

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Creative Quality in Advertisement Filmmaking in Pakistan

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Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence has initiated a fundamental reorganization of innovative and operational efficiency for media production. This research studies the recent insertion of AI-supported storyboarding tools like Midjourney into the advertising industry of Pakistan. Although industry Veterans appreciate the rapid development of AI in creating quality content, concerns remain about AI's placement of subtleties of the unique individual and nuances of culture. Using a mixed-methods approach, this research collects data using semi-structured interviews of professional directors and storyboard artists, and conducts a comparative analysis of the AI-and-non-AI-supported workflows. The research analyzes non-AI and AI-supported workflows in terms of production turnaround, visual integrity, and creative anxiety. AI supports and accelerates the other designer's ideation and preproduction by automating lower-order tasks, reducing creative fatigue, and allowing higher-order tasks to be performed at the designer's peak cognitive capacity. The data also show several huge disadvantages, notably a decline in aesthetic quality and narrative originality. The data show that inadequate control of AI's output resulted in inferior culturally grounded elements, in this specific case within the context of Pakistan. AI can further accelerate productivity. In this research, the authors argue that a combination of higher-order tasks grounded in culture and control of AI in the advertising industry of Pakistan is warranted, and propose options for balancing the human and the technological in professional advertising in advertising of Pakistan to preserve narrative integrity.

Keywords: Generative AI, Midjourney, Storyboarding, Pakistani Advertising, Creative Integrity, Digital Media Production.

1 Introduction

The Generative artificial intelligence systems are rapidly redefining the world's creative industries, including one of the most affected sectors, advertising and filmmaking. AI systems, from powerful language models to elaborate diffusion systems, are automating rudimentary pre-production tasks that require a lot of manual work and significant time.

AI storyboarding applications like Midjourney, Storyboarder.ai, and Shai Creative can turn a written script or a spoken idea into an elaborate sequence of images in a matter of minutes (Storyboarder.ai 2024). For firms with tight production deadlines and budgets, the speed with which these systems work is a distinct and meaningful competitive advantage. As many in the industry report, the focus has now shifted from how to make storyboards to why one would bother to make the first draft of a storyboard manually when an AI system can create a prototype within seconds (NielsenIQ 2023). The focus is now on scaling and maximizing output rather than the quality of work produced.

The growing use of AI in the creative field has prompted professorial discourse on the possibility of diminishing emotional depth and cultural significance in creative work. Even though AI-generated art is often of a high technical standard, evidence shows it often lacks the emotional narrative and pacing essential to effective storytelling (Oxford Research, 2023). Behavioral studies show that AI-generated art and media tend to elicit lower levels of neural engagement in audiences due to a perceived lack of human touch and depth, an effect often referred to as the uncanny valley of AI (MIT Technology Review, 2024). This requires the management of the tradeoff, in the context of a monopoly, between operational efficiency, defined as speed of production and cost savings, and a creative tradeoff that involves reduced originality, coherence, and cultural depth. Also, the use of these tools has created creative anxiety, as people worry that their jobs are threatened and that the use of these tools will result in a homogenization of art (Bellaiche, 2023).

The Pakistani advertising industry is at an even more critical point. Local markets heavily rely on either emotional narrative, cultural symbolism, relational authenticity, or a combination of all three. This is difficult for algorithms to achieve without tailored, localized data (Dawn News, 2024). Although leading Pakistani agencies and innovative creators start to embrace Symmetry Group's AffairStudio.ai, Pakistan's first generative AI creative studio – the larger ecosystem is still highly fragmented (Symmetry Group, 2025). Several practitioners depend on auto-actualization or rely on international models that do not necessarily sit well with the socio-cultural intricacies of the Pakistani audience (Khan, 2022). This has resulted in a "research gap"; where worldwide studies center on Western countries and their various levels of adoption, while disregard the singular industrial phenomenon of Pakistan and other developing countries (Ali & Rahman, 2023).

This research deals with the contrast between the efficiencies that AI creates and the potential losses of value in the cultural essence of Pakistani narrative construction. AI can be used in a capacity described as a creative muscle, capable of imagining a complex scene or even addressing the mundane issue of generating background layouts. However, unregulated output may yield formulaic content that erodes the brand's equity (NielsenIQ, 2023). Thus, this research examines the impact of AI storyboarding tools in the Pakistani context and attempts to quantify changes to production speed and costs and the overall emotional state of the employees. Furthermore, this research provides a conceptual framework for the AI-controlled defense of integrity in narratives, focusing on local professionals and the changes in narrative structure. At the end of the

day, the study aims to show the potential of AI as an extension of human creativity in the advertising industry, as long as this potential remains in the bounds of empathy and institute-value-driven hard-line creative integrity (Adarts Pakistan, 2025; Ali & Rahman, 2023).

2 Related Work

The global creative landscape is being reshaped by the weaving in of Generative Artificial Intelligence to produce media content and ads. In Pakistan, this is increasingly documented as the automated ideation and visual thinking stage. In the last few years, most recent scholars have recognized that the AI tools are gaining traction in the local creative industry in the planning of visuals and content (Rasheed & Anees, 2023). With the decreased duration of initial production stages and the positive side of the incorporation of AI tools, academia is apprehensive about the "creative quality" of the content. Generative AI is great at producing smooth and polished visuals, but as Rasheed and Anees (2023) put it, the lack of emotional and cultural depth needed for branding in Pakistan is very apparent. This dichotomy suggests that while AI offers operational advantages, it risks the loss of cultural authenticity—a core value for local consumers.

Aside from its technical output, the influence of AI on the psychology of creative professions is a new research territory. Pakistani designers deal with a form of anxiety called creative hesitation, which is caused by the machine's ability to generate a plethora of ideas in a fraction of a second. This phenomenon is shifting the understanding of authorship and originality, especially for the younger professionals who have to deal with AI as a culture-changing force, rather than just a technical instrument (Rasheed & Anees, 2023). Within the scope of producing advertising, AI is mostly used to draft a design in the early stages and create a quick mood board. What used to take several rounds and several drawings to explain can now be done in a matter of a few seconds. However, it does not provide total workflow effectiveness because AI largely creates errors. AI output keeps stressing the creativity of designers and needs to be manually corrected several times for anatomical and aesthetic errors (Rasheed & Anees, 2023). A prominent paradox in current design research is the balance between speed and authenticity. Researchers caution that a heavy reliance on automation may lead to lazy aesthetic choices, with AI repeating the same designs, with no variance, due to the dominance of a certain bias in the training datasets, effectively homogenizing styles where cultural complexity may once have been. Leaders in the field argue that automation should never replace authenticity, especially when it comes to the representation of varied viewpoints (Oxford Research, 2023). AI is said to work a little faster than humans, with an average productivity increase of double, but it tends to lead to the slow adoption of less varied content. On the other hand, some artists have reached what is called 'generative synesthesia,' or a synergistic condition in which AI suggests novel random combinations that the human creator then curates. This might indicate that AI is touching on the neuromorphic science of co-evolution, streamlining the processes of representation and leaving the core ideas to the artist, but the eureka moments that create surprise and resonance in human culture will always be limited to the human psyche (Oxford Research, 2023; Bellaiche, 2023).

Within the context of psychology, the advent of AI in Pakistan has triggered a complicated response of excitement along with a phenomenon termed 'creative displacement anxiety.' Positive comments have been made regarding the potential to streamline workflow, but there is also concern about losing one's job in an increasingly cost-focused economy. Qualitative research conducted among Pakistani illustrators provides an analysis of the multiple ways they feel their creativity is being overshadowed. This phenomenon may be addressed through the combination of education and policy/structures that make it possible to aid professionals in using AI as a supportive creative partner rather than a competitor (Ali & Rahman, 2023). This approach of human-AI co-creativity builds on the assumption that AI can broaden the field of creativity, but it is the human that performs the very necessary analysis and judgment that determines the value of the ideas created.

The launch of *AffairStudio.ai* indicates the beginning of a new AI-focused initiative within the Pakistani context that tries to incorporate artificial intelligence with emotional intelligence (Symmetry Group, 2025). However, the lack of a comprehensive national policy on the ethical training of AI exacerbates the problems of the relatively small local environment. The National Artificial Intelligence Policy (2021) deals with more general issues of innovation, and, therefore, provides media outlets little more than self-regulation. This absence of policy results in the adoption of international AI systems without modification (Ali & Rahman, 2023; Khan, 2022). Because local humor and literal and symbolic advertising value heavily depend on public mood and other social factors, the poor contextualization of AI may result in an inferior level of advertising.

Numerous international studies have shown that, due to the notion of authenticity and emotional depth, many audiences prefer human-created products to AI. This is especially of concern in Pakistan, where 68% of creatives are worried that AI will have a negative impact on value systems in advertising (Adarts Pakistan, 2025). There's a noticeable discrepancy between the international studies that focus on advertising and the local context, particularly with respect to narrative creation, where a mere mechanical shortcut is evaluated as positive, without any analysis of the symbolic systems that are relevant for the South Asian audience (NielsenIQ, 2023).

This research frames AI tools as an independent variable that influences dependent variables such as improvement of workflow, visual quality, and innovation. The research answers the question of how much efficiency is gained when AI-enabled storyboarding significantly reduces the time taken for the ideation loop to a few hours while measuring the AI's impact on the integrity of the narrative. It examines the model of AI proposed, humans judge in the context of the Pakistani studio. In the end, the literature expresses the need for a model that integrates the warm intuition of the human designer and the cold efficiency of the machine. The closure of this research gap provides Pakistani agencies with the means to integrate AI in a responsible manner and the means to ensure that the modernization of technology does not come at the cost of losing the creativity and cultural identity of the human (Ali & Rahman, 2023; Khan, 2022).

Theoretical Framework

This study uses the Uses and Gratifications Theory to examine the strategic adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Pakistani advertising and digital media industries. UGT, introduced by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1973), sees media technology users as active, goal-directed individuals who select media and technologies to satisfy cognitive, affective, and integrative needs. When applying this to AI in modern workflows, the paradigm shift turns the question away from what AI does for the creator and instead asks, what do creators do to AI to fulfill production requirements, alleviate limitations of resources, and stimulate innovation?

Using UGT, this research interprets the adoption of AI as the selection of a means to a desired end, such as achieving operational efficiency, enhanced ideation, and alleviating creative anxiety. In the competitive advertising market of Pakistan, marked by time-and-budget constraints, the cognitive and personal integrative needs of practitioners to retain global standards of visual excellence during the lengthy advertising development process are met by the use of tools like Midjourney and ChatGPT (NielsenIQ, 2023; Ali & Rahman, 2023).

Despite this, there is a very real contradiction between the gratification of operational efficiency and the desired outcome of maintaining artistic fidelity. AI, as the digital shortcut, results in a creativity deficit by eliminating the emotional and cultural connections and contextual emphasis of the Pakistani storytelling legacy (Oxford Research, 2023; Bellaiche, 2023). Thus, AI provides a means of addressing the creative displacement anxiety that professionals experience, as their use of AI is seen as a pragmatic balancing act between the functionality of technology and the need to narrate stories in a humanistic and culturally sensitive manner. This perspective helps elucidate the complex interplay between the adoption of new technologies and the socio-psychological dimensions that characterize the transformation of Pakistan's creative economy.

3 Methodology

This research uses a qualitative and interpretivist paradigm to analyze the ways in which Generative Artificial Intelligence affects the creative processes of the Pakistani advertising and filmmaking sectors. Given the nature of the problem being analyzed and the aim of the study, this methodology is indispensable for generating deeper insights into the psychological states of individuals, creative integrity, and mental disposition that are beyond the scope of quantitative measurement (NielsenIQ, 2023). As an interpretivist, the researcher determines social phenomena from the lived experiences of the practitioners in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad, the cities with the most developed media in Pakistan, where most technological innovation and classical art design (Ali & Rahman, 2023; Symmetry Group, 2025).

To sample a target population of 20-30 creative workers, including storyboard artists, illustrators, and creative directors, who have a minimum of two years of experience, a combined snowball sampling and purposive strategy was implemented. Data was also collected from semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a qualitative assessment of creative works (AI-generated and manual boards). Employing multiple research tools addressed the issue of 'emotional resonance' and 'aesthetic homogenization' (Bellaiche, 2023; Oxford Research, 2023).

Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of Thematic Analysis was the method used to conduct the analysis. Transcripts were coded and organized within the NVivo software. Recurrent themes were identified concerning the Weberian 'creative displacement anxiety', workflow, and the realism of cultural production. Ethical considerations were upheld by securing informed consent, coding the participants using pseudonyms, and following the transparency implemented in Pakistan's National AI Policy (Government of Pakistan, 2021). This approach assures that the findings remain pragmatic and relevant to the unique creative industry of Pakistan's socio-technical structure.

4 Results

The data were collected with 15 creative professionals based in Karachi, Pakistan. An ideal location for the intersection of old and new storytelling methods and the technologies that disrupt them, Karachi is the country's primary commercial and media center.

Urdu. This study examines the role of tools like Midjourney and Nano Banana in transforming creative quality in the advertising and filmmaking industries.

4.1 Redefining Creative Efficiency

The study examined the use of AI tools such as Midjourney and Nano Banana, and their impact on creative efficiency on Karachi's advertisement filmmaking. Participants understood AI to be a solution to the grueling production schedules and demanding clients that characterize the local advertising world. Creative professionals noted the use of AI to reduce the intensity and duration of the multiple iterations of a storyboard, to visualize a concept, to create mood boards, and to visually experiment. Traditionally, such tasks would require a series of manual sketches and edits and take several days to complete, but with AI, this is now achieved in a matter of hours.

Participants noted that AI assisted in speeding up the process of developing an idea and allowed for rapid visual experimentation with different styles and concepts of a campaign. Creative directors and storyboard artists reported that AI drafts facilitated better communication between the creative team and the client, as concepts were visualized in real time. This increased client confidence and minimized the number of revisions made during the developmental phase. Respondents understood AI to be a visual brainstorming partner and said that it deepened the extent to which the team could achieve a goal within a short time and under tight deadlines.

Although AI increased productivity in many cases, the emotional and artistic depth of the work suffered. Traditional methods allowed for more introspection, and the participants felt AI removed a lot of the reflective development of art. Many of the storyboard artists felt the AI output was visually appealing but emotionally lacking. While AI increased productivity and sped up workflow, the participants indicated they were not in favor of sacrificing emotional depth and artistic practices for increased efficiency.

4.2. Negotiating Authenticity and Originality

A prominent theme discussed was the balance between the use of AI in production and creative authenticity. Many participants wondered if AI imagery could be constitutively claimed as art. Many senior creative professionals who began their careers in

illustration, design, and manual editing felt AI removed the personal and emotional connection artists had with the work, and labeled AI outputs as gorgeous, yet lacking the human storytelling.

Younger professionals relaxed their definitions of originality. They shifted their focus and held that originality was in the ability to not only craft a perfect prompt, but also an artistic visual and procedural instruction. AI was not seen as the end of creativity, but rather the beginning of a new collaborative relationship between artist and AI for the purpose of achieving creative and visual aims.

Originality was linked to cultural identity. Some participants said Westernized aesthetics in AI-generated visuals fail to portray Pakistani culture, emotions, and social realities. Professionals often modified AI outputs to include facial features, clothing, and urban settings, as well as emotional expressions, relevant to Karachi. Hence, conceptually, Karachi advertising's authenticity relies on cultural representation rather than only on technical quality. The results reveal that creative professionals localized AI-generated visuals to adjust to cultural and emotional storytelling needs.

3. Audience and Cultural Value

The participants viewed AI more as a collaboration tool rather than a substitute for human imagination. Filmmakers, editors, and motion designers employed AI to be supportive of the creativity. AI technology enabled the testing of lighting, cinematic moods, and visual styles before the real work started. Respondents described how this combined communication improved creativity and accelerated storytelling in production units.

Several respondents explained how prototyping using AI stimulated the imagination, facilitated the construction of ideas, and inspired the creative teams. Rather than being a barrier to imagination, AI was often a catalyst for new potential imaginative directions. Directors and editors in particular valued AI because of the numerous visual possibilities generated for the refinement of the story.

However, respondents also noted the areas of tension that existed concerning human and AI collaboration. Some expressed concern that excessive reliance on AI could eventually condition the formation of structural and artistic judgment and lead authors to a less visually diverse direction. Directors highlighted that the balance of emotional instinct, cultural sensitivity, and storytelling judgment remained primarily a creative human domain. The results have consequently shown how professionals in Karachi have positioned AI tools to fulfill a purpose of coexistence alongside imagination rather than as a stand-alone creation.

4.4 Cultural Adaptation and Local Identity

The localization of AI content generated through the interviews in relation to the context of Karachi emerged as the single most pronounced theme. Participants unanimously expressed that AI systems trained on global datasets would provide content for Western visual structures. Thus, Pakistani AI-generated visual content, which lacked architectural, sartorial, facial, and societal elements of the Pakistani heritage, became mundane imagery.

In response to the issue, creative professionals began adjusting AI responses to match local narratives and the audience's expectations. Participants noted that prompts often

incorporated terms related to the region, such as Karachi streets, Pakistani wedding, or desi environment, to enhance the cultural contextualization. This effort illustrates that Karachi's creative professionals are not passive users of AI technologies, but rather active interpreters of global technological systems that are reshaped to regional aesthetics.

The results also emphasized the significance of multilingual collaboration in AI-induced creative systems. Some professionals used a combination of Urdu and English in prompts in order to generate visuals that resonated with the local emotional and cultural contexts. Therefore, AI-assisted creativity in Karachi has a strong cultural and linguistic context, rather than being focused on the technology itself.

4.5: Changing Professional Identities

The creative professionals of Karachi noted that the introduction of AI technologies into their industry has also altered the way they view themselves in a professional capacity. Participants of the study commonly referred to themselves as "AI visualizer," prompt engineer, and AI-assisted storyteller to represent their hybrid career roles. It appears that with the incorporation of advanced AI technologies, creative advertising has become less about the execution of ideas and more about the incorporation and development of guiding mental images and concepts.

The research also recognized that in Karachi, there are other methods besides traditional instruction for learning AI technologies. These include online tutorials, practicing with peers, attending workshops, and learning by doing. The participants talked about a collaborative learning environment where professionals shared prompts and techniques, along with their experiences, through social networks and other creative communities. This has led to a rapid, though chaotic, adoption of AI in Karachi's advertising and filmmaking.

5 Discussion

5.1 Discussion

Findings from Karachi's creative industry illustrate how perceptions of creativity have changed in Pakistan's advertising industry. Due to the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), this study shows how workers in professions that depend on technology use AI to enhance and augment technology. This includes (from the users' point of view) cognitive (rapid ideation), affective (blocking the creative flow), and integrative (defense for creativity's cost) productivity for the global creative market. Tools such as Midjourney and Nano Banana have shifted from exciting (outside) creative tools (phenomena) to essential (inside) creative tools (phenomena) used in hybrid workflow. The research shows how cultural authenticity and technological efficiency conflict. While the participants were excited that sketching could now be digitally (and rapidly) prompted (in a matter of hours), there is a 'gratification deficit' in regard to emotional fulfillment. In the study, participants referred to AI as a 'deaf-mute artist' that simply lacks the emotional (gut instinct) and creative (spirit) skills that are needed to tell high-stakes stories. This perception is similar to the Western perspective, which is rooted in the belief that AI should be a 'co-pilot' and not a 'captain' of the creative process. In the case of Karachi, this perception of AI is influenced by the belief that AI's training data is biased towards Western cultures. Compared to the West, there is a relative lack

of global facial features in South Asian culturally designed settings. This leads to a relative lack of culturally-directed (and/or culturally-sensitive) creative tools used in AI as a 'cognitive commodity' that Pakistani authors need to resist creatively refined tools. The research also shows how there are differences in the perception of authorship across different generations.

Increasing numbers of creatives consider prompt engineering art so that talent is now defined as conceptual curation (the mind) instead of technical execution (the hand). Senior practitioners (and their views of art's value as a commodity) adiabatically respond to what is termed the democratization of visual production as the anxiety induced by the creative displacements caused by the displacement of the skilled hand by computers. The results signify that the future of the industry is Human-AI Collaboration, where a storyboard artist's duties become those of an AI Curator.

The debate suggests that while AI can replicate a style with a specific lighting/design, and composition, AI is at a distinct disadvantage because the socio-cultural knowledge and intellect needed to devise and implement an effective communications campaign within the Pakistani market and the desired segments of it is still a domain that remains solely in the hands of humans, as AI does not possess such intelligence. It is the inventive capability of the human practitioner that will draw on a machine's efficiency.

5.2 Practical Contribution

The research is of immediate relevance to the advertising and filmmaking industries in Pakistan for a number of reasons. First, there is the necessity to stop the experimentation with integrating AI on an unstructured basis in favor of a more organized means of implementing what could be termed AI Ethics Guidelines that specify restrictions on AI authorship and the requirement to inform clients of the use of AI in content. This change calls for an update to the curriculum at institutions of art and media education, particularly at the Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture.

For production houses, these findings indicate an anticipated reallocation of resources. Rather than laying off employees, agencies should invest in training them as 'Visual Directors' who will oversee the generation of AI content. The time saved can be redirected towards higher-order tasks involving narrative strategy and addressing audience emotional engagement. Also, the 'Western' bias of the AI models can be commercially exploited through collaborations of local tech-creative companies to build datasets that present Pakistani aesthetics, languages, and cultural representations. This will help the industry use AI and maintain the culturally unique identity of the industry.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

This study is largely limited by its location-based focus on Karachi. Though a central media location, Karachi's characteristic media structures likely differ from those in Lahore or the policy settings in Islamabad. The sample of 15 provides depth with data saturation, but not from a statistical standpoint, and fails to represent the entire Pakistani creative industry. The tech-based critiques about the functions of AI technologies (eg. Midjourney) may be rendered outdated with the speed of tech development. The

reliance on self-reported data exposes the study to social desirability bias regarding perceived competence in AI. Finally, the study does not explain the receiving side by looking at how AI content is perceived and appreciated by the members of the Pakistani audience.

5.4 Future Study

The future studies may focus on comparative research of Karachi, Lahore, and Dubai in order to understand how regional Media challenges may be addressed. Comparative and quantitative research are also necessary to understand how consumer engagement varies based on advertisement type. Expanding the time-frame to 5 additional years will help understand the impact of Artificial Intelligence as either a means of job replacement or a tool to build a sustainable hybrid workforce. The confluence of AI and Intellectual Property in a legal context also needs to be explored to aid local artists in Pakistan. Innovative approaches are also required to design Diffusion Models in the Global South, particularly for South Asian visual cultures and languages in order to counter the predominance of western-centered biases.

5.5 Conclusion

The arrival of Generative AI into the Pakistani creative space has meant hybrid workflows are now the dominant standard as opposed to traditional manual workflows. This shift has occurred as a direct result of the high-stakes and high-demand nature of the industry. This research postulates that while AI has the capability of significantly enhancing the creative industry as a source of ideation and productivity, it will never be able to fill what this thesis regards as a culturally imbued void. The change will also require the professional label to evolve from that of the traditional maker' to that of the curator' where 'creative quality' will shift. Ultimately, the optimum outcome can be achieved through a balance of ethically guided and intuitive human and cultural machine integrated. With the localization of training and the upholding of ethical value, Pakistan can progress from being a global technology consumer and become a leading nation in providing the world with innovative digital storytelling that is culturally resonant.

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