced digital environment such as TikTok, message processing can occur not because of individual motivation, but because of the design and characteristics of the media that can encourage audiences to engage quickly and superficially, rather than deeply. Practically, the findings suggest that message clarity is a key element in building long-lasting perceptions, as it encourages higher cognitive engagement. Therefore, this can be a basis for content creators and communication practitioners to not only rely on visually appealing forms of content presentation but also strengthen the narrative and emotional content. AI content is still relevant in reaching the right audience, but in order for its impact not to be superficial and momentary, it needs to be accompanied by meaningful and relatable content values.

However, this study has some limitations. One of them is that the scope of the study is limited to two TikTok accounts and three dimensions of perception, so it does not yet reflect the diversity of content or the complexity of Generation Z's perceptions more broadly. In addition, the analysis only uses a descriptive quantitative approach, without delving deeper that capture the emotional and interpretive aspects of the audience's experience. Nonetheless, this study makes a meaningful initial contribution by showing that human-based (non-AI) and technology-based (AI) content differ not only in technical terms but also in the way they are received and interpreted by audiences. This provides an important foothold amidst the increasing trend of using AI in digital content production, while highlighting the importance of maintaining the human element in narrative-based communication.

This gap shows that there is still room to understand how Gen Z shapes the meaning of the content they consume. So for future research, it is recommended to expand the object and variety of content analyzed beyond the @aiwitness.id and @ngmare accounts, as well as involve mixed methods such as interviews and content analysis to understand the reasons behind audience perceptions more deeply, and consider contextual variables such as duration of exposure, level of digital literacy, and the influence of algorithms on cognitive engagement. Thus, the study of communication effectiveness in the era of AI-based content can be

developed more adaptively, comprehensively, and rooted in the dynamics of today's audience media behavior.

Overall, this research provides a new perspective in the study of digital communication, especially by using the Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT) to analyze two types of content on TikTok**,** which are still rarely discussed in previous studies. The uniqueness of this study lies in how it explains that human-made (non-AI) and AI-generated true story content are understood by Gen Z through two different ways of thinking, namely those that are deeply processed (central pathway) and those that are only based on initial impressions (peripheral pathway). This process is influenced not only by message content but also by content design, audience expectations, and technological novelty. The findings enrich the understanding that message effectiveness in the digital age depends not only on content, but also on the technological context and dynamics of the platform on which the message is delivered.

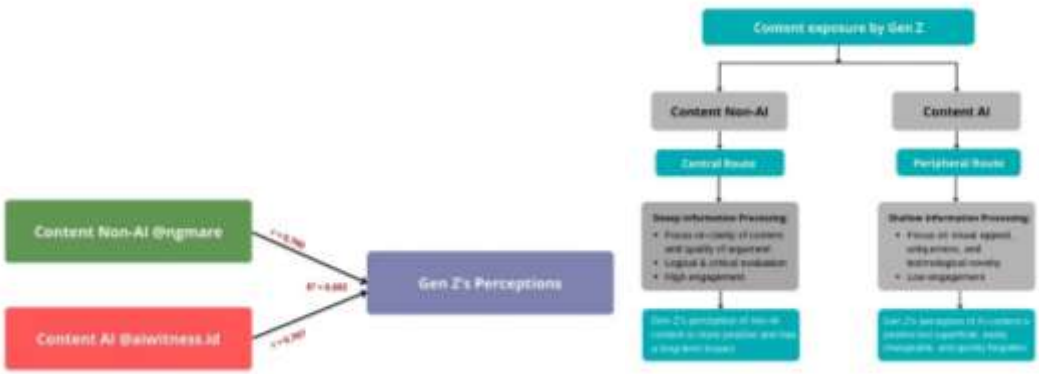

Figure 7. Visualization of research findings

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