

Media on cusp of historic transformation

AI reduced content production costs, but multiplied fabrication: *Expert*

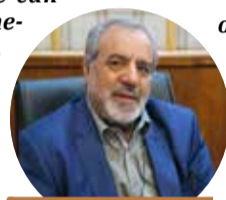
By Sadeq Dehqan
Staff writer

INTERVIEW

In less than a few years, artificial intelligence (AI) has evolved from an emergent technology into one of the most consequential actors within the realm of media and communications; a technology that has not only revolutionized the modality of content production, processing, and dissemination, but has also precipitated novel questions concerning news veracity, the role of journalists, professional ethics, privacy, and the future of media occupations, thereby presenting these quandaries before the stakeholders of this domain. Today, one can

scarcely identify a media outlet that is not, in some manner, confronted with the opportunities and challenges posed by this technology. Under such circumstances, that which acquires paramount significance, more than at any other time, is the meticulous comprehension of artificial intelligence's capacities and perils, along with the discovery of a method for its sagacious utilization. Artificial intelligence can augment the velocity, quality, and diversity of content production while diminishing production expenditures; conversely, phenomena such as deepfakes, the propagation of misinformation, algorithmic bias, and the infringement of intellectual property rights have rendered the necessity for devising professional and legal mechanisms more conspicuous than ever before.

On the other hand, the accelerated transformations of this technology have also raised the question of whether artificial intelligence will supplant journalists, editors-in-chief, and content producers, or whether it will merely alter the nature and methodology



Najafi Solari

of their activities. Furthermore, to what extent are the media institutions of this country prepared to enter this new epoch, and how can one establish an equilibrium between harnessing the capabilities of artificial intelligence and preserving professional media standards?

To examine these issues, Iran Daily has conducted an exclusive interview with Hassan Najafi Solari, who holds a doctorate in strategic management, serves as a researcher, university lecturer, and current expert at Iran's National Center of Virtual Space. Najafi Solari's CV includes the directorship of the Information Technology and Digital Media Development Center of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the presidency of the IRIB Production and Technical Department, and the secretaryship of the IRIB Structural Transformation Headquarters.

In the forthcoming interview, the opportunities and threats of artificial intelligence in media, the governance requisites of this technology, the future of media occupations, and the legal and ethical imperatives for employing artificial intel-

ligence in content production and dissemination have been examined.

IRAN DAILY: Considering the expanding utilization of artificial intelligence across various domains, from your perspective, what are the opportunities and threats of employing artificial intelligence for media?

NAJAFI SOLARI: Just as, for years, there was a debate regarding whether internet and virtual space are useful or harmful, we must first acknowledge that, today, the subject matter — that is, artificial intelligence — like those two that came before it, constitutes an accepted reality within the human system. In any case, this technology has arrived and, in the words of Jürgen Habermas, is inserting itself into the public sphere. That is to say, ordinary people are utilizing it, but so do media practitioners. On one hand, artificial intelligence provides immense assistance to them, and on the other hand, it inflicts certain damages.

As the adage goes, it is a double-edged sword. One edge represents benefit, and the other edge represents detriment and loss. For instance, within the media domain, AI provides substantial assistance in mon-

itoring, surveillance, content production, and news dissemination. One cannot deny that, concerning many concepts and subjects we previously could not express with ease, even our own abstract themes within philosophical and religious contexts, AI has come to our aid, creating symbols, providing models, and designing algorithms that enable the transmission of these concepts. For example, suppose you wish to depict love, affection, and friendship. Previously, you might have required a cinematic film costing several billion dollars to articulate that; but now, artificial intelligence, in a Lego model and within one minute, can accomplish the same task. That is, it authors, designs, and executes a short film or a short clip by itself, thereby fulfilling the objective you possess. Today, individuals who are considered media activists and have creativity, in order to pay lower costs for content production within cyberspace, turn to augmented realities, artificial intelligence, and so forth. Therefore, the first part of my discourse is that, firstly, AI is an accepted reality and truth, yet its utilization has advantages and disadvantages. You cannot assert that all of its contents are good and valuable. However, through the governance of AI utilization, one can steer a society's culture in a direction whereby its harms are not imposed upon us. Since AI is flexible, one can do anything with it. One can organize and systematize it in such a manner that it is beneficially employed, like a cane for walking.

Using artificial intelligence, nevertheless, also entails problems. Among other things, it can intrude upon users' privacy and create problems for them. For example, AI can construct your visage and articulate a speech on your behalf. This phenomenon, called "deepfake," can generate substantial troubles for certain individuals, especially because, on many occasions, one cannot distinguish fabrications from realities.

Consequently, the first problem of using AI is user privacy; for this, however, laws and regulations have been drafted to en-

sure vigilance, criminal prosecution, and confrontation with the offender. For instance, using artificial intelligence, they can easily alter your image and voice and broadcast them through media, and no matter how much you protest that this statement does not originate from you, it can prove futile.

Recall that during a period of the recent US-Israeli war on Iran, images of Netanyahu were circulated depicting him engaged in a media interview while having six fingers, and it was revealed that the images were fabricated using artificial intelligence. How do you analyze this matter?

Artificial intelligence is capable of fabricating all of these. Of course, concerning the issue of Netanyahu's six-fingered depiction in that footage, one must examine the purpose of its production, which, in any case, was the raising of an issue within the cognitive war. In my opinion, just as the occurrence of human error is always probable, artificial intelligence may also commit an error, or perhaps this matter occurred deliberately with specific objectives.

However, my conjecture is that they possess such an abundance of voids, bugs, gaps, and errors that we should not assume they would never commit such a mistake. Even they themselves, in their utilization of AI, may encounter substantial difficulties, realizing their error only after dissemination. As is evident, some of the imagery that the Zionists disseminate regarding their victories is subsequently exposed and revealed to be fabricated and unreal. Despite all the precision and subtlety that they employ, they eventually make a mistake.

In many instances, from artificial intelligence itself, at its current level, numerous errors emerge. For example, one of the phenomena that has become very prevalent in media and is cited as a danger of AI is diagnostic errors of AI. For instance, you employ AI to discern the veracity of a given news item. AI itself has access to only limited sources and presents the essence of the news to you in such a manner that, after you broadcast it, you realize it lacked factual basis and that AI's diagnosis was also erroneous.

Given that the data and information feedstock of artificial intelligence consists of human individuals and groups, how probable is it that these groups might supply specific data and information, aligned with their own intentions and objectives, to artificial intelligence in order to achieve a particular goal?

Of course, it is not the case that all AIs engage in such conduct. This is just like the perception we sometimes harbor regarding media — asserting that all media outlets seek the destruction of the Islamic Republic. Yet some of them aspire to adhere



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This illustration created in Los Angeles, US, on April 9, 2026, shows a Lego-style AI-generated war-themed video playing on a smartphone in front of a television depicting US President Donald Trump (r) and US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth.
● CHRIS DELMAS/AFP

