
Assessing Objectivity and Bias in the Functioning of Pakistani AI News Anchors

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Abstract

The research investigates the perceived objectivity and bias in the application of AI anchorpersons in Pakistani journalism industry. The study was anchored by two main research queries; (1) how objectivity is represented through AI anchors, and (2) how perceived bias differs between human and AI news presenters. Qualitative approach has been adopted, and data was collected through in-depth interviews from practicing journalists. Findings suggest that Pakistani journalists perceive that technology of artificial intelligence and synthetic digital anchors are more objective and less biased than human journalists, linking it with the absence of cultural and political association of AI newsmen. On the other side, human broadcasters are more inclined towards certain political and religious ideologies. However, the investigation also uncovers that in Pakistani media, AI anchors do not contribute in the production of news; rather, human media professionals edit and filter the news content before it is broadcasted by digital non-human anchors. The intervention of human agency in the news producing process raises reservations that the noticeable objectivity of machine may contain inherit biases. The machinal objectivity of AI technology in an ideal state is also labeled more dangerous to the fabric of human society, than the natural biasness of human media professionals.

Keywords: Objectivity, Bias, AI, Anchorpersons, Media, Pakistan

Introduction

Collaborating with, overcoming, and opposing new technological developments like artificial intelligence, media is proliferating across digital platforms at an ever-increasing rate (Wilde & Sylvia IV, 2024). Artificial intelligence can be explained as a science through which computers or other automated machines perform those functions which are executed by humans, especially those tasks which require intelligence to be handled (Turning, 1950). There is no such notion of singular 'AI', alternatively, multiple techniques and applications are in practice which can be nominated under the term of artificial intelligence (Wischmeyer & Rademacher, 2020). The journalistic procedures are modified by algorithms and machines, in fact non-human entities are now procuring the place of a communicator (Jamil, 2021). In any case, AI systems must evade partiality and biasness, because it has a potential to marginalize sensitive chunk of a population and can increase discrimination and prejudgment (Palumbo, Carneiro, & Alves, 2024). The integration of algorithms in the newsroom is evident over the previous ten years, specifically, the article writing has enhanced remarkably (Biswal & Kulkarni, 2024). Artificial intelligence (AI) is the term used to describe computer systems that use algorithmic models and large, complex datasets to mimic the learning processes of the human brain (de-Lima-Santos & Ceron, 2021; Diakopoulos, 2019).

Generative artificial intelligence refers to the creation of images, text, and audio/video that has been produced by AI-based systems (Farid, 2022). In the media industry, the application of artificial intelligence is increasing

progressively – *New York Times* and *Bloomberg* were first media outlets to introduce artificial intelligence in the journalism industry (Broussard, Diakopoulos, & Chuan, 2019), after that many Asian countries, like China, India and Pakistan also experimented AI journalism. An artificial intelligence (AI) anchorperson is developed using numerous technologies to trigger the abilities of broadcasting of a human anchor through voice and expression synthesis (Wang, 2023).

In the twenty-first century, with the inclusion of artificial intelligence, the horizon of world media industry experiences a major shift. The human oriented communication sector is being trespassed by synthetic non-human entities and all over the world. The virtual anchorpersons have been introduced globally, it seems that artificial intelligence will revolutionize media industry (Olmsted, 2019). The application and dependency on the technology of artificial intelligence for news dissemination and production is evident worldwide. Moreover, for the creation of content, examining data and demonstration of news segments AI-supported systems are performing crucial role (Diakopoulos, 2019; Marconi & Siegman, 2017). The AI anchors are now broadcasting news segments to audience on digital media platforms, the behavior of audience is different on digital media sites than mainstream media – the general behavior of users is to not verify the news of social media from other sources in terms of routine news (Hassan, Tayyeb, & Baloch, 2023).

The noticeable phenomenon is the growth of AI news anchors, which offers numerous advantages as compare to human anchors – virtual anchors are designed by computer algorithms, capable of showcasing news bulletins 24/7 without fatigue, the phenomenon of AI anchor sparks a debate about future of journalism and the role of human anchors (Fitria, 2024).

The media sector in Pakistan has commenced experimentation with digital AI anchorpersons, marking a substantial transformation in the delivery and reception of news. The progressive initiative of digital anchorpersons by Pakistani media is not only demonstrating the trend of advanced technology, but at the same time raises reservations related to news room culture and landscape of local media industry (Baloch, Hassan, & Hassan, “You are an AI and you know a lot more than humans”: A Semiotic Discourse Analysis of the World’s First AI TV Show, 2024). The media in Pakistan faces several obstacles relating to technological infrastructure, ethical considerations, audience engagement, and cultural representation, unlike established nations (Jamil, 2021). There are multiple advantages and disadvantages attached with digital AI news anchors – foremost prospect is reduction in cost for media owners and unparallel efficiency in disseminating news. Despite significant compensation, the inclusion of AI anchorpersons raises crucial concerns related to credibility and objectivity of news content and their impact on the journalism sector (Wiederhold, 2019).

Although, the phenomenon of the inclusion of synthetic AI anchors in media industry is increasing gradually, there is still lack of substantial research work about how and to what extent these non-entities are affecting the overall fabric of journalism. AI news anchors were introduced by Pakistani mainstream electronic channels in 2023. Discover Pakistan was the first mainstream TV channel which introduced AI anchorpersons, after that, many other channels like GNN, Express News, and Neo News launched their AI entities on the YouTube digital platform. The use of AI news anchors in Pakistani media is a relatively recent development that could change how the media sector operates.

The aim of this research is to investigate the bias and objectivity associated with the usage of AI anchorpersons in the Pakistani media industry.

The role of media is regarded as informer, entertainer and reshaping the traditional values of culture (Denis, 2010) – when it comes to AI news anchors, it is not only revolving around their operational importance, but also associated with the production and dissemination of news content, moreover, it is linked with the transformation of journalistic ethics and objectivity of news. Functionally, AI entities carry out tasks traditionally handled by human anchors—such as delivering news and performing fact-checks, thus enhancing newsroom efficiency (Vincent, Hashmat, & Shahwar, 2025). Symbolically, digital anchorperson demonstrates the progress of technology and extend expectations of journalistic exhibition in regional media (Moroojo, Shabbir, Madni, & Hussain, 2025). The designation of anchorperson can be defined as a

professional journalist who is specialized in broadcasting news segments on microphone and on the screen. Anchors serve as a mediator or a bridge between media agency and spectators, it exhibits authenticity, trust and acute professionalism (Denis, 2010). Specially, in news broadcasting, anchors play as a pivotal entity, they handle the flow of information and maintain the credibility of the media organization (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996).

The anchorperson conveys the news channel's legitimacy, credibility, and identity in addition to their practical duty of reporting and coordinating news bulletins. The job of an anchorperson is altered by the use of AI since non-human digital anchorpersons mimic human anchors' behaviors while also questioning accepted notions of professionalism, reliability, and credibility.

AI news anchors were first broadcasted by Pakistani mainstream channels Discover Pakistan, GNN, and Neo News in 2023. Both male and female AI news anchors were featured on online platforms of YouTube. The inclusion of artificial intelligence in the industry of media sparked critical concerns (Wang, 2023). It is a concern that, eventually, AI technology will surpass human workforce and will establish issues related to ethics, regulations, trust and credibility – that needs serious and meaningful discussion (Porlezza, 2023).

Over 500 years have passed since humans began to dominate mainstream media. The media sector was entirely run and managed by people until recently. Both media producers and consumers were members of the human race. However, artificial intelligence poses a danger to the human dominance of media in the twenty-first century. Software like ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and Google Gemini are quickly changing the technical landscape, and AI algorithms are become more powerful and efficient. The emergence of AI anchorpersons in media industry, particularly in electronic media, has the potential to considerably alter the development of broadcasting, and the future of journalism with a human workforce becomes uncertain. AI anchorpersons are being introduced in newsrooms in nations like America, China, and India that have the largest and most powerful economies in the world. The newsroom is significantly impacted by the invasion of AI anchorpersons in the media sector. The phenomena are worth investigating since it poses important questions.

Objectives

The main objective of the research is to investigate the degree of objectivity and bias present in AI anchorperson functioning inside the media outlets of Pakistan. Precisely, this study targets to analyze how media professionals construct visual and verbal objectivity in anchorperson generated by artificial intelligence. The research also identifies the numerous types of bias, such as political, cultural and ideological and the influence of algorithms on them. Moreover, the study aims to explore the perspectives of newsroom journalists as per the partiality and editorial control of digital anchorpersons, in addition, to identify the perceived notion of objectivity of human anchors with non-human digital anchorperson in the context of Pakistani media.

Research Questions

RQ1. How is objectivity constructed and represented through AI anchorpersons in Pakistani news media?

RQ2: What is the difference in perceived bias between human anchorpersons and AI anchorpersons?

Significance

This study is crucial, not only theoretically but practically as well. Objectivity in a news content is a significant concern all over the world, especially in the media of Pakistan, where news channels have been easily labeled biased from the audience perspective. In Pakistan, people tend to choose selective media outlets for the information needs, they prefer those media agencies which broadcast news align with their existing political association. The inclusion of non-human entities in the media industry raise serious reservations about the objectivity of news and potential biasness in the algorithms of AI news anchors. Additionally, this study adds

to the body of knowledge regarding the phenomena of AI-supported journalism in developing nations (Thurman, Dörr, & Kunert, 2017).

Practically speaking, the study helps Pakistani media organizations, journalists, and audiences to understand the advantages and disadvantages of digital anchors. Familiarity with these nuances is crucial to creating reliable operations that connect AI to the media sector.

Scope & Delimitation

The present research is limited to Pakistani media industry and focuses on the aspects of objectivity and biasness in producing and presenting news content through AI news anchors. It aims to gather the practical insights from working journalists of Pakistan and explores their perception about the news mechanism broadcasted by digital AI anchorpersons

Literature Review

The research of Hong, (2025) observed drastic alterations in the journalistic content with the support of the artificial intelligence, specifically the nature of the creator of a news content, for example human or AI bot influences the opinion of the audience. The findings of the study demonstrate spectators choose stories written by humans, rather than crafted by machine algorithms, moreover audience shows optimistic attitude for human writers – in addition, people perceive that AI bots are less bias as compared to human journalists.

The broadcasting of news segments to audience is a sensitive and technical aspect in the media industry, with the application of artificial intelligence, the overall procedure of news dissemination has been influenced. One of the major concerns which prevail in the traditional mechanism of news broadcasting is achieving the objectivity of news content and minimizing the inherit biasness of human agency while editing and filtering the news stories. With the objective of enhancing the credibility of the news content, the research joints big data with artificial intelligence in the experiment. Findings exhibit that efficiency and accuracy of news content have been improved by 3.63 and 4.76, individually (Zhou, 2024).

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are used to make employment decisions during the many stages of job advertisements, shortlisting, interviewing, and hiring; bias may be present in any of these procedures. To eliminate the bias of artificial intelligence and promoting impartiality in AI systems is a major challenge. The combination of reasonable AI with the metrics of equal opportunity guidelines is important for the application of AI supported design in decision making process for jobs recruitment (Chan, 2024).

Working with new technical advancements like artificial intelligence (AI), media is proliferating across digital platforms at an ever-increasing rate. Additionally, these advancements are taking place at an era of global changes, such as pandemics and climate change. Given these developments, it is the perfect moment to encourage greater discussions between cultural studies and media through posthumanism in more methodical and well-developed approaches (Wilde & Sylvia IV, 2024).

Limited AI-based technologies, biases in data, security, confidentiality, and ethical concerns further complicate matters and put users, developers, civilization, and society at grave risk (da Silveira & Lima, 2024; Partadiredja, Entrena-Serrano, & Ljubenkov, 2020).

While discussing the role of artificial intelligence in the journalistic process, Gelgel envisioned the likelihood of the replacement of conventional human presenters with artificially intelligent anchorpersons, in upcoming years. The study also explains the hurdles which practicing newsmen experience, such as risky nature of job and technological disturbance – focusing how crucial is to maintain journalistic value system of objectivity and impartiality. It debates for the reasonable and responsible application of technology to promote the production and distribution of news stories, furthermore, advocating the pivotal role of objectivity and fairness in the future of journalism industry, especially in news reporting (Gelgel, 2020).

With the intentions of exploring the impact of technology on the perception of young spectators about credibility and reliability of the content generated by AI supported system, Sundar created a framework. The

study suggests that audience find news content produced by machines less biased and more reliable as compared to that content which was generated by human journalists. Audience believe that machines have no association and affiliation towards any belief system, neither it has any personal agenda and that is the reason the content generated by AI is more credible and maintain fairness (Shayam, 2008).

Because of the intense rivalry in the news sector, media outlets are being forced to employ technology more and more, which allows AI-generated entities to take over duties that humans may find difficult or impossible to complete (Baloch & Noor, 2024).

We are made to assume that AI makes decisions based only on cold, hard data and sees the world through a lens free from human bias. But let's destroy that illusionary notion as active participants in this story. We claim that AI is anything but neutral. Like a virus infiltrating a machine's mind, it is deeply rooted in prejudice. AI is fundamentally a data-driven system. As creators and trainers, we supply the building pieces that AI algorithms are built upon, whether they are text, images, or numerical data. The problem is that the information we give AI is everything from impartial (Xavier, 2025).

Methodology

The research is qualitative in nature and aims to explore the objectivity and bias in the news segments delivered by AI anchorpersons in the media industry of Pakistan. To understand the critical concern of news objectivity, this study deployed the technique of in-depth interviews of professional journalists. For assuring the reliability, the data has been collected from those media practitioners who are involved directly or in directly with the application of AI anchorperson in different news channels. Sample included, news producers, controller news, news editors, anchorpersons and even owners of news channel. In order to obtain extensive information, semi-structured questionnaire with open ended questions has been prepared for respondents.

Findings and Analysis

All over the world, the concerns of news objectivity and inherit biasness of humans are two most debated segments in the media industry. In the country like Pakistan, stakes are always high, because rivalry between political parties is common and leaders of political organization utilize every technique of propaganda to belittle and humiliate their opposing point of view. In all this political chaos and instability, media is considered as an opinion maker which has the power to reshape the perception of general audience. Directly or indirectly, censorship and media laws are implemented everywhere in the world – freedom of expression is compromised via multiple tactics. Humans, working in media industry have affiliations with political parties and association with certain religious ideologies, the phenomenon is considered as natural human instinct. Contrastingly, synthetic anchors, generated by artificial intelligence technology have no such political affiliation, neither have religious connotation nor possessing socio-cultural stigmas. Moreover, humans tend to have ethnocentric approach, but in the case of AI technology, there is evident inclination towards any specific culture or society.

While answering the question of objectivity and biasness of AI news anchors, most of the respondents agreed that AI supported news anchors will be less biased and more objective in terms of news production, but some raise concerns over mechanical objectivity of machine, they consider it a curse in a disguise of blessing and problematic from the root level of algorithms.

“I think humans are biased towards any political party, religious or sectarianism.

So, AI can definitely be prominent in these things”

Malik Ateeq Ahmad

Humans carry sentiments and emotional baggage of their experiences; even sheer professionals cannot escape from past dilemmas. While working in a journalism industry, the memories of past incidents and emotional trauma can also lead to human workers towards a selective judgement – resulted in a biased point of view. As contrast to humans, digital news anchors do not have any sort of emotional history, their objectivity cannot

be distorted due to delicate human like sentiments. Few respondents believe that if AI content will not be interfered by humans, it would be 100% objective and unbiased, but as long as human filters and edit the AI news content, the level of biasness will always stay high.

While discussing the notion of objectivity regarding the news content of AI, Dr. Qaiser shared his views about objectivity of artificial intelligence,

"I believe there will be less bias. Because AI will be assessing all of this in real time; let's say there are 200 comments to a news article on digital media, in a matter of seconds AI will detect all comments."

Because AI agents can verify information more quickly than humans, they are more reliable due to the remarkable speed at which data is handled throughout the internet. Notwithstanding the effectiveness of artificially intelligent news personnel, a huge chunk of false information is accessible on websites and social media platforms, which can capture AI personnel and propagate false information. There isn't currently a system in place that can stop fake news from spreading online and serve as the foundation for human monitoring of information produced by AI anchorpersons.

These days, a lot of false information may be found on digital media, and you may encounter deceptive events. What is the source of the data, then? Run the fact check on it.

Filter it. This is not how it is refined.

Dr. Qaiser Rafiq

One of the respondents and senior journalist had an opinion that when it comes to the matter of objectivity and biasness in the news content of digital anchors, there will be no substantial difference, because it is always the human mind which works behind the curtain, furthermore, technically, news production is not the primary duty of anchorpersons, no matter it is human or non-human.

"The anchor person does not bring the news himself; news comes to him; he has to read it on the prompter. This will be the job of the AI anchor."

Chaudhry Latif

Chaudhry also warns about the absolute freedom of AI technology in media industry; he thinks that would not be a good idea for journalism, moreover, the notion of independent technology of artificial intelligence in human centered affairs has a potential of damaging the fabric of whole society,

"Technology does not operate by humans. In fact, it may be more deadly. Because it is emotionless."

An emotionless AI anchor may be neutral and unbiased, but it also lacks societal responsibility. Furthermore, it will disseminate unfiltered news without calculating the impact of hard news on general audience -- which may result in the anger of audience, can spark indignation and potentially damage the national sovereignty.

The expression of AI anchors while broadcasting different types of news segments is also a matter of concern. Human news anchors manage their communication style and match their facial expressions according to the news story, whereas digital anchors struggle in facial and vocal expressions. One of the respondents of the study predicted the future related to the impression of AI newscasters,

"In a short time. Its expression will also change. If we are running news about a blast, or running news about a festivity, then surely its impressions will be on screen. And it's just, it's like a command."

Jalaludin Babar

Babar is also optimistic that in a few years, AI technology will be advance enough to equip digital anchors with human like facial expressions,

“Yes, absolutely. Now you see, there are a lot of robots that answer properly, which talk logically in the run time.”

Jalaludin Babar

Many respondents forecasting the aware future of AI anchorpersons, but they are not foreseeing the potential conclusion, as Latif Chaudhry forecasted that mechanical objectivity of AI anchorpersons poses a greater threat than a human's inherent bias.

Discussion

The inclusion of AI anchorpersons in the media industry is relatively a new phenomenon in the journalism sector of Pakistan. Multiple mainstream television channels have launched digital anchors along with human presenters, the major reasons behind the application of non-human anchors were cost effectiveness and error free dissemination of news content. AI news anchors have certain advantages over human news person – they are low maintenance, can appear on multiple screens simultaneously and execute commands without improvisation, furthermore, AI news person does not have any political or religious affiliation. Whereas, human anchors are high maintenance, can be tired and ask questions on their own, moreover humans’ journalists have certain affiliation with different ideologies such as political and cultural, that association triggers bias and eventually damage the objectivity of news segments.

The first question of the study was, how is objectivity constructed and represented through AI anchorpersons in Pakistani news media? In Pakistani media industry, the AI anchorperson is not producing news content on its own, artificial intelligent tools might collecting news content but human professional filters and edit that content, then it is broadcasted by AI anchorpersons. So, the human agency is still dominating in the news content broadcasted by AI news anchors. Discussing about second research question of the study, what is the difference in perceived bias between human anchorpersons and AI anchorpersons?

Most of the journalists who participated in the study believe that digital anchorperson and the technology of artificial intelligence is more objective and inherently less biased than human media professionals, because AI agents do not have prejudice against certain political and cultural institutions. Due to affiliation of human media workers with specific political and cultural values, they are prone towards certain biasness which leads towards the distortion of objectivity. While disseminating news stories, human anchorpersons wear certain facial expressions and vocal tone which shift according to the nature of the news content. Whereas non-human digital anchorpersons are unable to vary their facial expressions, they have limited body movements such as eye blink, smile and eyebrow lifting. When it comes to deliver news bulletin, the body language of AI anchorpersons is insufficient and incomparable with human body gestures – the lack of facial expressions of AI generated news anchors makes overall presentation of news segment less believable. Some studies suggest that audience consider AI agents more objective and less bias in the news segments, but they chose stories written by human authors rather than generated by AI bots.

The mechanical objectivity of AI anchorpersons is also being challenged and marked as dangerous for the overall fabric of society. Human journalists know the fabric of a society, they understand rules and regulations, public sentiments and importance of national interest – due to all beforementioned concerns and for the greater cause, human news person edit and filter news story, which exclude potentially harmful elements. Whereas, in the case of AI news person, while broadcasting the uncensored news stories, it will not cater national interest in account, nor will it consider the backlash from the general public, which itself possess another type of dangerous situation which can cause chaotic atmosphere.

Conclusion and Recommendations

AI anchors fundamentally alter the media environment, influencing the relationship between humans,

machines, and information. As per McLuhan “medium is the message”, AI anchors have a capacity to transform the overall culture and workflow of newsroom, AI changes the “medium”, therefore it changes the message. With the support of digital non-human anchorpersons, the occurrence of artificial intelligence in the human centered field of journalism has a potential of starting an era of “post-human” journalism. The human’s notion of objectivity and bias can be transformed and redefined in the journalism handled by non-human AI entities. Journalism industry is evolving, transforming and experiencing the era of co-existence of human and workforce of artificial intelligence – for a productive and professional relationship, now is time to create a balanced workflow and hierarchy between two parallel forces of human and AI.

The perception of audience has not been considered in the undergoing research study, only working journalist’s point of view was included. It is recommended to further researchers who are willing to work in the same area of Pakistani media industry, to obtain the perception of general audience about the objectivity and bias involved in the news segments of AI news anchorpersons.

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