The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

16. Survey Research AI-Generated Content and Public Trust in Media

Gouri Goyal
Student, BA-JMC 6th Semester
IIMT College of management, Greater Noida

Abstract

The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed the media industry by enabling automated news writing, personalized content delivery, data-driven journalism, and real-time information dissemination. While AI-generated content offers significant benefits such as speed, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, it has also raised critical concerns regarding credibility, misinformation, deepfakes, and the erosion of public trust in media. This survey research investigates public perceptions of AI-generated content and examines its influence on trust in news and digital media platforms. The study aims to assess the level of public awareness of AI-generated media, identify factors affecting trust and credibility, and evaluate audience ability to distinguish between human-produced and AI-generated content. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to a diverse sample of media users, while secondary data were obtained from scholarly journals, government reports, and published research on artificial intelligence and journalism. The findings indicate that although respondents recognize the efficiency and innovation associated with AI-generated journalism, a majority express concerns about the authenticity, transparency, and ethical implications of AI-produced news. The survey further reveals that misinformation, manipulated visuals, and deepfake technologies significantly reduce public confidence in digital media. Respondents emphasize the importance of clear disclosure, human editorial oversight, fact-checking mechanisms, and stronger regulatory frameworks to enhance trust in AI-assisted journalism. The study concludes that AI should complement rather than replace human journalists, ensuring that technological innovation is balanced with ethical responsibility, editorial accountability, and transparency. These findings provide valuable insights for media organizations, policymakers, researchers, and technology developers seeking to promote responsible AI adoption while preserving public trust in the evolving digital media ecosystem.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, AI-Generated Content, Public Trust, Digital Media, Journalism, Deepfakes, Misinformation, Survey Research.

Introduction

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has ushered in a new era in the field of journalism and mass communication. Over the past decade, AI technologies have become increasingly integrated into media production, content creation, and news dissemination processes. From AI-written news articles and automated reporting systems to algorithmically curated news feeds and sophisticated deepfake technology, artificial intelligence is fundamentally reshaping how information is created, distributed, and consumed by audiences worldwide.

In contemporary media landscapes, news organizations are deploying AI tools to enhance operational efficiency, reduce production costs, and meet the growing demand for real-time information. News agencies such as the Associated Press (AP) and Reuters have adopted AI-generated content for financial reporting, sports summaries, and data-driven journalism. Meanwhile, social media platforms

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

increasingly rely on algorithmic recommendation systems powered by AI to curate personalized news experiences for billions of users.

However, alongside these technological advancements, significant concerns have emerged regarding the integrity, authenticity, and trustworthiness of AI-generated media content. The proliferation of deepfake videos, AI-fabricated images, and automated disinformation campaigns has raised serious questions about the capacity of audiences to distinguish between authentic and artificially generated content. These challenges are further complicated by the speed at which AI-generated misinformation can spread across digital networks before being identified and corrected.

Objectives

search study was undertaken with the following primary and secondary objectives:

1. To examine the primary news consumption habits and preferred media platforms among respondents.
2. To assess the level of awareness and familiarity of respondents with AI-generated content in media, including deepfakes, AI-written articles, and AI voiceovers.

Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research design, utilizing a structured questionnaire survey as the primary data collection instrument. Descriptive research is appropriate for this study as it seeks to describe and analyze the characteristics, perceptions, and attitudes of respondents regarding AI-generated content and media trust without manipulating any variables.

Data Collection Instrument

The primary data for this study was collected through a structured questionnaire created and distributed using Google Forms, a widely accessible and user-friendly online survey platform. The questionnaire was designed to elicit both quantitative responses (through Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, and rating scales) and qualitative insights (through an open-ended comments section).

The questionnaire comprised ten sections, each addressing a distinct research variable related to media consumption habits, AI awareness, trust levels, and ethical concerns. Questions were formulated to be clear, unbiased, and accessible to respondents from varied educational backgrounds.

Sampling

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Parameter	Details
Research Approach	Survey-Based Empirical Study
Data Collection Tool	Google Forms Questionnaire
Sample Size	10 Respondents
Sampling Method	Convenience/Purposive Sampling
Target Population	Digitally Active Adults
Survey Period	2024–2025
Data Type	Primary Data (Quantitative + Qualitative)

Data Analysis

The collected survey data was analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Responses were tabulated and converted into percentages for each survey question. The analysis includes frequency distribution tables and interpretive commentary for each question. Qualitative responses from the open-ended comments section were thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns and sentiments.

Survey Analysis and Interpretation

The following section presents a detailed analysis and interpretation of the ten survey questions included in the research instrument. Each question is accompanied by a data table showing the frequency distribution and percentage of responses, followed by an interpretation of the findings in the context of the broader research objectives.

1: Primary Source for Daily News

Respondents were asked to identify their primary source(s) for daily news consumption. As this was a multiple-response question, the total percentage exceeds 100%.

News Source	Percentage of Respondents
Social Media Platforms	50%
Broadcast Television News	40%
Traditional Print Media	30%

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Podcasts / Streaming News	30%
News Aggregators	10%
Online News Websites	0%
Word-of-Mouth Networks	0%

Interpretation: *Social media platforms emerge as the dominant news source, cited by 50% of respondents, surpassing traditional broadcast television (40%) and print media (30%). This reflects a broader global trend of digital media migration, whereby younger and tech-savvy audiences increasingly rely on platforms such as Instagram, Twitter/X, YouTube, and WhatsApp for news updates. The complete absence of online news websites as a standalone source is notable and suggests that algorithm-driven social media feeds have replaced direct news website visits. The growing popularity of podcasts and streaming news (30%) indicates the rise of on-demand audio-visual journalism. These findings underscore the transformative impact of digital technology on news consumption patterns and highlight the challenges traditional news organizations face in retaining audience attention.*

2: Familiarity with AI-Generated Content

Respondents rated their familiarity with AI-generated content (including deepfakes, AI-written articles, and AI voiceovers) on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents minimal familiarity and 5 represents very high familiarity.

Familiarity Rating	Description	Percentage
5 (Highest)	Very familiar with AI content	40%
4	Quite familiar	30%
3	Moderately familiar	10%
2	Slightly familiar	0%
1 (Lowest)	Not familiar at all	20%

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Interpretation: *A substantial majority (70%) of respondents rated their familiarity with AI-generated content at 4 or 5 on the scale, indicating a high level of awareness regarding AI technologies in media. This finding suggests that awareness of AI content forms such as deepfakes, automated articles, and synthetic voiceovers is becoming widespread among the general public. However, 20% of respondents rated their familiarity at the lowest level (1), indicating that a segment of the population remains unaware of AI-generated content and its implications. This knowledge gap presents a significant challenge for media literacy efforts and underscores the need for public education about AI technologies in journalism.*

3: Trust in Traditional News Organizations

Respondents were asked to rate their trust in traditional news organizations on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 represents very low trust and 7 represents very high trust. The average rating across all respondents was 4 out of 7.

Trust Rating	Description	Percentage
1 (Very Low)	Very low trust in traditional media	20%
2	Low trust	0%
3	Below average trust	10%
4 (Average)	Moderate/neutral trust	40%
5	Above average trust	10%
6	High trust	0%

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Trust Rating	Description	Percentage
7 (Very High)	Very high trust in traditional media	20%

Interpretation: *The average trust rating of 4 out of 7 indicates a moderate, essentially neutral level of public trust in traditional news organizations. The distribution reveals a bimodal pattern, with significant proportions of respondents expressing either very low trust (20% at rating 1) or very high trust (20% at rating 7), and the largest group (40%) settling at the neutral midpoint (rating 4). This polarization in trust levels reflects broader societal divisions regarding media credibility. The findings suggest that traditional media organizations face a trust deficit among a significant portion of the audience, even as they retain the confidence of another segment. This underscores the importance of transparency, accountability, and ethical journalism practices in rebuilding and maintaining audience trust.*

Question 4: Concerns Regarding AI in Media

Respondents were asked to identify their primary concerns regarding the use of AI in media production and journalism. The following major concerns were expressed:

Concern	Nature of Concern
Spread of misinformation and propaganda through AI	High Priority Concern
Deepfake images and videos	High Priority Concern
Difficulty distinguishing AI-generated from human-created content	High Priority Concern
AI-written news published without human editorial review	Significant Concern

Interpretation: *Respondents demonstrate a high level of concern about the misuse of AI in media, with particular emphasis on misinformation, deepfakes, and the blurring of boundaries between authentic and fabricated content. The concern about AI-written news being published without human editorial oversight reveals public expectations for human accountability in journalism. These findings align with global debates about the ethical deployment of AI in news production and reflect the public's understanding that unchecked AI use in media could have serious societal consequences, including the erosion of democratic discourse, electoral manipulation, and public health misinformation.*

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

5: Should AI-Generated Content Be Clearly Labelled?

Respondents were asked whether they believe AI-generated media content should be clearly labelled for the audience.

Response Option	Percentage
Yes, absolutely — all AI-generated content should be labelled	80%
Yes, but only for certain types of AI-generated content	20%
No, labelling is not necessary	0%
Unsure / No opinion	0%

Interpretation: *An overwhelming 100% of respondents agreed that AI-generated content should be labelled, with 80% supporting mandatory labelling for all AI-generated media content and 20% advocating for selective labelling of specific content types. The unanimous agreement on labelling reflects a strong public demand for transparency and accountability in AI-mediated journalism. This finding has significant policy implications, as it suggests that regulatory frameworks mandating AI content labelling would align with public expectations and contribute to maintaining audience trust in media organizations. The complete absence of opposition to labelling is particularly noteworthy and underscores the public's desire for clarity about the nature of the content they consume.*

6: Impact on Trust if News is AI-Generated

Respondents were asked how their trust in a news organization would be affected if they discovered that a news article or broadcast was generated by AI.

Impact on Trust	Percentage
Trust would increase significantly	30%
Trust would slightly increase	10%
No change in trust level	30%
Trust would slightly decrease	30%

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Trust would significantly decrease	0%

7: Additional Comments from Respondents

Respondents were invited to provide any additional comments or observations regarding AI-generated content and its impact on public trust in media. The following themes emerged from the qualitative responses:

Theme	Representative Comment
Dual Impact on Trust	AI affects trust in media both positively and negatively, depending on how it is used.
Deepfake Threat	Deepfake news has a significant impact on public trust and should be regulated.
Accuracy vs. Misinformation	AI can improve news accuracy and efficiency but also carries the risk of spreading fake content.
Rapid Transformation	AI is changing media consumption rapidly and society needs to adapt through education.

Interpretation: *The qualitative comments from respondents reflect a nuanced and multifaceted understanding of AI's role in contemporary media. Respondents acknowledge that AI presents genuine opportunities for improving journalism while simultaneously creating new risks for misinformation and public deception. The recurring mention of deepfakes as a specific concern highlights the salience of synthetic media in public consciousness. Comments about the need for societal adaptation and education demonstrate that respondents recognize the importance of digital literacy and regulatory frameworks in managing the challenges posed by AI in journalism. These qualitative insights complement the quantitative findings and reinforce the complexity of the relationship between AI-generated content and public trust in media.*

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Findings

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the survey data, the following key findings have been established:

5.1 News Consumption Patterns

- Social media platforms are the dominant source of daily news for the majority of respondents (50%), surpassing traditional media channels including broadcast television (40%) and print media (30%).
- Online news websites received no direct citation as a primary news source, suggesting that social media algorithms have replaced direct website visits as the primary mode of digital news consumption.
- Podcasts and streaming news services are emerging as significant news platforms, reflecting the growing audience preference for on-demand, multimedia journalism.

5.2 AI Awareness and Familiarity

- The level of awareness regarding AI-generated content is high among the surveyed population, with 70% rating their familiarity at 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale.
- A notable knowledge gap exists, as 20% of respondents reported minimal familiarity with AI-generated content, indicating the continued need for public education and media literacy programs.

5.3 Public Trust in Traditional Media

- Public trust in traditional news organizations is moderate, with an average rating of 4 out of 7, reflecting a neutral to slightly positive level of trust.
- Trust levels are polarized, with significant proportions at both the low and high ends of the trust spectrum, indicating a divided audience landscape.

5.4 Deepfake Detection Challenges

- A majority of respondents (40%) rate deepfake identification as moderately difficult (5 out of 10), with responses distributed across the full difficulty spectrum.
- The challenge of deepfake detection underscores the need for accessible detection tools and public awareness campaigns.

The Asian Thinker
A Quarterly Bilingual Peer-Reviewed Journal for Social Sciences and Humanities
Year-8 Volume: II, April-June, 2026 Issue-30 ISSN: 2582-1296 (Online)
Website: www.theasianthinker.com **Email**: asianthinkerjournal@gmail.com

Conclusion

The research findings presented in this study offer a comprehensive and illuminating snapshot of contemporary public perceptions regarding AI-generated content and its implications for trust in media institutions. The survey data, drawn from ten respondents through a structured Google Forms questionnaire, reveals that AI technology is fundamentally transforming the landscape of journalism and media consumption in ways that are simultaneously promising and concerning.

The dominance of social media platforms as primary news sources signals a profound shift in media consumption habits, with algorithmic curation increasingly mediating the relationship between audiences and news content. This shift has direct implications for the quality and accuracy of information that audiences receive, as social media platforms are particularly susceptible to the rapid spread of AI-generated misinformation and synthetic media.

While the majority of respondents demonstrate high awareness of AI-generated content, a significant minority remains uninformed about these technologies, highlighting persistent gaps in digital media literacy. The moderate and polarized levels of trust in traditional news organizations suggest that media credibility is a contested terrain, shaped by diverse ideological, political, and generational factors.

The unanimous support for mandatory labelling of AI-generated content represents one of the most clear and actionable findings of this study. It indicates that audiences are actively demanding greater transparency from media organizations and that regulatory measures mandating AI content disclosure would align with public expectations.

Despite concerns about misinformation and deepfakes, the majority of respondents express optimism about AI's potential to improve journalism. This cautious optimism reflects a pragmatic understanding that AI, when deployed responsibly and ethically, can enhance the speed, accuracy, accessibility, and reach of quality journalism.

In conclusion, the relationship between AI-generated content and public trust in media is complex, multifaceted, and evolving. Maintaining public trust in an AI-mediated information environment

requires a commitment to responsible AI use, robust editorial oversight, transparent content labelling, rigorous fact-checking, and ongoing public education about digital media literacy. Media organizations, technology companies, policymakers, and journalism educators must collaborate to develop and implement ethical frameworks that ensure AI serves the public interest rather than undermining it.

Reference

- Deuze, M. (2019). Journalism and the media. Sage Publications.
- Pavlik, J. V. (2023). Journalism in the age of artificial intelligence. Columbia University Press.
- Schudson, M. (2018). Why journalism still matters. Polity Press.
- Russell, N., & Norvig, P. (2021). Artificial intelligence: A modern approach (4th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Carlson, M. (2015). The robotic reporter: Automated journalism and the redefinition of labour, compositional forms, and journalistic authority. Digital Journalism, 3(3), 416–431.
- Diakopoulos, N. (2019). Automating the news: How algorithms are rewriting the media. Harvard University Press.
- Hameleers, M., & van der Meer, T. G. L. A. (2020). Misinformation and polarization in a high-choice media environment: How effective are political fact-checkers? Communication Research, 47(2), 227–246.
- Latar, N. L. (2018). Robot journalism: Can human journalism survive? World Scientific Publishing.
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Robertson, C. T., Eddy, K., & Nielsen, R. K. (2023). Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.