

# Exploring the Integration of Generative AI on Social Media to Enhance Health and Wellness Creator-Audience Interactions

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## Abstract

Social media health and wellness creators play a vital role in disseminating information and fostering emotional support, but they often face challenges managing large volumes of audience interactions. This paper explores how generative AI (GenAI) might assist creators in handling these interactions while preserving trust and authenticity. We conducted 16 semi-structured interviews with Instagram users who regularly engage with health and wellness creators. Using speculative design scenarios, we examined audience perceptions of creator-GenAI collaboration and varying levels of disclosure. Our preliminary findings suggest that expectations toward GenAI-assisted interactions are highly context-dependent. While participants recognized GenAI's potential to enhance efficiency, they emphasized the importance of maintaining the creator's authentic and emotionally responsive presence. Although many supported transparent disclosure of GenAI use, some expressed concern that full transparency could diminish the perceived authenticity and relational closeness between creators and their audiences. Ongoing analysis will further inform the future design of GenAI tools that balance efficiency, personalization, and relational trust in creator-audience interactions.

## CCS Concepts

• **Human-centered computing** → **Empirical studies in collaborative and social computing**.

## Keywords

Health and Wellness, Social Media Content Creator, Creator-Audience Interaction

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## 1 Introduction

The prevalent use of social media has led to a growing focus on the content produced by content creators. Due to their ability to attract and build followers, these individuals are commonly referred to

as “social media influencers.” [4, 30] These social media content creators have gained attention in both academic and industrial sectors due to their multifaceted impact. They hold the potential for substantial profit [16, 24, 27, 36], serve as a major source of entertainment [2, 28], and possess the power to alter public opinion and behavior [1, 2, 18].

Previous research has investigated how content creators attract audience engagement, identifying their interaction with the audience as one important factor [7, 41]. They focused on concepts like parasocial [5, 21, 32] and trans-parasocial relationships [20, 23], and considered them as significant factors affecting audience opinions [29], purchasing intentions [6, 20, 27], and behaviors [9]. In addition, prior research has also discovered that audience media consumption behavior has shifted from passive reception to active participation, highlighting that actively interacting with the audience can increase their engagement [7].

Among various domains of content creation, health and wellness social media creators play a uniquely important role due to their ability to disseminate health information and influence health and wellness behaviors [14, 31, 39]. These creators often address crucial topics such as healthy diet, nutrition, fitness, mental health, healthy lifestyle, and medical advice, being viewed as trusted sources of information and emotional support by their audiences [8, 11, 13, 33]. Given the personal and sensitive nature of health-related content, the interactions between creators and their audiences can significantly impact audience well-being and decision-making [3, 10, 37].

Therefore, health and wellness creators often face distinct challenges. They frequently encounter a high volume of audience inquiries, ranging from requests for personalized advice to discussions about complex health issues [1, 17]. Managing these interactions is not only time-consuming but also emotionally demanding, as it often involves addressing deeply personal concerns. Moreover, online misinformation is a persistent issue in health and wellness domains [26, 34, 35, 38, 42], and creators must navigate audience interactions carefully to ensure accurate information dissemination [1, 17]. These challenges can lead to burnout among creators, ultimately reducing their ability to engage effectively and fulfill their critical role as health advocates.

In addition, prior research shows that content creators across various domains can become overwhelmed by the sheer volume of audience interactions. This overload poses mental capacity challenges, impacts their well-being and their ability to maintain meaningful engagement with their audiences [12, 40]. For health and wellness creators, who are already under pressure due to the sensitive and high-stakes nature of their content, these difficulties are even more pronounced. Although recruiting managers to help manage this audience interaction could be one solution, it could also be costly,

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and creators might lack the resources to recruit extra hands for audience management [40].

To address the challenge of managing extensive audience interactions, we propose studying how generative AI (GenAI) can assist in creator-audience interaction. Prior studies have shown that Large Language Models (LLMs) have created opportunities for developing chatbots capable of handling intricate question-answering scenarios and enhancing audience engagement with news content [15]. With the development of LLMs and GenAI applications, many content creators have begun using GenAI to assist in various content creation tasks. Much research has focused on improving and augmenting GenAI to aid the content creation process [19, 22, 25].

While GenAI may be a cost-effective solution for creators, questions remain regarding how to integrate it effectively into creator-audience interactions and what the perceptions and acceptance levels are among audiences and content creators when leveraging GenAI for this purpose. Little research has been conducted to explore how GenAI can facilitate and assist interactions between content creators and their audience. This study seeks to explore these opportunities and concerns by investigating the role of GenAI in assisting health and wellness content creators with audience interactions. We examine the following research questions:

- RQ1: How do audiences perceive the collaboration between health and wellness content creators and generative AI across different interaction contexts?
- RQ2: To what extent should health and wellness content creators disclose their use of generative AI in audience interactions, and how does disclosure influence audience perceptions and engagement?

By addressing these questions, this study aims to provide insights into the integration of GenAI into creator-audience interactions, informing design implications for GenAI-assisted engagement.

## 2 Methodology

In this study, we employed an envisioning design approach, presenting participants with speculative scenarios of GenAI-assisted response content creation and disclosure strategies. This method encouraged participants to reflect on their preferences, concerns, and perceptions regarding GenAI's role in creator-audience interactions.

We conducted 16 semi-structured interviews (90–120 minutes each) with participants who regularly engage with health and wellness creators on Instagram. Participants were recruited within the U.S. through personal networks, university email lists, and public flyer postings. To ensure eligibility, we administered a screener survey that assessed participants' self-reported frequency and nature of interactions with health and wellness creators.

Participants interacted with research materials designed to simulate GenAI-creator collaboration and disclosure approaches. These materials included various GenAI-creator collaboration processes (as shown in Figure 1) and mockup Instagram interfaces illustrating how GenAI usage is disclosed in comments and direct messages (as shown in Figure 2). The interview process covered three key areas: (1) participants' prior interactions with health and wellness Instagram creators, as well as their perception and familiarity with

GenAI, (2) their perceptions of different creator-GenAI collaboration models, and (3) their views on various disclosure strategies. The discussion concluded with participants reflecting on the overall potential benefits, concerns, and future design opportunities of GenAI-assisted tools for creator-audience interaction.

Data collection and analysis were conducted iteratively using thematic analysis. Transcriptions were coded and refined, leading to several key themes that inform audience perceptions of GenAI-assisted creator interactions and disclosure practices. All interviews were IRB-approved, and participants provided informed consent before participation.

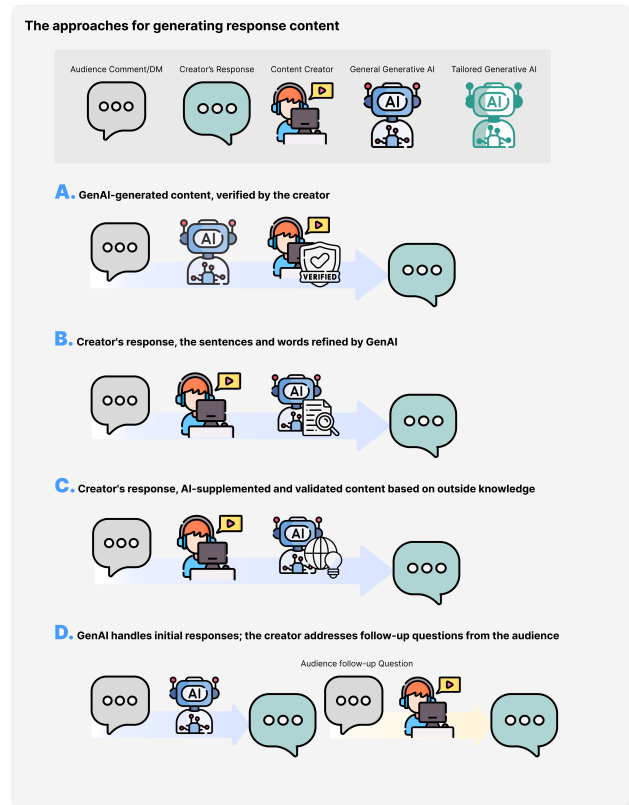


Figure 1: GenAI-creator collaboration approaches

## 3 Preliminary Findings

Our preliminary analysis indicates that multiple factors influence how audiences perceive GenAI assistance in creator-audience interactions and how GenAI usage should be disclosed. These factors include the audience's prior perception of the creator, their knowledge and perception of GenAI, their motivation for engaging with creators, and the characteristics of the interaction topic. In the following, we present several interesting insights from our findings.

### 3.1 Audience Perception of Creator-GenAI Collaboration

When seeking information, participants valued GenAI's ability to provide additional knowledge and reference, but preferred creators

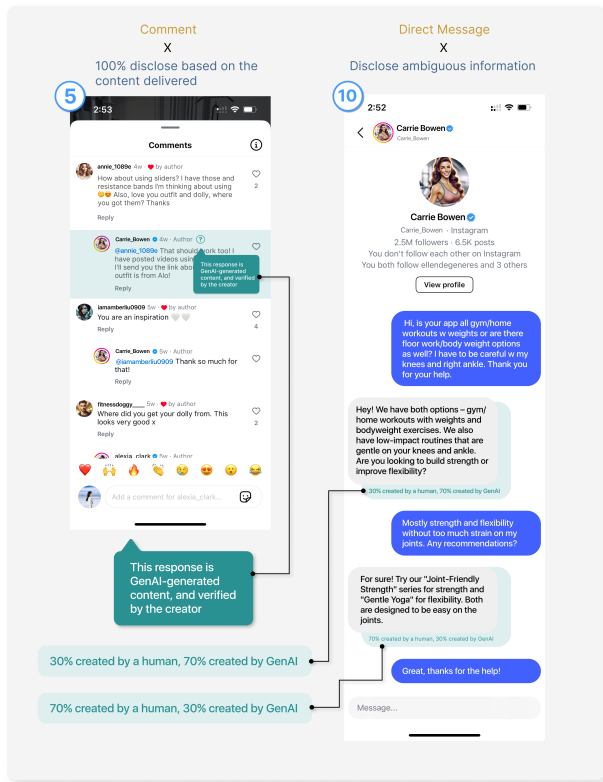


Figure 2: Example of the Disclosure of Generative AI Usage

to be the primary source of responses. They expressed a preference for GenAI to supplement rather than replace a creator's input, ensuring that AI-generated responses enhance but do not dictate the conversation. As P9 noted *"I'd probably prefer that content creators themselves give me some answers, then the generative AI can write a couple more sentences about it just to give me some extra information."* In addition, many participants emphasized that creators should always have the final authority in verifying response content, as they placed greater trust in human expertise and believed that creators should ultimately be responsible for the information they share. As P4 highlighted this perspective *"I wanted to know whether the opinions were verified by the creator themselves, so that they are held accountable for the comment."*

When engaging for social purposes, while some participants found GenAI useful for facilitating simple interactions that required only minimal attention from creators, many raised concerns about its ability to effectively support creators in responding to more complex forms of social engagement. Among those who sought minimal attention, some were content knowing that their messages had been seen by the creator, even if they did not receive a response. For them, an acknowledgment, such as a verification check, was sufficient. P4 described their expectations when engaging with a long-supported creator *"If it's a praise—that also depends on whether they read that praise, because I didn't expect a response, and that's okay if they read it and didn't reply to me."* In contrast, other participants valued human-like interactions with creators, particularly

in cases where responses involved emotional elements rather than purely informational content. P9 articulated this distinction *"I don't really want somebody to be like, 'Oh, please refer to this book' or 'Please refer to this slide deck.' I want somebody to say, 'Okay, I'm on it. I'm sad to hear that you've been struggling through this,' or 'I'm happy to hear that times have been really good for you. And I suggest this, this, and this to keep it going or maybe improve something that you're not a fan of.'"* While participants recognized that GenAI could refine the tone of responses, making them sound more polite or nuanced, they still preferred that creators retain their authentic voice and personality. P2 shared this perspective *"Maybe the AI would put words there more softly, or in a way that is just... yeah, I would say soft. It wouldn't be wrong, but it would feel like it's not the person answering you."*

Audiences also perceived the characteristics of a creator's response as crucial, with personalization and responsiveness being the two most important factors. Many participants were skeptical of GenAI's ability to understand nuanced, personalized needs, leading them to prefer direct responses from creators when seeking tailored advice. P6 illustrated this *"Maybe I send them a direct message and I'm like, 'Hey, what are some of the best vegetables or fruits that are alkaline that you recommend?' I think that would be best answered by the content creator themselves because it's more personalized to me."* However, participants also noted scenarios where GenAI could enhance efficiency, particularly for handling frequently asked questions. Some saw GenAI as a potential solution for addressing general inquiries, allowing creators to focus on more complex discussions. In these cases, participants expressed openness to a greater role for GenAI. As P4 explained *"I would prefer they have the freedom to control that [the draft type they'd like to create], and AI will be able to take more than half of the work in that collaboration so that, as an audience member, I'd have a higher possibility of getting a reply."*

### 3.2 If Creator-GenAI Collaborate, What Should Be Disclosed?

When content creators collaborate with GenAI to respond to their audiences, most participants preferred full transparency regarding AI usage. They emphasized that detailed disclosure would help them assess the quality of the information and determine whether to trust it. As P12 explained *"I'm trying to think that the audience is smart and they would fact-check all of the information that they received, but I know that at the end of the day, audiences will not be checking the information, and that people tend to believe what they see online. So for the audience, it would probably be more helpful if more information is released, like, what exactly is AI."* Participants also expressed a strong belief that audiences have the right to know when GenAI is being used, considering a lack of disclosure to be unethical. P8 articulated this perspective *"I think it's better to show it instead of like having the option to see it. I think it's the right of people to see how much is being generated by AI."* However, some participants felt that creators should have the autonomy to use tools that assist them and that requiring disclosure should be subject to the creator's consent. P4 highlighted the importance of balancing transparency with creator autonomy *"I think they should have that kind of process [the process for asking the creator's consent], because*

the platform should prioritize their content creators. Otherwise, the content creators wouldn't stay up on that platform."

Interestingly, some participants preferred vague disclosures, suggesting that audiences may not always want complete transparency but instead "sugarcoated" facts. P1 expressed this preference for ambiguity in GenAI disclosure "Like, I don't think most people want these exact facts. They want—they want facts. But sugarcoated facts." Some participants also suggested that disclosing too much information about GenAI usage could harm the creator-audience relationship. They felt that, in certain situations, audiences might prefer less disclosure to maintain the perception of a genuine creator interaction. P16 illustrated this concern "I think something that's serious, and if I am to get a response, I would expect, like, a genuine response from a person. If there's like AI involved, then, especially if it's the bulk of the writing, then I guess I could imagine people feeling offended. So I would imagine, like, to play it safe and not display it at all." This concern was particularly evident when discussing smaller creators, who are often perceived as more approachable, relatable, and closely connected to their audience. Some participants worried that disclosing AI usage could erode trust in these creators. As P12 noted "Personally, if she uses AI, I do not want to see where, because I feel like that would make me trust her less. I feel like that would almost break my audience relationship with her in a way, so the less I know... yeah. Maybe it's because it's a nano-influencer."

#### 4 Conclusion and Future Work

In this study, we examined the role of GenAI in facilitating health and wellness creator-audience interactions on social media. Our preliminary findings indicate that while audiences prefer creators to remain the primary source of engagement, they recognize the potential contributions of GenAI. Transparency in AI usage is generally valued, however, some participants expressed a preference for limited disclosure or selectively framed information to preserve the creator-audience relationships. Moving forward, we will further investigate the impact of GenAI involvement and disclosure on audience perceptions to inform the design of GenAI-assisted tools that enhance creator-audience interactions.

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