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THE ARTIST AND THE ALGORITHM: CULTURAL MEDIATION, CREATIVE AUTHORITY, AND HUMAN–AI COLLABORATION IN ADVERTISING

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence is increasingly embedded in creative industries, not only as a technical tool but as a cultural presence that reshapes how creativity, authorship, and responsibility are understood. While existing research often frames AI adoption in terms of efficiency or ethical risk, less attention has been paid to how AI mediates everyday creative practice and redistributes cultural authority within organizations. This study addresses this gap through a phenomenological investigation of advertising professionals in Jakarta, Indonesia. Based on in-depth interviews with designers, creative directors, and planners, the findings show that AI functions as a mediating actor that reorganizes creative workflows, affects affective expression, and redefines professional judgment. A key contribution is the identification of bidirectional learning, through which technical AI fluency and experiential creative knowledge circulate across hierarchical boundaries. Human oversight emerges as ethical boundary work that sustains meaning and accountability in algorithmically assisted creativity. By situating these dynamics within organizational practice, the study contributes to scholarship on scientific culture by demonstrating how creativity is culturally governed within human–AI systems and highlighting the institutional conditions under which algorithmic collaboration remains meaningful, ethical, and socially grounded.

KEYWORDS: Artificial Intelligence, Human–AI Collaboration, Creative Practice, Cultural Mediation.

1. INTRODUCTION

The advertising industry, a sector fundamentally built on human creativity, intuition, and persuasion, is undergoing a profound transformation driven by artificial intelligence (AI) (Förster, 2024). AI technologies are no longer peripheral tools but are deeply embedded in core creative workflows, from automating routine design tasks to generating novel content and personalising campaigns at an unprecedented scale and speed (Budhwar et al., 2023; Lai, 2021). This integration promises significant gains in operational efficiency and productivity, streamlining processes that once consumed considerable time and resources (Juska, 2021).

However, this rapid technological ascent presents a formidable and widely recognised paradox. While AI demonstrably augments capabilities, it simultaneously triggers deep-seated anxieties within the creative workforce. A palpable concern exists that AI's inherently data-driven, analytical nature could systematically marginalise the very human elements (such as intuition, emotional resonance, and ethical nuance) that have traditionally formed the core of compelling and effective advertising (Cao, 2023; Stiegler, 2019). The rapid proliferation of AI-driven tools, such as generative image models and copywriting assistants, threatens not only to displace specific roles but also to devalue the experienced, skilled labour responsible for creating uniquely human-centric designs (Wach et al., 2023). Consequently, the industry stands at a critical juncture, grappling with a central, unresolved challenge: how to harness AI's formidable operational power without extinguishing the creative spirit that defines its very success.

Research to date has effectively mapped the two poles of this tension but has struggled to connect them. A substantial body of literature meticulously details AI's technical capabilities and its disruptive potential for established creative practices and business models (Appel et al., 2020; Dwivedi et al., 2021). Concurrently, a robust and growing stream of research examines the ethical implications and societal risks, including job displacement, algorithmic bias, intellectual property concerns, and the potential erosion of creative originality (Franke et al., 2023; Wach et al., 2023). Yet, a critical conceptual and practical gap persists. The academic and professional discourse often remains polarised between technological optimism and human-centric caution, leaving the strategic, organizational mechanisms for proactively navigating this transition (the practical 'how to') largely underexplored and theoretically underdeveloped.

We argue that Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) constitutes this missing link. SHRM, defined by its alignment of human resource practices with long-term strategic business goals, provides the essential framework for navigating periods of intense digital disruption. It is the organisational function tasked with adapting workforce capabilities, reshaping corporate culture, and fostering the innovation necessary to maintain a competitive advantage (Kane et al., 2019). While its general importance in organisational change management is well-established (Bratton & Gold, 2017), and the broader literature confirms that high-performance work systems can significantly enhance employee creativity and innovation (Jiang et al., 2012), its specific, applied function in mediating the complex relationship between AI and creative professionals remains poorly understood. We lack a clear, evidence-based model how specific SHRM practices, from talent development and recruitment to performance management and ethical leadership, can be deliberately configured to empower designers, mitigate AI's inherent risks, and foster a truly synergistic collaboration. Pu and Wang (2023) argue that cultural artefacts are inseparable from the environments that sustain them, as environmental conditions actively mediate preservation, transformation, and loss, positioning environment as a formative force in cultural meaning rather than a passive backdrop. Drawing on this logic, the present study conceptualizes artificial intelligence as an environmental condition of contemporary creativity, within which creative work is shaped not only by human intention but also by infrastructural, institutional, and computational contexts that organize judgment, authority, and ethical accountability (Pu & Wang, 2023).

This study addressed this critical void by pursuing two central research question. First, how can SHRM function as a strategic enabler for visual designers, simultaneously enhancing their creative talents and mitigating the professional risks posed by AI technologies? Second, what are the effective strategies for leveraging AI in advertising creativity to blend human ingenuity with robust ethical accountability, and what organisational factors optimise collaboration between experienced and junior designers in this new medium?

To investigate these questions empirically, we conducted a qualitative, phenomenological study in Jakarta, Indonesia, a dynamic and rapidly evolving advertising market that provides a rich context for examining digital transformation. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with visual designers,

creative directors, and account planners, we capture the nuanced, lived experience of this technological shift from the front lines.

The primary contribution of this paper is the development of a SHRM-mediated partnership model for human-AI collaboration in creative work. This model is empirically grounded in our identification of a key emergent dynamic: 'bidirectional learning,' a paradigm where the technical AI fluency of junior staff and the strategic, client-focused wisdom of senior designers converge to create a powerful new collaborative structure. We provide a strategic roadmap for advertising agencies seeking to build an agile, ethical, and creatively potent hybrid workforce for the future by translating these findings into actionable SHRM imperatives. This dynamic of bidirectional learning provides an empirical lens through which the study examines how epistemic authority, creative judgment, and ethical responsibility are reorganised within algorithmically mediated cultural systems.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The incursion of AI into the advertising industry represents a paradigm shift, fundamentally recalibrating the value proposition of human creativity. Scholarly consensus confirms AI's role as a powerful engine for efficiency, automating repetitive tasks, accelerating content production, and enabling hyper-personalised marketing at a scale unattainable through human effort alone (Juska, 2021; Lai, 2021). Machine learning algorithms analyse vast consumer datasets to identify trends, optimise ad placement in real-time, and generate countless creative variants for A/B testing, directly linking computational power to return on investment (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

However, this technological revolution carries a significant counterweight, creating a core tension for the creative professions. A growing body of literature highlights the disruptive and potentially detrimental effects of AI on creative roles. Scholars note that the very capabilities that make AI powerful, its reliance on data patterns and automation, render it prone to generating work that lacks the 'human touch,' emotional depth, and intuitive understanding that underpin truly innovative advertising (Wingström et al., 2024). The proliferation of AI-driven tools threatens not only to displace jobs but, more insidiously, to devalue the experienced, skilled labour responsible for creating nuanced and emotionally resonant designs (Cao, 2023; Stiegler, 2019). This has sparked complex ethical concerns, extending beyond job displacement to encompass algorithmic bias, intellectual property ambiguity, and the potential homogenisation of creative output (Franke et al., 2023; Wach et al., 2023). The central challenge, therefore, lies not in choosing between AI and human creativity, but in balancing AI's formidable efficiency with the preservation of irreplaceable human creative capital.

In the face of such industry-wide disruption, the role of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) becomes critically important. SHRM is theoretically grounded in the principle of aligning human resource practices with long-term business objectives to build a capable, motivated, and agile workforce that delivers sustainable competitive advantage (Bratton & Gold, 2017; Mello, 2013). Its efficacy in navigating organisational change is well-documented. SHRM provides the essential framework for managing talent, reshaping corporate culture, and developing the dynamic capabilities needed to thrive in volatile environments (Kane et al., 2019).

When faced with digital disruption, organisations with robust SHRM systems are better equipped to adapt. They can systematically identify emergent skill gaps, implement targeted training and development programmes, and foster a culture of agility and continuous learning essential for technological adoption (Marcus, 2016). Crucially, SHRM is instrumental in fostering the innovation required to stay competitive. Grounded in theories of human capital and the resource-based view, research demonstrates that high-performance work systems, a key component of SHRM, significantly enhance employee creativity and organisational performance by providing the necessary support, resources, and motivational structures (Jiang et al., 2012). This establishes a clear theoretical link between strategic people management and innovative output, a link that must be tested in the novel context of AI integration.

While the literature on AI's impact and the value of SHRM is extensive, their intersection—specifically concerning the management of creative professionals—remains a nascent and critically underexplored area. Previous research has largely treated these as parallel discourses, failing to build the necessary theoretical bridges

On one side, the AI literature often exhibits a technological determinism, focusing on implementation and direct effects while frequently overlooking the organisational and human systems required to support it effectively (Dwivedi et al., 2021). On the other side, while SHRM research acknowledges the need for digital adaptation, its

application in highly creative, AI-augmented environments is not well understood. For instance, while Kostelnick (2019) examined AI integration in management for visual projects, the focus was not on the strategic HR frameworks necessary to sustain the creative human element. Similarly, calls for new forms of digital leadership (Marcus, 2016) and the alignment of HRM with technology strategy (Chowdhury et al., 2024), while valuable, remain high-level and lack empirical grounding in the unique, subjective context of advertising design.

This leaves a significant theoretical and practical void. As Budhwar et al. (2023) recently highlighted, there is an urgent need for research on HRM in the age of generative AI. The specific mechanisms through which SHRM practices (such as tailored recruitment, continuous upskilling, performance management, and ethical governance) can be deployed to empower visual designers, mitigate the risks of AI, and foster a synergistic human-AI partnership are not yet defined (Mello, 2013). This study directly addresses this void. It moves beyond diagnosing the problem or stating the need for SHRM, to empirically investigating how SHRM can function as the essential strategic mediator, enabling advertising organisations to harness AI's power while actively safeguarding and nurturing human creativity, ethical practice, and collaborative innovation.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design grounded in a phenomenological approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and an interpretivist paradigm. This philosophical perspective is concerned with the essence of lived experience (Antich, 2023) and views understanding as arising from coexisting in reality and interpreting events (Merleau-Ponty & Smith, 2006).

It is therefore suited to capturing the subjective, lived experiences of advertising professionals as they navigate the profound integration of AI into their creative identities and workflows. The methodology provides a platform for open-ended, in-depth inquiry into the complex, human-centric nature of this phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), prioritising depth and contextual understanding over generalisable statistics.

The study was conducted in Jakarta, Indonesia, a prominent centre for advertising innovation characterised by cultural diversity and a rapidly evolving market, making it an ideal context for this inquiry. A purposive snowball sampling strategy was used to recruit 15 information-rich participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The primary criterion was a minimum of five years of professional experience in roles such as visual designer, art director, creative director, or account planner.

Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved. The final cohort was strategically composed to capture a spectrum of perspectives: four Creative Directors (12-20 years), two Account Planners (8-10 years), one Head of Agency (15+ years), three Senior Designers (10-15 years), two Junior Designers (5-7 years), one Copywriter (7 years), and two Art Directors (9-12 years). This ensured insights from strategic leadership to hands-on creative execution.

Primary data was collected over three months (December 2023 - February 2024) through semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. An interview protocol with open-ended questions guided the exploration of key areas: direct experiences with AI tools, impacts on creativity and workflow, evolving professional identity, and views on organisational support and ethical challenges. The study remained open to supplementary methods, such as participant observation, to capture real-time interactions with AI, though the primary empirical base consists of interview narratives.

Interviews were conducted in Jakarta, in-person or via secure video conferencing, lasted an average of 50 minutes, and were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim with prior informed consent. Comprehensive field notes were taken to capture non-verbal cues, contextual observations, enriching the data corpus (Flick, 2018).

The data analysis followed a systematic thematic analysis procedure (Clarke & Braun, 2017). This process was iterative. First, familiarisation and initial coding, in which the research team immersed themselves in the data, generating initial codes from significant statements, phrases, and concepts relevant to the research questions.

Second, theme development, where codes were collated and sorted into potential themes, identifying broader patterns (e.g., clustering ‘faster iteration’ and ‘automating tasks’ into ‘AI as a Catalyst for Productivity’).

This involved examining relationships between codes in a process akin to axial coding. Third, reviewing and refining themes, where themes were reviewed against the entire dataset and refined for coherence and distinctiveness, ensuring they accurately represented the participants’ lived experiences.

To ensure rigour and trustworthiness, we employed peer debriefing sessions to critique the

thematic structure and practiced reflexivity through a research journal to scrutinise potential influences on the interpretation. This approach aligns with the consistency and transparency required in phenomenological researcher.

For ethical considerations, the study received full approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB No. 020-23/CHEC-LSPR/YS/YS/CC) and was conducted in strict adherence to ethical standards for primary data collection (Iltis & MacKay, 2024). All participants were provided with a detailed information sheet and signed a written informed consent form.

This process guaranteed they understood the research objectives, procedures, data protection measures, their right to withdraw at any time without consequence, and the protocols for maintaining confidentiality (Israel, 2015). All participant data were anonymised through pseudonyms, and any potentially identifying details were removed from transcripts and publications.

Our positions as university instructors and researchers with backgrounds in advertising, business, and communications inherently shaped this study. We acknowledge that our professional perspectives and prior knowledge of advertising principles positioned us to interpret the technical and ethical narratives of design with a certain sensitivity. This inside r understanding facilitated rapport with participants but also necessitated a disciplined reflexive practice.

Throughout the research process, we actively documented and questioned our assumptions in a research journal to mitigate bias and ensure that the participants' voices, rather than our own preconceptions, remained central to the analysis and findings (Etherington, 2005).

Reflexivity was treated as an ongoing analytic practice throughout the coding process. The research team maintained a reflexive journal to document interpretive uncertainties, professional assumptions, and moments where familiarity with advertising practice risked influencing analysis. These reflections were revisited during subsequent rounds of coding to ensure that emerging themes remained grounded in participants' accounts.

Reflexive attention was particularly applied when participants used language common in industry discourse. For example, when AI was described as an "ideation partner," the researchers critically examined whether this framing reflected participants' lived experience or their own conceptual vocabulary. Such moments were discussed in peer debriefing sessions, leading to refinement of codes and themes where necessary. This process helped preserve analytic distance while acknowledging researcher positionality, consistent with phenomenological standards of rigor.

4. FINDINGS

The phenomenological analysis of interviews with 15 advertising professionals in Jakarta revealed six central themes that capture the core of their lived experiences with AI integration.

These themes illustrate the complex duality of AI as both an empowering tool and a disruptive force, collectively underscoring an urgent need for strategic organisational management. The themes and their essence are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Thematic Findings on AI Integration in Advertising.

Theme	Core Finding	Representative Voice
Catalyst for Productivity & Exploration	AI automates repetitive tasks, freeing designers to focus on higher-order creative and strategic thinking.	"It allows us to experiment with concepts faster... enabling us to spend more time thinking creatively." (Justin, Creative Director)
Erosion of the 'Human Touch'	AI's lack of human intuition and emotional nuance risks generic, formulaic creative output.	"AI… frequently lacks the 'human touch'... I am concerned it may make design seem mechanical." (Erwing, Account Planner)
Imperative for Human Oversight	Human judgement remains critical for providing context, ensuring brand safety, and making ethical decisions.	"There always needs to be a designer who understands the context... Otherwise, we risk losing the ethical nuances." (Norton, Junior Designer)
Driver of Bidirectional Learning	AI fosters a new collaborative dynamic where junior and senior staff exchange technical and strategic knowledge.	"I bring years of client experience, which allows us to learn from each other. AI has transformed how we collaborate." (Brown, Creative Director)
Necessity of Continuous Skill Evolution	AI integration demands perpetual upskilling, expanding the designer's skill set to include 'AI literacy.'	"Young designers have numerous opportunities... while veteran designers offer broader experience…" (Tommy, Senior Designer)

SHRM as the Orchestrator	Successful integration is an organisational challenge, requiring SHRM to formalise structures for collaboration.	Synthesised from participants narratives lack of structured support.

4.1. Theme 1: Algorithmic Mediation and the Reconfiguration of Creative Practice

Rather than functioning merely as a productivity tool, AI emerges in participants' accounts as a mediating presence that reorganises how creative work is imagined, performed, and evaluated.

A dominant finding was AI's significant role in enhancing efficiency and serving as a creative partner. Participants consistently reported that AI tools automate repetitive and time-consuming tasks (such as resizing visuals, generating initial mock-ups, and producing A/B testing variants) which liberated their time and cognitive resources for higher-order strategic and creative thinking.

One Creative Director, Justin, encapsulated this sentiment:

"The advancement of AI in the design flow will empower designers to create superior work, leading to rapid evolution and growth in the visual design industry. It allows us to experiment with concepts faster and fix mistakes quickly, enabling us to spend more time thinking creatively rather than on manual adjustments."

This view was widely echoed, with designers describing AI as an "ideation partner" that allowed them to explore a broader range of concepts and visual styles at a pace that would be prohibitively time-consuming using traditional methods alone.

Wetchayont et al. (2024) demonstrate that digital technologies function as epistemic mediators rather than substitutes for cultural knowledge. In their study of the ancient Dvaravati city, geo-information technologies enable the reconstruction of spatial and historical relationships that would otherwise remain obscured, while interpretive authority remains grounded in human expertise. Drawing on this insight, the present study approaches artificial intelligence as a mediating technology in contemporary creative practice—one that expands the scope of exploration and pattern recognition, yet continues to rely on human judgment to produce meaning, maintain authorship, and ensure ethical accountability within algorithmically assisted creativity.

4.2. Theme 2: Creativity, Affect, and the Limits of Algorithmic Expression.

Participants' concerns about the loss of the "human touch" point less to nostalgia than to the cultural limits of algorithmic expression in conveying affect, context, and lived meaning.

Despite the efficiency gains, a strong undercurrent of concern emerged regarding AI's inherent limitations. Participants expressed apprehension that an over-reliance on AI could lead to generic, formulaic advertising, as the technology lacks the nuanced intuition, emotional resonance, and contextual understanding that define human creativity.

An Account Planner, Erwing, highlighted this perceived risk:

"AI can produce visually stunning work, but it frequently lacks the 'human touch,' the nuanced adjustments and intuition that stem from experience. I am concerned that excessive reliance on AI may make design seem mechanical or overly generic."

This theme underscores a perceived threat to the unique value proposition of human designers, pointing to a potential loss of originality and emotional depth in AI-driven work.

4.3. Theme 3: Human Judgment, Ethical Boundary Work, and Creative Accountability

In participants' narratives, human oversight functions as a form of ethical boundary work, distinguishing what can be delegated to algorithms from what must remain under human responsibility

Closely linked to the previous theme, participants universally emphasised that AI is a tool, not an autonomous creative agent. They stressed the non-negotiable need for human oversight to provide crucial context, ensure brand safety, and make ethical judgements that AI is currently incapable of.

A junior designer, Norton, articulated this clearly, despite his technical proficiency:

"AI is great and all, but there always needs to be a designer who understands the context behind the design and the message it aims to convey. Otherwise, we risk losing the ethical nuances or creating designs that fail to resonate emotionally."

This finding positions the human designer not as being replaced, but as evolving into a critical editor, curator, and ethical governor of AI-generated content.

4.4. Theme 4: Redistributing Expertise: Bidirectional Learning and Epistemic Reversal.

The emergence of bidirectional learning signals a redistribution of expertise, where technical fluency and experiential judgment circulate across generational and hierarchical boundaries. A novel

and significant finding was AI's role in fostering a new dynamic of collaboration, challenging traditional top-down mentoring. The study revealed a shift towards a bidirectional learning model, where junior staff often act as mentors for AI technical skills, while senior designers provide strategic direction, industry wisdom, and client-relationship management.

A seasoned Creative Director, Brown, reflected on this dynamic:

"I bring years of client experience, which allows us to learn from each other. AI has transformed how we collaborate... AI software is also designed to provide tools that foster imagination and drive innovation."

This reciprocal exchange creates a powerful, complementary partnership that leverages the strengths of different generations within the workforce.

4.5. Theme 5: Becoming Creative in Algorithmic Systems: Identity, Adaptation, and Learning

Continuous upskilling is experienced not simply as technical adaptation, but as an ongoing negotiation of professional identity within algorithmically mediated creative systems. Participants unanimously acknowledged that AI integration necessitates an ongoing commitment to learning. The core skill set of a visual designer is expanding beyond traditional software proficiency to include "AI literacy" (the ability to craft effective prompts), critically evaluate AI outputs, and integrate them into a coherent creative vision

A senior designer, Tommy, noted the imperative for all to adapt:

"Young designers have numerous opportunities presented by new AI technology, while veteran designers offer broader experience and perspective. When carefully managed, this combination can work wonders in achieving excellence in the task at hand."

This theme highlights that continuous technical and strategic adaptation is now a fundamental requirement for professional relevance.

4.6. Theme 6: Organisational Mediation and the Cultural Governance of Human–AI Creativity

Participants' accounts suggest that organizational structures—particularly SHRM practices—function as forms of cultural governance that stabilize, regulate, and legitimize human–AI collaboration. Synthesizing the previous themes, the data strongly indicates that successful AI integration is not just a technological challenge but a significant organizational one. Participants described a landscape often marked by ad-hoc adoption and a lack of structured support, implicitly calling for a strategic framework to guide this transition.

The findings suggest that Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) is perceived as the critical function to institutionalise the necessary support systems. This includes formalising the bidirectional learning model through targeted training, revising performance metrics to value human-AI collaboration over pure output, and fostering leadership that champions an agile and ethical culture. This strategic approach is seen as essential for moving from mere AI implementation to true human-AI integration.

5. DISCUSSION: CREATIVITY, CULTURE, AND ORGANISATIONAL MEDIATION IN ALGORITHMIC SYSTEMS

5.1. Algorithmic Mediation and the Reconfiguration of Creative Practice

The findings confirm that AI has become embedded in everyday creative practice, but not merely as a productivity enhancer. Participants describe AI as a culturally mediating presence that reshapes how ideas emerge, how alternatives are evaluated, and how creative time is experienced. While the acceleration of iteration and automation of repetitive tasks align with prior accounts of AI-driven efficiency (Lai, 2021; Dwivedi et al., 2021), the cultural significance lies in how these capabilities reorganise creative attention. Designers are no longer absorbed primarily in execution; instead, they increasingly operate at the level of selection, framing, and interpretation.

This shift alters the texture of creative work. AI-generated variations expand the space of possibility, yet they also introduce a new form of dependency on algorithmic suggestion. Creative exploration becomes partially pre-structured by the datasets, logics, and affordances embedded in AI systems. From a scientific culture perspective, this reflects not a loss of creativity, but a transformation of it—where creativity is enacted through interaction with computational systems that quietly shape what is visible, plausible, and worth pursuing.

5.2. Creativity, Affect, and the Limits of Algorithmic Expression

Despite recognising AI's technical strengths, participants repeatedly articulate concern over what they describe as the erosion of the "human touch." Importantly, this concern is not framed as resistance to technology, but as a recognition of the limits of

algorithmic expression. AI outputs may appear polished and coherent, yet participants note their difficulty in conveying affect, emotional nuance, and culturally situated meaning—qualities central to persuasive advertising (Wingström et al., 2024).

These accounts resonate with critiques that position AI as fundamentally derivative, operating through recombination rather than lived experience (Stiegler, 2019). From this perspective, the perceived "flatness" of AI-generated content is not a technical flaw to be corrected, but a cultural boundary. Participants' unease reflects an awareness that creativity in advertising is not only about form, but about resonance—an alignment with social moods, ethical sensitivities, and unspoken cultural cues that resist full codification.

5.3. Human Judgment, Ethical Boundary Work, and Creative Accountability

Across roles and levels of seniority, participants emphasise the necessity of human oversight in AI-assisted creative processes. This oversight extends beyond quality control into the domain of ethical accountability. Designers describe themselves as responsible for interpreting context, safeguarding brand integrity, and preventing misalignment between algorithmic output and social meaning.

From an STS perspective, these practices can be understood as ethical boundary work. Participants actively draw lines between what may be delegated to AI and what must remain under human judgment. This boundary is not fixed; it is negotiated in response to client expectations, cultural norms, and perceived risks such as bias, misrepresentation, or emotional insensitivity (Franke et al., 2023; Wach et al., 2023). In this sense, human oversight is less about correcting machines and more about maintaining moral authorship within hybrid creative systems. These ethical negotiations do not occur in isolation, but reshape how expertise and authority are distributed within creative teams.

5.4. Redistributing Expertise: Bidirectional Learning and Epistemic Reversal

One of the most significant findings concerns the emergence of bidirectional learning between junior and senior practitioners. Rather than reinforcing traditional hierarchies of expertise, AI introduces a reversal in which technical fluency often flows upward, while experiential judgment and strategic insight flow downward. Junior designers contribute knowledge of tools, prompts, and workflows, while senior practitioners provide interpretive frameworks shaped by years of client interaction and cultural experience.

This redistribution of expertise represents an epistemic shift. Authority in creative decision-making no longer rests solely on tenure or position, but is distributed across complementary forms of knowledge. Participants describe this process not as destabilising, but as generative, enabling new forms of collaboration grounded in mutual dependence. In cultural terms, AI acts as a catalyst that exposes the partiality of any single form of expertise, making collaboration a practical necessity rather than an organisational ideal.

5.5. Becoming Creative in Algorithmic Systems: Identity, Adaptation, and Learning

The requirement for continuous skill evolution emerges as a defining feature of creative work in AI-mediated environments. Participants describe learning not as a discrete phase of adaptation, but as an ongoing condition of professional life. AI literacy—understood as the ability to guide, critique, and contextualise algorithmic output—becomes intertwined with creative identity itself.

This process involves more than acquiring technical competence. Designers speak of rethinking what it means to be creative when authorship is shared with non-human systems. Adaptation thus takes on an existential dimension, requiring practitioners to reconcile their sense of agency with algorithmic participation. Rather than eroding professional identity, this negotiation often strengthens it, as designers reposition themselves as interpreters, curators, and ethical stewards within complex creative assemblages. Such identity negotiations ultimately require organisational structures capable of sustaining creativity without collapsing responsibility into algorithmic systems.

5.6. Organisational Mediation and the Cultural Governance of Human–AI Creativity

Taken together, the findings suggest that AI integration cannot be understood solely at the level of individual practice. Participants' experiences reveal the importance of organisational structures in stabilising human–AI collaboration. In the absence of clear norms, evaluation criteria, and ethical guidance, AI adoption risks becoming fragmented and uneven.

Here, Strategic Human Resource Management emerges not merely as an administrative function, but as a form of cultural governance. Through training frameworks, performance metrics, and leadership practices, SHRM shapes how creativity is valued, how responsibility is assigned, and how

collaboration across human and algorithmic actors is normalised (Bratton & Gold, 2017; Budhwar et al., 2023). Rather than controlling creativity, these structures provide the conditions under which creative meaning and ethical accountability can be sustained in algorithmic systems.

6. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine how artificial intelligence reshapes creative work as a form of cultural knowledge production, rather than as a problem of technological efficiency or organizational optimization, and advertising, not as a question of technological efficiency, but as a cultural transformation embedded within organizational life. Drawing on the lived experiences of advertising professionals in Jakarta, the findings demonstrate that AI integration is best understood as a reconfiguration of creative practice, expertise, and responsibility. Rather than displacing human creativity, AI participates in reshaping the conditions under which creativity is produced, evaluated, and governed.

The primary epistemic contribution of this study lies in reframing AI-assisted creativity as a culturally mediated process rather than a technological substitution. By adopting a phenomenological approach, this research foregrounds how creative professionals experience AI as an active presence in their everyday work—one that influences judgment, redistributes expertise, and alters the meaning of authorship. The concept of bidirectional learning advances existing discussions by identifying a concrete mechanism through which epistemic authority is renegotiated in algorithmic systems. Knowledge in AI-mediated creative environments no longer flows unidirectionally from senior to junior practitioners; instead, it circulates across generational and hierarchical boundaries, revealing creativity as a distributed and relational form of knowing.

Culturally, the study illuminates how AI introduces new tensions around affect, meaning, and ethical accountability. Participants' concerns about the erosion of the "human touch" do not reflect resistance to innovation, but an awareness of the limits of algorithmic expression in conveying lived experience and emotional nuance. These concerns highlight creativity as a cultural practice grounded in context, empathy, and moral judgment—qualities that cannot be fully encoded into computational systems. Human oversight thus emerges not merely as quality control, but as a form of cultural and ethical stewardship, where designers actively negotiate boundaries between what can be delegated to algorithms and what must remain under human responsibility.

From a scientific culture perspective, this research contributes to broader debates on how technologies shape knowledge production and social order. AI systems do not operate in isolation; they are embedded within institutions that stabilise norms, assign value, and distribute accountability. By positioning Strategic Human Resource Management as a form of cultural governance, this study demonstrates how organisational structures mediate the relationship between human creativity and algorithmic systems. SHRM practices—through training, performance evaluation, and leadership norms—play a critical role in defining what counts as creativity, how collaboration is legitimised, and how ethical responsibility is sustained in hybrid human–AI environments.

Importantly, this study extends scientific culture scholarship beyond Western-centric settings by situating AI–creativity relations within the context of Jakarta's advertising industry. The findings show that global AI technologies intersect with local professional cultures in ways that are neither uniform nor predictable. This contextual grounding reinforces the value of qualitative, interpretive research for understanding how technological change is culturally experienced rather than abstractly assumed.

While the study is limited by its qualitative scope and context-specific focus, these limitations also constitute its strength. By prioritising depth over generalisation, the research captures the subtle negotiations through which creative professionals adapt to algorithmic systems without relinquishing agency or meaning. Future research may build on these insights through comparative or longitudinal studies that explore how cultural governance mechanisms evolve as AI becomes further embedded in creative industries.

Beyond its contribution to advertising and organizational studies, this research speaks directly to debates within scientific culture concerning how knowledge, authority, and responsibility are shaped by technological systems. The findings show that AI does not simply support creative work but actively participates in reorganizing judgment, expertise, and accountability within organizational settings.

By examining human–AI collaboration as a culturally mediated practice, this study positions creativity as a form of situated knowledge production governed by institutional norms and professional values. In doing so, it reinforces

Scientific Culture's focus on understanding technology not as an isolated tool, but as a cultural force embedded in everyday practices of meaning-making and ethical negotiation.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the integration of AI into advertising is not merely a technical transition but a cultural reordering of creativity, expertise, and responsibility. Its relevance to scientific culture lies in showing how algorithmic systems reshape not only what people do, but how they understand knowledge, creativity, and ethical accountability. For scientific culture scholarship, this finding underscores that the future of creativity will be determined not by algorithmic capability alone, but by the cultural and institutional arrangements through which knowledge, judgment, and responsibility are collectively governed.

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