Co-existence of Human and AI Anchorpersons in Pakistani News Media

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The research investigates the phenomenon of coexistence between human and artificial intelligence anchorpersons in the Pakistani media industry. The study is steered by the major research question -- How do Pakistani journalists perceive the co-working environment of human and AI anchorpersons in newsrooms? A qualitative approach has been applied, and data were collected through in-depth interviews, via a semi-structured questionnaire from the working journalists of Pakistan. Findings highlight that perception of the majority of Pakistani journalist about co-working with AI anchorperson is optimistic and they admit the efficiency of technologically advanced digital anchor, but despite the perfect mechanical performance of artificially generated news anchor, human journalist can still surpass it with some unique humanistic qualities -- AI anchorpersons are productive and efficient, but they cannot change facial or vocal expressions during a live transmission of news segment, moreover digital anchorpersons are unable to probe the guest while conducting a program. In addition, the AI anchorperson is also unable to decipher the verbal or physical cues of a human anchorperson in a co-working situation.

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence has brought a significant shift in the global media landscape in the twenty-first century. Synthetic non-human entities are invading the human-oriented communication sector – there is high probability that the technology of artificial intelligence will revolutionize the global media industry (Olmsted, 2019). Worldwide, there is a clear use of and reliance on artificial intelligence technologies for news production and distribution. Additionally, AI-supported technologies play a critical role in content generation, data analysis, and news segment demonstration (Diakopoulos, 2019; Marconi & Siegman, 2017).

Inclusion of artificial intelligence in the media industry, globally, is spreading rapidly – from news gathering, producing and broadcasting, all phases of journalism is now influenced by the progressive technology of AI. Specially, digital platforms are the places where proliferation of artificial intelligence is on a boast with ever-increasing rate (Wilde & Sylvia IV, 2024). To define the technology of artificial intelligence, it is a scientific process through which machine does the work which is handled or performed by human workers and also requires some sort of intelligence (Turning, 1950). The term artificial intelligence can also be described as computer systems that applies specific algorithms to mimic the learning abilities of human cognition (de-Lima-Santos & Ceron, 2021; Diakopoulos, 2019).

As many people believe that AI is a singular entity, this notion is not correct, there are several methods and strategies in practice which can be labeled as a technology of artificial intelligence (Wischmeyer & Rademacher, 2020). Despite the plenty of operations handled by AI in the media industry, the most significant one is the application of AI news anchorpersons in front of the screen – it shows that the role of communication which was in control of humans for centuries, now shifting towards the algorithms of machines (Jamil, 2021). The intervention of computer algorithms in the newsroom is apparent over the previous ten years (Biswal & Kulkarni, 2024). There is another terminology associated with AI, which is known as generative artificial intelligence – It is basically the creation of textual, imagery and audio/video data generated by AI-enabled systems (Farid, 2022). In the scenario of digital AI anchorperson, every aspect of news broadcasting has been covered with the support of relevant software available for the assistance.

The overall persona of AI anchorperson, including face, body, costume, movements and vocal expressions is made by the technology of artificial intelligence, but with the mindset of human professional. In order to generate specific AI news presenter, the human professional operates and applies certain prompts in AI system, those prompts or commands, usually, are align with the social and cultural values of the society. The anchorperson generated by the technology of AI is created by several technologies to execute the skillset of news broadcasting through voice and expression like human (Wang, 2023). Initially, in the journalism industry, *New York Times* and *Bloomberg* were first entities which apply artificial intelligence (Broussard et al., 2019). The media industry of Pakistan adopted the trend quickly and television channels *Discover Pakistan*, *GNN*, *Express News* and few others also launched news anchorpersons generated by the technology of artificial intelligence. The infotainment channel *Discover Pakistan* stretched the technological boundaries and broadcasted the first ever talk

show in the history of media, consisted AI guests and anchorpersons all together (Baloch et al., 2024).

These days, AI anchors broadcast news segments to audiences on digital media platforms. The audience's behavior on these platforms differs from that of mainstream media; generally speaking, consumers do not check social media news from other sources when it comes to regular news. (Hassan et al., 2023). The synthetic AI anchorpersons have several advantages associated with them -- contrast to humans, digital anchors do not feel tired, they are low in maintenance, can deliver news segments with 100% accuracy, moreover, they can appear on multiple screens simultaneously. The observable phenomenon of the inclusion of artificial intelligence in media industry is rapid growth of AI news presenters, which demonstrates several benefits to journalism industry, unlike human media professionals, AI newsmen can broadcast news round the clock without feeling any sign of exhaustion, the obvious advantages of AI anchors on human presenters raise concerns about the future role of human news presenters in journalism (Fitria, 2024).

The experiments of Pakistan's media industry with artificial AI anchorpersons, which would significantly change how news is delivered and received. In addition to showcasing the trend of cutting-edge technology, Pakistani media's progressive endeavor of digital anchorpersons raises reservations about the local media landscape and the overall culture of newsroom (Baloch et al., 2024).

There are numerous hurdles which media of Pakistan encounters linked with the infrastructure of technology – in addition, the involvement of audience, representation of culture and ethical concerns are also evident (Jamil, 2021). The low cost of AI news anchors is relatively a major attraction for the media owners, especially when these non-human entities are disseminating news with perfect accuracy and efficiency – despite obvious benefits, the application of AI presenters also produce complication in the workflow of newsroom (Wiederhold, 2019).

Even though the use of artificial intelligence (AI) anchors in the media sector is becoming more common, there is still a research gap of significant studies on how and to what degree these non-entities are impacting journalism as a whole. In 2023, Pakistani prominent electronic broadcasters began using AI news anchors. A relatively recent breakthrough that may alter the way the media industry functions is the introduction of AI news anchors in Pakistani media.

The aim of this particular study is to explore and understand the co-existing phenomenon of human journalists alongside with AI anchorpersons. We all know about major functions of media, which are to inform, to entertain and to educate about conventional values of local culture (Denis, 2010). The AI entities are not maneuvering only at operational side of journalism, in fact they are also interfering in the process of news production, furthermore, they are also doing fact checking and finally disseminating the refined news content, which are traditionally the functions of human journalists (Vincent et al., 2025). Metaphorically, AI anchorpersons exhibit the growth of technology and set the par high for traditional style of journalism in media (Moroojo et al., 2025).

The term *Anchorperson*, related to media industry can be explained as a practicing journalist who is responsible to broadcast news bulletin on the television screen – Anchorperson, commonly known as a face of a media organization, and ensures trust and credibility, moreover, functions as a bridge between general audience and organization (Denis, 2010). Anchors are particularly important in news transmission since they manage information flow and uphold the media organization's reputation (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996).

With the application of AI news presenters, the responsibility and functionality of traditional anchorperson is changed, now digital anchors are replicating human style of news presenting, which ultimately challenged the conventional broadcasting style of human anchors. The inclusion of AI anchorperson in Pakistani media industry is following traditional binary structure of gender; only male and female digital anchorperson have been introduced so far. The overall application of artificial intelligence in the global industry of media raise crucial concerns (Wang, 2023). Throughout the history, whenever a new technology emerges, the very first fear which humans feel is losing a job, and that is exactly the case with artificial intelligence also – the major problem is, gradually, this artificial intelligence will supersedes human capabilities, will create several issues linked with ethical values and regulations, and that requires some meaningful discourse (Porlezza, 2023).

For the human workforce, to avoid the elimination, the ideal situation can be achieved where humans work parallel with AI entities in the media sector – the coexistence of humans and AI sounds appealing and win-win scenario, but it is not that easy to obtain, as it underlies many complexities regarding creating a perfect balance between human and AI workflow. The combination of physical vs virtual entity can become very beneficial for media industry, but to create an environment which suits both is a challenging task. There are several hiccups involved in the coexisting environment of human anchorperson with AI presenter -- humans are emotional beings, whereas AI newsman is a machine which does not possess any sort of sentiments, humans feel tired and need to rest to perform again, in contrast, AI anchor can perform 24/7 without feeling any fatigue. In addition, humans have mood swings, whilst AI will carry same attitude forever, humans have political and religious ideologies, but AI has not such notions of faith.

The development of broadcasting could be significantly altered by the rise of AI anchorpersons in the media sector, especially in electronic media, and the future of journalism with a human workforce becomes dubious. Newsrooms in countries with the biggest and strongest economies in the world, such as the United States, China, and Pakistan, are starting to use AI anchorpersons. The invasion of AI anchorpersons in the media industry has an impact on the newsroom, especially the co-existence environment of newsroom between human and AI anchorperson raises significant questions, making it worthwhile to investigate.

1.1 Significance

The study is significant, not only practically but theoretically as well. The inclusion of AI entities in the media industry transforming the working mechanism of journalistic practices. Human news anchors are now working with AI virtual anchorpersons on screen – this advanced type of technological broadcasting create dynamic co-working environment which demands clear understanding of professional standards. In order to survive, It is crucial for human

journalists to raise the bar of their capabilities and understand the behavior of machine – this research will also extend the existing body of knowledge regarding the happening of journalism backed by AI systems in developing nations (Thurman et al., 2017).

In practical terms, the study aids audiences, journalists, and media organizations in Pakistan in comprehending the benefits and drawbacks of digital anchors. To build trustworthy operations that link AI to the media industry, it is essential to understand these subtleties. This particular research is limited to Pakistani media and emphases on the phenomenon of the co-working environment of human and AI news anchorpersons in the newsrooms. It targets to collect the practical experiences and perception of media practitioners about working patterns of virtual AI anchorpersons.

1.2 Objectives

The main objective of this research is to explore the coexistence of human and AI anchorpersons in the media landscape, specifically this study focuses on the co-working environment between human and non-human digital anchorpersons. Precisely, the inquiry targets to analyze how media practitioners of Pakistan perceive the role of AI anchorpersons while working alongside with human journalists.

RQ1: How do Pakistani journalists perceive the co-working environment of human and AI anchorperson in newsrooms?

The term "co-existence" explains the macro level lens of both human and AI anchorpersons working in the media horizon of Pakistan, whereas the "co-working" links specifically to the workflow of newsroom, professional teamwork between human and non-human entity, moreover, the real experiences of human journalists while broadcasting news segments side by side with virtual anchorperson.

2. Literature Review

There are numerous concerns sparked with the application of AI technology in the journalism industry, concerns related to impact of AI and its role in the news making process. In Denmark, journalists have been questioned in a study to speak out their reservations or apprehensions regarding the penetrating phenomenon of the technology of artificial intelligence. Findings reveal that media practitioners acknowledge the supporting role of AI in various news production phases, such as collecting and verifying the data – but they raise concerns about credibility of journalism backed by AI driven systems, moreover, journalists also feel threatened by efficiency of artificial intelligence and have fear of losing their job. Despite the concerns, respondents of the study also feel self-assured that AI journalist cannot grasp the humanistic qualities of creativity and empathy (Mølleret al., 2025).

For producing the practical perceptions about the newsroom, BBC has conducted action research, consists over the three consecutive years – one of the objectives of the study was to investigate the tools of AI used by human journalists. Findings reveal that journalists who are involved in the news producing process and working with AI systems are not contributing any substantial input to the transformation phase of journalism industry, rather they are acting as mere observer in the process. The study suggests, that for the better future of media industry,

the usage of AI should be restricted systematically and after a careful scrutiny only selective AI applications should be applied in the journalism process (Jones & Jones, 2025).

The technological transformation in the media industry attracts researchers globally, specifically the ones who are concerned with journalism industry. The research study of Cui explores the transition of broadcast media, with the focus on co-working environment between human and the technology of artificial intelligence. Findings observe that media agencies which apply human friendly applications of AI gets more benefits and achieve more participation from audience (Cui, 2025).

Following a thorough examination of the potential and ramifications of artificial intelligence anchorpersons in television journalism, it has been noted that harmony between traditional human hosts and AI anchors is necessary for the successful implementation of AI technology in the media sector (Garg & Garg, 2025). In spite of the application of AI anchorpersons, the requirement of human news presenters will remain intact and even very crucial for the multiple diverse tasks of broadcasting news, that demands acute judgement and experienced wisdom with a support of empathy. In the meantime, the traditional human anchors need to be more innovative and skillful for becoming significant in the media industry (Li, 2025).

Lindgren (2024) outlines a number of unresolved research concerns and recommends using the framework to capture and manufacture for human-AI co-working skills, capability development, and eliciting the moral and ethical implications of AI systems operating within a person's developmental zone. In the romantic front, the research investigates the phenomenon of a relationship between human and AI chatbot. Results found some segments of artificial intelligence are harmful for human partner. In addition, the study suggest that humans must protect their fragile emotional side from the side effect of AI chatbot and tech companies should come up with practical solutions to safeguard the sentimental values of human agency (Zimmerman et al., 2024).

Koivisto and Grassini (2023) matches the cognitive process of humans with AI chatbot, specifically focusing on creative process. Findings highlights that normal chatbot supersedes the capacity of human creativity, but in some unique cases, human creative ideas go parallel with AI, and even surpasses the mechanical creativity of chatbots. Researcha also argues that humanistic approach of producing creative notions is unmatched and complex, which is not achievable by the technology of artificial intelligence. Kang and Lou (2022) Investigates the condition when human user co-operate with AI supported social media applications, the TikTok users found acceptive to tailored interactions initiated by machine. Furthermore, both user and machine reach to a level where they start creating joint impact, in addition, according to requirement, sometimes the user influence the algorithms with prior intention.

Three concepts emerge from the study's discussion of the parallels and discrepancies between humans and artificial intelligence: first, the fundamental limitations of both human and AI; second, the intellect of human agency is a combination of various forms; and third, the potential for advanced impact of various forms of limited amalgam of AI applications. (Korteling et al., 2021).

The role of a communicator is now transferring to artificial intelligence, it was a forte of human agency, but now AI is rapidly capturing its share in it. Contrastingly, the practical journalists of Pakistani media industry perceive AI technology as a mediator or a contributor in the communication process (Jamil, 2021). The study of Xio and Duan investigates the possible advantages and hurdles encounter by human anchorpersons in co-working environment with digital AI newsman. The coexistence of human with non-human entity in the newsroom is labeled as "crises coexistence", moreover, it also explores how media industry can gain profit from this situation (Xiao & Duan, 2021). While reading news segments human broadcasters can do mistakes, sometimes they overlap and feel confusion, whereas AI news anchor can perform tasks with 100% accuracy without doing any mistake (Qi, 2021).

Digital anchors have multiple advantages over human news presenters, AI person can communicate and broadcast news in several languages, it can work 24/7 without any fatigue and without committing any error in the reading process (Yin, 2020). Numerous media disciplines, including audience experience, interaction, content optimization, and operational automation, have incorporated artificial intelligence (AI). Efficiency and finding a balance between artificial and human intelligence have proven to be significant challenges (M. & Chan-Olmsted, 2019). Wiederhold (2019), Arguably, as far as cost concerns, the robotic AI anchorpersons are very effective and offers cheap solutions. Furthermore, they can broadcast news segments for the entire day.

3. Methodology

To understand and explore the phenomenon of co-working environment between human and AI anchorperson in the media industry, the qualitative approach has been adopted for this particular research study. In order to gather practical insights of the newsroom, the data for this research has been collected via in-depth interviews from practicing journalists of Pakistani media. For the authenticity and reliability, the interviews were conducted from those journalists who are working in the same news channels which introduced AI anchorpersons. All respondents of the study are working media professionals and practicing journalism on different level of designation, such as controller news, editors and anchorpersons.

4. Findings and Analysis

One of the most contested topics is the working environment between humans and artificially intelligence anchorpersons in the newsroom, which assesses and forecasts potential futuristic human-machine collaboration. Only media professionals are qualified to answer this technical question because they are the ones who are familiar with the insights of their field and direct stakeholder of the phenomenon. Interesting and perceptive details come to light when speaking with media professionals.

The anchorperson Shehroz Anjum is working in Discover Pakistan channel; he is one of the respondents of this particular research study. Anjum expressed his point of view about a possibility of working alongside with AI anchorperson in a humorous way,

> *"I would definitely like to do work with AI person, if they laugh at my punchline."*

This apparently soft and witty comment, in fact, showcasing the higher level of intellect of human being, the cutting-edge sarcasm reveals basic deficiencies in the development of

digital AI anchorpersons. In order to unfold the pun in a discussion, both persons must have understanding of related cultural values to fully grasp the linguistic meanings of a conversation. With the evolution of thousands of years, humans have developed semiotics, which represent meanings through signs and codes in the language system, and it travels from generation to generations. On the other side, the anchorperson generated by the technology of artificial intelligence does not have any cultural or social experience, so it will raise a question on the ability of digital anchor, whether it will be able to understand genuinely the codes of human language or not.

Malik Ateeq Ahmad, a practicing journalist, working as a senior reporter and anchorperson in the Discover Pakistan channel raised some technical issues in a co-working environment with digital non-human anchorperson,

"When we are doing our programs and talking to our co-hosts, mostly females or males, we understand our cues and body language. This understanding of human co-anchors will definitely

have to make a difference here."

A cue is a signal in a communication; it can be verbal or can be conveyed through body gestures while talking. There are several cues embedded in a certain society which humans follow and apply in a specific situation to express their desired feelings to another human being. The technical and very appropriate issue has been raised in this comment, any human anchor can face this issue while broadcasting a program with AI anchorperson, and in the case of live transmission, the situation can become worse. Human can deliver cue to other fellow anchor in multiple ways; it can be a simple wink or a blink of an eye or through any code word in a telecasting of a live program. Humans shared same value system and living in a society, moreover, they have developed emotional persona and can understand even subliminal hints of each other, but when it comes to AI anchorperson, it does not contain human like conscious and can easily misunderstood cues of fellow human anchor, which ultimately can cause serious issues while broadcasting any program on screen.

In television program, during the conversation between host and guest, especially in an interview-based format, the probing is essential skillset for an anchorperson – human anchorperson always prob and cross question to expert person about particular aspect of any issue in a discussion. Whether the AI anchorperson has the capacity to prob in a talking session or not, the question has been asked to the respondents of this research study.

"No, I don't think so. AI will not probe like that. With the passage of time,

when it will be mechanically strong, as and when it is needed,

we will work on it".

Malik Ateeq Ahmad

"We put news anchors on sports, economy, politics, people are interacting with them,

anchors with guests or with other reporters. So, for that,

AI may not be feasible in that way."

Naseem Niazi

"Artificial intelligence models are not developed in such a way,

it is difficult to tell the questions on the run time."

Jalaludin Babar

The response of interviewees clearly demonstrates, and in fact an admission of the fact that AI anchorperson lacks the ability of probing during discussion – the situation can be critical during live transmission such as broadcasting any current happening or election transmission where most of the times, anchorpersons improvise and ask questions on their own.

Imran Yousaf who is a practicing journalist and working as a news caster in *Dunia* News channel appreciates the co-working environment along with AI news presenter, he is satisfied while working with digital non-human entities, and call it a win-win situation for the media industry, globally.

"AI anchors, in my personal opinion, I am satisfied

that both of us should work."

The facial expression of the anchorperson, especially while broadcasting a news bulletin is crucial – not only facial expressions, the texture of vocal tone also create a certain impact on the audience. Human anchors vary their voice and expressions according to the nature of a news segment, the question is whether AI anchorperson can change its expression and voice as per the news story,

"We have to see that it is bad news, then we have to lower

the pitch. Because we have to drive the audience.

Will AI be able to do this?"

Imran Yousaf

Since humans are emotionally motivated beings, the sensitivity of human nature has been highlighted here. As they say "it is not what you say, it is how you say it" is well-known, and in broadcasting in particular, words lose significance while expression has greater impact. A news caster must adjust their vocal expression and pitch level according to the demands of the news segment they are giving. When harsh news is provided, the situation becomes more critical. While human anchors can modify their tone, AI anchors are now unable to do so.

"As far as technology is concerned, you can't add emotions to it at this point."

Dr. Qaiser Rafiq

Anwaar Hashmi, who is working as a director content in Discover Pakistan channel, urges human media professionals to enhance their skillset and need to learn more about latest technology to cope with the anchorperson generated by artificial intelligence.

"In a co-working environment, with AI, obviously, the skill set will have to be increased.

Humans will have to learn more about technology.

They will have to improve their skills."

4.1 Discussion

The application of synthetic anchorpersons in the journalism industry of Pakistan is relatively a new practice; many news channels followed the technological trend settled by international media. There are so many triggering factors behind that decision of launching AI anchorpersons – some of advantages are cost effectiveness, low maintenance and 24/7 available media resource, which can broadcast news segments and can handle current affair program with 100% precision. Whereas, human news presenters take salaries, they have emotions and can feel tired occasionally, moreover, humans can make misstates during live transmission.

Despite obvious benefits of AI anchorpersons, human newsman still inherits few characteristics which surpass the mechanical performance of artificial generated news anchors. Most of the respondents agree that AI anchorpersons are effective and efficient, but they mention distinguish factors of human journalist, such as the skillset of probing in a heated debate during a live transmission, changing the facial and vocal tone as per the nature of the news segment. In a co-working environment, it is difficult for AI anchorperson to interpret the cues of human fellow host, which can result in a messy situation.

It has been advised to human media professionals to enhance their skillset, especially technological learning, if they want to co-work alongside with hyperactive AI anchorpersons. Human journalists do have certain edge over technology of AI, but the way artificial intelligence progressing, the day is not far when this advantage will not be useful anymore – Media professional must find strategies to create a balanced coexistence between human and non-human AI anchorpersons.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

It is evident that application of artificial intelligence will change the eco system of media industry, globally and Pakistan will be no exclusion – although it will take more time in Pakistan than the developed countries, to complete reshaping of journalistic practices in the newsroom, but the expected revolution is knocking at the door. All over the world, media practitioners facing the fear of losing jobs and anchorpersons are no exception in it, because AI will replace conventional style of journalism, instead of feeling the fear and treating AI as an enemy, human media professionals should embrace the technology of artificial intelligence in a positive way, and should enhance their skillset in a machine learning. The co-existence of human and AI anchorperson is definitely a win-win situation and media should thrive for that.

This research explores the perception of working journalists of Pakistan about co-working environment between human and AI anchor. It is suggested for further research projects to investigate the perception of tech professionals, software engineers and specially the professionals who create specific algorithms to generate the persona of artificial intelligence anchorperson, so that technological point of view will also be catered.

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