

A Comparative Study on Audience Trust in AI-Generated News: A Survey of University Students in China and Japan

Zihan Zhou

*Sophia Program for Sustainable Futures, Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan
z-zhou-9g2@eagle.sophia.ac.jp*

Abstract. The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into news production and dissemination is transforming journalism. As trust is fundamental to effective communication, understanding its determinants across different sociocultural contexts is crucial. One of the issues hindering the potential of generating news content using AI is the issue of audience trust. However, audience trust in news dissemination—an important pillar of the trust relationship—can vary from one cultural and journalistic media ecosystem to another. Because of their innovative technological adaptability, college students represent an important group of professionals and are among the largest groups of consumers of digital content. This study collected data from Chinese and Japanese college students and utilized an online questionnaire to address the relevant aspects of the trust gap in AI news generation between countries. The study found that media usage and trust have a positive relationship, but the level of that relationship differs between the two countries. In the study, the trust in AI news generation among respondents from China was more pronounced, and it was absent among respondents from Japan. The results are important for developing AI news and distribution and are the first attempts to analyze the design of cross-border AI news generation, trust, and production.

Keywords: Generative AI, Trust in News, AI-Generated Content, Cross-Cultural Comparison, Media Psychology

1. Introduction

1.1. Research background

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology has advanced so quickly in recent years that its use in the journalism sector has also increased dramatically. A growing number of local and international media firms are using automated news, natural language generation (NLG), and artificial intelligence (AI) news anchors. For instance, during the Fifth World Internet Conference in 2018, Xinhua News Agency and Sogou introduced "AI Synthetic Anchor," the first synthetic news anchor in history. They "created" a "double" with the same broadcasting capabilities as an actual anchor using the most recent artificial intelligence technologies. In addition to achieving technological innovation and advances in the global field of AI synthesis, this also led the way in the news industry's use of AI avatars for real-time audio and video synthesis [1]. In order to increase content

creation efficiency and save labor costs, several domestic media outlets have already started experimenting with employing AI to create reports in industries like sports and finance [2,3]. These techniques show that artificial intelligence is not only transforming news content production but also having a significant impact on information distribution channels and audience reception patterns.

AI-driven news creation has several benefits from the standpoint of industry practice, such as effectively producing vast volumes of material, lowering operating expenses, and facilitating real-time reporting. An increasing number of Chinese newsrooms have incorporated automation or AI-assisted tools into their processes, according to reports from pertinent local research institutions. For instance, the robot writing project "Kuaibi Xiaoxin" was offered by Xinhua News Agency, "DT Manuscript King" by Alibaba in collaboration with Yicai Global, "xiaomingbot" by Toutiao, and "Xiao Nan" by Southern Media Group. One after another, a variety of writing robots have appeared. This pattern shows how artificial intelligence is playing a bigger role in boosting media competitiveness in the digital era.

With technological advancements, a growing number of folks are apprehensive about the accuracy and authenticity of AI-generated news. Notwithstanding technical progress, effective information distribution cannot be assured without the audience's confidence. A dependable news transmission system must highlight trust as its foremost characteristic. Individuals frequently express apprehension over the reliability, responsibility, and transparency of AI-generated information, especially when the methods of its development or verification are ambiguous. Cognitive impairment deteriorates under the influence of various moral factors, algorithmic bias, and insufficient monitoring of human activities [4,5].

Perhaps people are deeply distracted by the possibility of AI news distortion, but there are differences in AI news trust among people of different countries and kinds of media systems [6]. China and Japan have different media systems and social and cultural setups. This provides different perspectives to compare. The differences in attitude towards AI, tech usage, and media trust in both countries may result in different feelings and trust towards AI-generated news.

The focus is on college students. Since they have the most exposure to digital media and new technologies, they often come across content generated by AI. Given the transformers applied to content, digital media consumption by students and AI news are both innovative. Using students for this research is justified, as they often help the media consumption of innovative technologies.

This research aims to discover the differences in AI news trust and media consumption parity among the college students of China and Japan. This research holds many implications. First, it explains how news consumption impacts trust relationships and suggests new fun technologies while maintaining the information ecosystem. Second, it suggests new AI techniques and communication tools for the media. Finally, it believes that these illustrations may help understand the use of AI in the media of the future.

1.2. Literature review

1.2.1. AI's transformative impact on news production

With artificial intelligence constantly improving, the possibilities to create and share news become increasingly numerous. This stuff seems to be highly mechanical. The conventional model of production, which is based on people, is transforming significantly as increasingly more automatic writing, news generation based on algorithms, and AI digital anchors are used to create news. Previous studies have shown that the capability of artificial intelligence to quickly analyze structured information and create standardized news content was initially viewed as a way to

improve the efficiency of journalism [7]. The technology of automation has been efficient, especially in areas where information is vital, like in finance and sports. It is able to quickly create large volumes of information and create content, greatly speeding up manufacturing.

According to a different study, algorithms have taken over some of the most boring tasks that computers used to do to find news. This change helps writers and programs. Technology has changed news production from single-person participation to human-machine co-participation. Artificial intelligence does not fully cover news review, but only plays a supporting role. The main work is still speeding up improvements and processing.

From a broader standpoint, the advancement of artificial intelligence has a subtle impact on the structure of the news industry in addition to changing how news is generated. On the one hand, technological systems are now involved in news editing, content filtering, and even agenda-setting, which means that decisions about news production are no longer solely made by humans; on the other hand, this shift has also presented the journalism profession with new difficulties and pressures to change [8,9]. The limits of conventional journalists' jobs have become hazier with the rise of "robot journalists," and news production is increasingly exhibiting traits of parallel human-technology collaboration. However, some believe that rather than taking the place of people in news value assessment and ethical decision-making, artificial intelligence is only useful as a supplementary tool to improve production efficiency [10].

Because of this, several studies have started to broaden their focus to include the ecological and structural elements of media and news communication. Media systems are gradually displaying traits of "automation," and the reasoning behind the creation of news content has changed from a purely human decision-making model to one that increasingly depends on data and technology-driven approaches as the role of algorithms in content production continues to grow [11]. Big data and algorithms have changed the ways that information is disseminated while also making the news-producing process more technological and methodical. Overall, artificial intelligence has become a key part of news communication, and it has also greatly changed the operation of the industry.

At present, many current studies revolve around using technology to make things. The application of artificial intelligence in the field of journalism is becoming more and more extensive, and merely thinking that technology affects production is not enough to fully present the reality. The research will focus on how people read, accept, and evaluate the news generated by artificial intelligence, especially the evaluation of its authenticity.

1.2.2. Navigating audience trust in the algorithmic news era

A study on the impact of artificial intelligence on news generation and dissemination proposed the concept of "audience trust". Research shows that although AI news is similar to traditional news in terms of language structure, audiences have lower confidence in such content. Empirical studies have found that consumers often lack relevant knowledge of news sources and struggle to distinguish between human-written articles and machine-generated articles. This demonstrates the proficiency of artificial intelligence in creating convincing writing. But "difficult to distinguish" does not mean that the audience truly trusts [12].

In AI news-related research, "audience trust" is an aspect that receives increasing attention. Existing research shows that although AI news is similar to traditional news in language structure, audiences have a particularly low level of trust in such content. Extended research finds that if consumers do not know the source, they often cannot distinguish between human-written news and machine-generated news. This means that AI can easily make text seem real [13,14]. But "cannot

distinguish" does not mean that the audience truly believes. If the foundation of trust is destroyed, trust may weaken.

At the macro level, artificial intelligence affects people's trust in news. Due to the lack of news source responsibility and the criteria for judging the authenticity of information, the opaque algorithm process exacerbates this situation [15]. Artificial intelligence systems are like "black boxes"; most people find it difficult to understand their working principles. This lack may make people less willing to trust. Even if more media use artificial intelligence technology, attention needs to be paid to balancing the use of technology and trust.

Differences between people will affect the audience's trust. Research shows that people's understanding of artificial intelligence will affect their views on artificial intelligence. Research points out that an individual's understanding of artificial intelligence will affect cognition. Smarter people can better master technical functions and enhance conceptual understanding. An individual's attention to information acquisition and the reliability of news sources will affect confidence. Different demographic groups have different levels of confidence in AI-generated news, which shows that the problem is complex and cannot be explained by a single factor.

AI digital anchors and other AI news applications make it more difficult for audiences to trust things. Some people still don't believe in this new technology. This shows that AI has not only changed the way news is produced, but also gradually changed people's views on "real news".

Past studies have explored audiences' trust in AI-generated news from multiple aspects, and basic questions have not been resolved. First, most studies only focus on a single culture or a single country, and there are few cross-national comparisons. Second: the analysis of trust is too general, and there are few studies on emotional aspects in different cultures. To determine the differences and subtleties of trust in AI-generated news, this study must make comparisons in other cultural settings.

1.3. Research framework

Judging by the above information, this study needs a comparative study approach to discover how much trust people have in AI-generated news, which varies across countries. Certainly, there are some key similarities between China and Japan in terms of the media, level of technology use, and social origin, and there are also some differences. They are good places to begin when considering the two countries. Due to this reason, Chinese and Japanese college students are the key individuals of this investigation. The research examines their degree of belief and propensity to trust AI-created news. It is to find out more about the process of building trust in an audience and what can alter it when AI-generated news is spread. This paper will achieve this by examining the way the students in colleges in the two countries responded to the question and the way they have different brain functions. Then, this will give the industry a theoretical framework and helpful materials to make the most of AI-generated news distribution strategies.

This research paper is particularly aimed at answering the following questions:

To begin with, the extent of the trust of Chinese and Japanese college students in news generated by artificial intelligence is significant.

Second, is there a substantial difference in the perceptions of Chinese and Japanese college students towards the reliability of AI-generated news?

Third, how often college students use media and how they use digital media will influence their degree of confidence in AI-generated news. This study specifically seeks to address the following questions:

2. Methodology

2.1. Research methods

This study is categorized as quantitative research and uses a positivist research paradigm. A questionnaire poll was used to gather information in order to compare the degree of faith that Chinese and Japanese college students had in AI-generated news.

This study employs online surveys to gather data from undergraduate students enrolled in Chinese and Japanese institutions. Platforms including WeChat and Xiaohongshu in China and Line and Instagram in Japan were used to disseminate the questionnaire, and Sojump and Google Forms were used to organize and export the data. Distributed 310 surveys from March 1 to March 31, 2026, and were able to collect a total of valid questionnaires (303), accounting for a Response Rate: 97%. Among them, 151 valid surveys from Japan and 152 valid questions from China were collected.

Using a five-point Likert scale (1 = complete distrust, 5 = strong trust), this study examines the extent to which the public is inclined to believe AI-generated news. For example, the questionnaire includes basic facts, media consumption habits, attitudes, and trust evaluations about AI-generated news.

For the analysis between Chinese and Japanese college students with regard to trust, this study will utilize an independent samples t-test, with descriptive statistical analysis used to report general disparities in levels of trust. The analysis of correlation relations will be studied, too, to analyze how media consumption habits affect trust levels.

2.2. Research design

College students enrolled in higher education in Japan and China serve as the study's primary data sources and are easily reachable. The study's subjects are college students in Japan and China. This big group study is very easy to get in touch with online. Most of the questionnaires were spread through the social networks Instagram, WeChat, Xiaohongshu, and Line. Users answered the questionnaires on mobile devices, and online platforms Google Forms and Questionnaire Star were used to collect and sort the data. It was very easy to reach and study.

This study received 310 questionnaires, and 303 of the answers are valid, meaning that 97 of the respondents answered the questions. Japan accounted for 151 of the valid questionnaires, and 152 valid answers were provided from China. The relatively large sample size of the study is sufficient in terms of the basic requirements of a statistical study. This study used the convenience sampling technique, which is effective in practical situations.

To make statistical analysis easier, all variables have been measured using five-point Likert scales. The study aims to understand the relationship among the variables through correlation analysis and evaluate the gaps among variables by using mean comparison and an independent samples t-test. Therefore, the analytical nature of the data collected tends to be very high.

In terms of data sources, sample collecting, analytic techniques, and time expenditures, this study is often very feasible and successfully supports the resolution of research issues.

3. Results

3.1. Sample characteristics and scale reliability

In all, 303 valid questionnaires were gathered for this study, yielding a 97% valid response rate. Among them, 152 college students from China made up 50.2% of the sample, while 151 college students from Japan made up 49.8%. Because the sample sizes from both nations are almost equal, cross-cultural comparative analysis may be conducted with them (Figure 1-Figure 2).

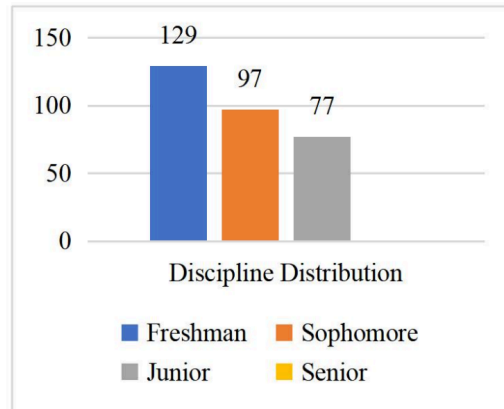


Figure 1. Grade distribution

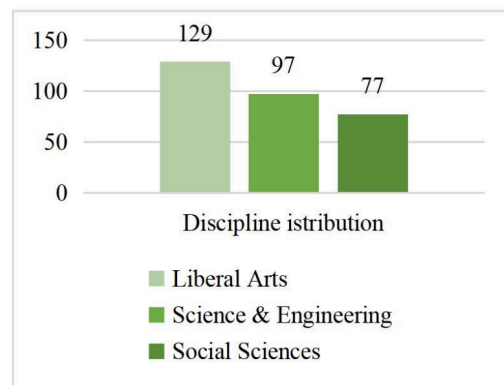


Figure 2. Subject distribution

To confirm the fundamental assessment tool's reliability, this study tested the "AI-generated news Trust Scale." The scale's Cronbach's α coefficient for the entire sample is 0.895, indicating an outstanding level of reliability, according to the reliability analysis results (see Table 1). From a national standpoint, the Chinese Sample's α coefficient is 0.792, which is at a decent level; the Japanese sample's α coefficient is 0.929, which is exceptional. The trust measurement scale has good internal consistency reliability and is appropriate for further statistical analysis and cross-cultural comparative study, as all three α coefficients exceed the acceptable criterion of 0.7.

Table 1. Cronbach's α reliability coefficient for the ai-generated news trust scale

Sample	Number of items	Sample Size (N)	Cronbach's α	Reliability Assessment
Full Sample	6	303	0.895	Excellent

Table 1. (continued)

Chinese Sample	6	152	0.792	Good
Japanese Sample	6	151	0.929	Excellent

Note: Reliability assessment criteria: $\alpha \geq 0.9$ indicates excellent, $0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ indicates good, $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$ indicates acceptable, and $\alpha < 0.7$ indicates unacceptable.

3.2. Descriptive analysis of trust in AI-generated news

Descriptive statistics for the trust scale items and total scores are presented in Table 2. With a standard deviation of 5.55, the average score of college students polled on the AI-generated news Trust Scale is 19.13 points, with a theoretical range of 6 to 30 points. The mean of the items is 3.19 points, which is slightly above average when scaled to a five-point range (i.e., the overall score divided by the number of items).

The Chinese college students scored 20.18 points on the AI-generated news trust scale (average) with a standard deviation of 4.04 points (or 3.36 points per question) nationally. The mean of the Japanese college students was 18.07 points (standard deviation: 6.58), or 3.01 points per question. It is clear that, overall, Chinese college students tend to trust news generated by AI more than Japanese college students.

Chinese college students also scored higher on all the 6 specified items as compared to the Japanese college students (see Table 2). The scores of Chinese college students were slightly higher on Q5 (I believe AI can report news objectively, $M=3.39$) and Q7 (I trust the depth of AI-generated news reporting on complex events, $M=3.41$), whereas Japanese college students scored moderately (between 3.00 and 3.06) on Q4-Q7. This result indicates that Chinese and Japanese students of a college differ in the degree of trust they have in AI-generated news, particularly, the degree to which they trust AI to be objective and be able to report on complex events. Chinese students in colleges express a greater tendency to trust.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of AI-generated news trustworthiness items and total scores (by country)

Item	China M	China SD	Japan M	Japan SD	Difference (CN– JP)
Q4: I think AI-generated news content is credible.	3.38	0.97	3.03	1.28	+0.35
Q5: I believe AI can report news objectively.	3.39	1.02	3.02	1.31	+0.37
Q6: I think AI-generated news performs well in terms of timeliness.	3.36	0.91	3.05	1.24	+0.30
Q7: I trust the depth of AI-generated news coverage on complex events.	3.41	0.93	3.06	1.29	+0.35
Q8: Overall, I am willing to trust AI-generated news.	3.36	1.03	2.92	1.25	+0.44
Q9: I would feel comfortable sharing or forwarding AI-generated news.	3.28	0.91	2.98	1.28	+0.30
Total score (Q4–Q9)	20.18	4.04	18.07	6.58	+2.12

3.3. Cross-national comparison of trust levels

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the total trust scores between Chinese and Japanese students. The homogeneity of variances for the two sets of data was examined prior to the

t-test, and the findings indicated heteroscedasticity (Levene's test, $p < 0.05$). As a consequence, the t-test findings assuming unequal variances were used.

Chinese college students have much greater overall trust in AI-generated news ($M=20.18$, $SD=4.04$) than Japanese college students ($M=18.07$, $SD=6.58$), according to an independent-samples t-test (see Table 3), $t(301)=3.379$, $p < 0.001$, which is highly significant. According to this finding, Chinese college students are far more likely than Japanese college students to believe news produced by artificial intelligence.

The computed Cohen's d value for effect size is 0.388. Cohen defined a modest effect as 0.2, a medium effect as 0.5, and a big effect as 0.8. As a result, 0.388 is around the modest-to-medium impact size [16,17]. This suggests that while there is a statistically significant difference in trust levels between the two nations, the real difference is not that great. Chinese-American college students are more likely to believe AI-generated news. However, this finding still supports the research premise that viewers' confidence in AI-generated news may vary by cultural background and media context.

Table 3. Independent sample t-test results of AI-generated news trustworthiness in China and Japan

Group	N	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
China	152	20.18	4.04	3.379	301	< .001	0.388
Japan	151	18.07	6.58			***	

Note: $p < .05$, $p < .01$, $p < .001$

3.4. Correlation between media usage and trust

Pearson correlation analyses were performed to examine the relationship between media usage habits and trust in AI-generated news. Correlations between five types of media usage and trust in AI-generated news are presented in Tables 4-6.

First, all five media consumption characteristics showed a substantial positive correlation ($p < 0.001$) with the total AI-generated news trust score, according to the correlation study conducted on the entire Sample ($N=303$) (see Table 4). A substantial association is shown by the correlation coefficient r , which ranges from 0.702 to 0.745. The consumption of newspapers and magazines has the strongest link ($r=0.745$) with trust, followed by social media ($r=0.721$) and conventional news applications ($r=0.726$). This suggests that college students' faith in AI-generated news increases with the frequency with which they utilize different media outlets, regardless of whether they are from China or Japan.

Table 4. Pearson correlation analysis of media use and AI-generated news trustworthiness for the full sample ($N=303$)

Media use variables	r	p	Significance	Correlation Strength
Q11: Social media (WeChat/Weibo, etc.)	0.721	< .001	***	Strong
Q12: Traditional news apps	0.726	< .001	***	Strong
Q13: News portals	0.714	< .001	***	Strong
Q14: Television/radio	0.702	< .001	***	Strong
Q15: Newspapers/magazines	0.745	< .001	***	Strong

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; Correlation strength: $|r| \geq 0.7$ is strong, $0.5 \leq |r| < 0.7$ is moderate, $|r| < 0.5$ is weak

Second, consider exploring the differences in the correlation patterns through uncorrelated correlation analyses of the two countries' subsamples. The positive correlation ($p < 0.001$) between all media consumption characteristics and AI-generated news trust is substantial in the Chinese subsample ($n=152$). However, the correlation degrees are, at most, moderate, ranging from 0.542 to 0.621. Arguably, the most significant degree of correlation is expected with trust in AI-generated news and the use of magazines and newspapers ($r=0.621$) and, next to that, social media ($r=0.609$) in the Chinese subsample. In contrast to the Chinese subsample, the correlation coefficients, r , in the Japanese subsample ($n=151$) show significant differences in AI-generated news trust and media consumption parameters, at a strong level of correlation, between $r=0.770$ and $r=0.799$ (see Table 6). In the Japanese subsample, the most significant degree of correlation ($r=0.799$) was expected with trust in AI-generated news and the use of traditional news applications, and news portal websites ($r=0.779$), and newspapers and magazines, also in the Japanese subsample ($r=0.792$), respectively.

Table 5. Pearson correlation analysis of media use and AI-generated news trust in the Chinese sample ($n=152$)

Media use variables	r	p	Significance	Correlation strength
Q11: Social media (WeChat/Weibo, etc.)	0.609	< .001	***	Moderate
Q12: Traditional news apps	0.542	< .001	***	Moderate
Q13: News portals	0.583	< .001	***	Moderate
Q14: Television/radio	0.546	< .001	***	Moderate
Q15: Newspapers/magazines	0.621	< .001	***	Moderate

Table 6. Pearson correlation analysis of media use and AI-generated news trustworthiness in the Japanese sample ($n=151$)

Media use variables	r	p	Significance	Correlation strength
Q11: Social media (WeChat/Weibo, etc.)	0.770	< .001	***	Moderate
Q12: Traditional news apps	0.799	< .001	***	Moderate
Q13: News portals	0.779	< .001	***	Moderate
Q14: Television/radio	0.770	< .001	***	Moderate
Q15: Newspapers/magazines	0.792	< .001	***	Moderate

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$; Correlation strength: $|r| \geq 0.7$ is strong, $0.5 \leq |r| < 0.7$ is moderate, $|r| < 0.5$ is weak

There is generally a positive correlation between media habits and trust in AI news. However, this correlation differs by country in this study. The correlation between frequency of media habits and trust in AI news is stronger among Japanese university students than among Chinese university students. This could be caused by different media conditions, tech acceptance, and AI content user dialogue between the two countries. The analysis presented in this study can't establish a causal relationship between dependent and independent variables; nevertheless, the findings indicate that media habit plays an important role in developing trust in AI news. Future research could examine the extent to which some other variables could play a moderating or mediating role, such as, and not limited to, artificial intelligence tech, trust in other media, etc.

4. Discussion

4.1. Summary of key findings

This study used survey questionnaires to understand the perceptions that 303 Chinese and Japanese college students have of AI-generated news. The researchers also studied the level of trust and the difference between the two nations. Finally, the researchers studied perceptions and the level of trust in relation to media consumption. The researchers came to several conclusions. First, on the individual survey items that measured perceptions of trust on a scale of 1 to 5, college students' average score was 3.19. This suggests that college students have at least some level of trust in AI-generated news. Second, the results indicated that there was a significant difference in trust in the news. This trust was also significantly higher in Chinese students ($p < 0.001$) when compared to Japanese students. The results also showed that trust and a positive correlation between the two were significant. This relation was more significant in the Japanese ($r=0.77\sim0.80$) than in the Chinese ($r=0.54\sim0.62$) sample.

4.2. Interpreting the cross-cultural trust gap: a contextual analysis

The pronounced trust gap between Chinese and Japanese students can be attributed to different social trust systems, media ecologies, and tech narratives. Consider first the differences in the narratives that technologies and media systems have. From the Chinese government and mainstream media's perspective, AI technology is seen as an important tool for the promotion of social development. From this perspective, "technological innovation" is posited as a net positive social good. An example of this in news media is AI news anchor projects that the Chinese mainstream media like Xinhua News Agency have promoted as symbols of social progress and technology. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that Chinese students are equipped to provide a relatively optimistic evaluation of the news produced by AI. In contrast, Japanese media are relatively more zero-sum in the way that they cover the news regarding AI technology, and they are more focused on the social issues and ethical dilemmas. In this relatively more conservative narrative on the development of technology, Japanese college students may be more cautious about the AI news.

Second, the differences in social trust dispositions and the cultures of technology adoption. In the development and adoption of the digitization of technologies—such as mobile payment, and short video—Chinese society is, without a doubt, the world's leader. In a society that has grown up mainly in the digital world, the new generation has a 'default adopting' and 'effective trust' towards new technologies. Naturally, the world of AI-generated news is affected by this inclination toward technological optimism. But when it comes to technological adoption, Japanese culture is comparatively more conservative, with the general public having a strong risk-averse attitude toward automation and algorithmic decision-making and emphasizing values like "peace of mind" and "safety." Japanese college students are more sensitive to the unpredictability of AI-generated news in this cultural context, and as a result, the trust threshold has risen.

Third, the variations in media companies' trust migration processes. In China, the public has always held mainstream media outlets in high regard. College students' preexisting confidence in these organizations may partially "transfer" to the technical tools they employ, improving their acceptance of AI-generated news if these institutions are the first to apply AI technology to news creation. In Japan, a more skeptical and fragmented media trust environment hinders this institutional-to-technological trust transfer.

4.3. The Link between media use and trust: nuances and implications

According to this study, college students in the entire sample have an overall trust level in AI-generated news that is typically above average, with neither widespread skepticism nor strong trust. This outcome supports the findings of Tandoc and Oh that audiences exhibit a "cautious acceptance" of algorithm-generated content. It also supports the ideas put forth by Montal and Reich, who contend that the information production process itself serves as a crucial anchor for audiences to assess the content's credibility [18,19]. As a result, college students' current level of trust in AI-generated news is more akin to "conditional trust": they recognize the benefits of AI in terms of timeliness and data processing capabilities, but they remain skeptical in areas that call for value judgments, like objectivity and the depth of reporting on complicated events.

4.4. Theoretical contributions and extensions

The results of this study offer fresh insights into the mechanisms underlying the development of confidence in AI-generated news, while confirming the suitability of current ideas in cross-cultural settings.

First, confirmation and refutation of the "trust transfer theory." According to Pavlik, audience confidence must be "transferred" from established institutions or channels before new technologies may be introduced. The study's conclusions offer cross-cultural support for this theory: college students' greater faith in mainstream media was "transferred" to AI-generated news tools more easily in the Chinese sample than in the Japanese sample. According to this comparison, trust transmission is heavily influenced by cultural background, media credibility, and society's acceptance of technology hazards rather than happening spontaneously.

The second is the cultural setting of the "Technology Acceptance Model." Perceived utility and perceived ease of use are important factors that affect users' adoption of new technology, according to the Technology Adoption Model (TAM). This study situates this paradigm in a cross-cultural setting and discovers that media contexts and cultural values may considerably limit the influence of technology cognition. While high-frequency media consumption in Japan may have raised exposure to the dangers of AI-generated news, hence impeding the development of trust, it may have strengthened students' exposure to positive narratives about AI technology in China.

5. Conclusion

This study used a questionnaire to find out how much 303 college students from China and Japan trusted news provided by AI. It also looked at the disparities in trust between the two nations and how media consumption patterns affect trust levels. The results show that most college students have a lot of faith in news made by AI. Their degree of trust is "limited," which means they aren't sure if they believe it or not. Second, students from China and Japan don't trust each other as much. Third, those who use the media more often are more likely to believe news that AI creates. This wonderful bond is still there, but it's not as strong for Chinese students as it is for Japanese students. How many people believe in AI-generated news relies a lot on their culture, how the media talks about technology, and how much they trust society as a whole.

This study has several effects on people and the globe as a whole. When media companies use AI in real life, they should know that they don't always have to worry about convincing people to accept what they say. Culture is important. This study needs to make Chinese traditional media more credible in terms of the credibility of AI news. Japan focuses on open discussion of risks, ensuring

accountability and algorithm transparency. Research shows that social trust in technical information varies. Broadly speaking, this is important for the health of the information ecosystem. This finding, supported by real data and research, allows news organizations to better grasp the implementation of artificial intelligence and communicate with the audience.

There are shortcomings in this study. First, the survey was only conducted for college students, and its results cannot be widely applied. The cross-sectional technology only constructs a situation of trust each time. With the development of artificial intelligence, the public's ideas may change. Finally, the media uses information from their own memories or reports, and there is a situation of memory bias. Future research may use large samples and study long-term changes to look for credible evolutionary trends. At the same time, it will also use qualitative research, such as in-depth interviews, to figure out the reasons for the discovered differences.

References

- [1] Xinhua Net. (2018). The world's first "AI synthetic anchor" goes live at Xinhua News Agency. Xinhua Net. https://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-11/07/c_1123678126.htm
- [2] People's Daily. (2018). The current status and prospects of robot journalism. People's Daily Online. https://paper.people.com.cn/xwzx/html/2018-01/01/content_1831362.htm
- [3] Qian, W. (2025). Write a media-level press release in 30 minutes – this AI prompt enables tech professionals to master PR writing. Alibaba Cloud. <https://developer.aliyun.com/article/1686744>
- [4] Lyu, W. (2025). The application status and ethical risks of artificial intelligence in news production. *Frontiers in Social Sciences*, 1(6).
- [5] Ge, Y. (2025). Research on the regulatory status and ethical dilemmas of generative AI in content creation. *Open Journal of Legal Science*, 13, 958.
- [6] Song, S., Zhao, Y., & Zhu, Q. (2023). From ELIZA to ChatGPT: Credibility evaluation of AI-generated content (AIGC) in human-AI interaction experiences. *Documentation, Information & Knowledge*, 44(4), 35-42.
- [7] Simon, F. M. (2024). Artificial intelligence in the news: How AI retools, rationalizes, and reshapes journalism and the public arena.
- [8] Fitria, T. N. (2024). Artificial intelligence (AI) news anchor: How AI's performance in journalistic sector? *Indonesia Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (iTELL) Journal*, 1(1), 29-42.
- [9] Nguyen, D., & Hekman, E. (2024). The news framing of artificial intelligence: A critical exploration of how media discourses make sense of automation. *AI & Society*, 39(2), 437-451.
- [10] Liu, J., Qian, Y., Yang, Y., & Yang, Z. (2022). Can artificial intelligence improve the energy efficiency of manufacturing companies? Evidence from China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(4), 2091.
- [11] Siddique, M. R. I., & Gupta, S. K. (2026). Next-generation media technologies and the redefinition of journalistic ethics. *Indian Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism (IJMCJ)*, 5(3), 26-35.
- [12] Dugan, L., Ippolito, D., Kirubarajan, A., Shi, S., & Callison-Burch, C. (2023, June). Real or fake text? Investigating human ability to detect boundaries between human-written and machine-generated text. In *Proceedings of the AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence* (Vol. 37, No. 11, pp. 12763-12771).
- [13] Banerjee, S., Mont'Alverne, C., Arguedas, A. R., Toff, B., Fletcher, R., & Nielsen, R. K. (2023). Strategies for building trust in news: What the public say they want across four countries.
- [14] Koliska, M., Moroney, E., & Beavers, D. (2025). trust through relationships in journalism. *Journalism Studies*, 26(16), 2092-2109.
- [15] Chlebicka, A. (2024). Solutions for overcoming information asymmetry and enhancing trust in supply chains. In *Trust and Supply Chains* (pp. 86-107). Routledge.
- [16] Brewer, P. R., Bingaman, J., Paintsil, A., Wilson, D. C., & Dawson, W. (2022). Media use, interpersonal communication, and attitudes toward artificial intelligence. *Science Communication*, 44(5), 559-592.
- [17] Cohen, J. (2013). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. routledge.
- [18] Tandoc, E. C., & Oh, S. (2017). Small departures. *Journalism Practice*, 11(5), 573-588.
- [19] Montal, T., & Reich, Z. (2017). I, robot. You, journalist. *Digital Journalism*, 5(7), 829-849.