National Institute of Technology Rourkela

Synopsis Seminar

Seminar Title	: Humanizing Brands: A Study on the Role of Anthropomorphized Brands in Shaping Customers' Engagement Behaviour
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Venue	: Conference Hall, Room No: 302
Date and Time	: 30 Jul 2025 (11:30 am)

Abstract : As technology continues to transform the service landscape, brand anthropomorphism, where brands adopt human-like characteristics, has emerged as a powerful strategy to bridge the gap between technological advancements and human connection. While prior studies have demonstrated the positive impact of anthropomorphism on consumer engagement, limited research has explored how this relationship can be sustained over time and whether this association will lead to willingness to engage in sustainable practices. Therefore, this research investigates the impact of engaging with anthropomorphized brands across two key service sectors: e-commerce and hospitality. In the e-commerce context, the study draws on a sample of 480 respondents, while the hospitality context uses 346 respondents. The hypotheses were tested using Process Macro by Hayes. Specifically, it examines how engagement with anthropomorphized e-commerce brands influences continued engagement and identifies key mediating factors, namely immersion and escapism, in this process. Additionally, it ascertains how engaging with anthropomorphized hotel brands through an anthropomorphic concierge may encourage consumers&rsquo willingness to engage in sustainable practices through hedonic motivation and positive experience. The findings confirm the serial mediating role of immersion and escapism in the association between anthropomorphism and continued engagement in the e-commerce setting and reveal that hedonic motivation and positive experience serially mediate the relationship between anthropomorphism and willingness to engage in sustainable practices in the hospitality setting. The research is theoretically grounded in the SEEK Model and is further supported by Social Exchange Theory, Flow Theory, Coping Theory, and Value Theory, offering a holistic lens to understand the psychological mechanisms behind consumer responses to anthropomorphic branding. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to academic literature by advancing theoretical insights on brand anthropomorphism, while also offering practical guidance for marketers aiming to foster long-term customer engagement and promote sustainability through humanized brand interactions. By providing a deeper understanding of how anthropomorphic branding influences consumer behavior across varied service settings, this study aims to help brands design more engaging, relatable, and impactful consumer experiences in an increasingly digital and sustainability-conscious marketplace.

Keywords: Anthropomorphism, Brand Anthropomorphism, Continued Engagement, Willingness to Engage in Sustainable Practices, Immersion, Escapism, Hedonic Motivation, Positive Experience