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## A Study of Generative AI's Influence on Graphic Design Practices and Creative Industries in Tamil Nadu

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### Abstract

This is an exploratory as well as qualitative study to study the multiple effects of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in the graphic design and advertising industries in Tamil Nadu, India. This research investigates the impact of products like Midjourney and Adobe Firefly, and Canva AI in the context of rising digital democratisation on professional workflows, economic models and representation of culture. Thematic study of secondary data from industry blogs, professional forums, webinars and freelancer portfolios highlighted key trends (2023-2025). The results are twofold: GenAI can save small firms and non-designers a great deal of time and money (between 50 and 70 per cent), but it also wreaks havoc on entry-level jobs and freelance work. The key issue is that the internationally trained AI models tend to produce inauthentic or stereotypical representations of Tamil visual culture (kolam, Tamil font and festival visuals), which can be a danger to vernacular identity. The study shows that sustainable integration must be accompanied by a triptych of strategic upgrading, socially responsive AI model development and ethical frameworks to boost human-AI collaboration, so that the region's creative economy may progress without surrendering its cultural individuality. Keywords: Generative AI, graphic design, Tamil Nadu, cultural representation, creative sectors, labour market, human-AI collaboration.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is dramatically transforming the creative industries. With tools such as Midjourney, Adobe Firefly, DALL-E and Canva AI, artificial intelligence is revolutionising the traditional visual production process, automating tasks that previously required expert human intervention. High-quality content generation with deep learning. Enables fast ideation and prototyping. This turns the designer into a strategic supervisor and creative director in a human-AI collaboration. India has cheap broadband and mobile everywhere so GenAI adoption is getting traction. Canva and other platforms are growing exponentially and India is a key market and Adobe and others are growing with customized subscriptions. However, adoption has been patchy, with a clear gap between early adopters in urban tech-savvy areas and semi-urban/rural dwellers who are struggling with cost and digital literacy.

The graphic design industry in Tamil Nadu is quite unique in the sense that it is part of cinema, retail and entrepreneurship and operates in both formal and informal economies. Chennai is a major hub. But the

efficiency gains promised by GenAI are mired in fears of job displacement and the erosion of a rich visual culture based on Tamil typography, kolam, temple art and cinematic traditions. AI models trained on global data tend not to really pick up on those localized aesthetics.”

The adoption of GenAI is happening at a fast pace in India but there is a lack of empirical studies in the region on its impact on the graphic design industry in Tamil Nadu. In this paper we aim to address this gap.

#### Aims of the research

- To explore the effect of the adoption of GenAI on the roles of professionals, livelihoods of freelancers, and business models of the graphic design and advertising industry in Tamil Nadu.
- To explore the cultural implications of GenAI and its capacity (or lack of) to reproduce accurately the visual culture and vernacular aesthetics of Tamil Nadu.
- Recommend Sustainable Integrated Strategies Focused on Skills Development, Ethical Concerns, and Creation of Contextualized AI Instruments to Preserve Cultural Integrity

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

GenAI is described in global scholarship as a paradigm shift in creative work, automating execution while elevating strategic tasks (Gunkel, 2020; Mazzone & Elgammal, 2019). Although GenAI has been praised for its democratisation of design, critics have warned of labour deskilling and increased economic precarity (Bridle, 2022). This suggests that the gains from accessibility may be outweighed by the loss of job security and opportunities for skill development among conventional designers. In the Global South, digital divides can be barriers to adoption, especially in the case of subscription models (Irani, 2019; Qiu et al., 2020).

Studies in India, while showing rapid adoption, also show stratified access along urban-rural and economic lines (Sharma, 2023; Thomas, 2023). There are predictions of contraction in entry-level technical jobs and a redefinition of creative labor (Bakhshi et al., 2017; D’Costa, 2020), but little empirical work has been done on creative professions.

Research into AI and cultural representation has shown the bias in datasets that lead to the homogenization and misrepresentation of non-Western visual cultures (Benjamin, 2019; Crawford, 2021). This is particularly the case in culturally specific regions like Tamil Nadu where local art forms and narratives are often marginalised by dominant Western paradigms. The literature discussed the need for region-specific studies on the intersection of AI, creative labor, and cultural sustainability.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative, exploratory research design was used to explore this emerging fact in the real-world context. Secondary data were gathered from openly available sources for the years 2023 to 2025, including industry blogs, professional newsletters, webinar transcripts, and public portfolios of Chennai-based designers on LinkedIn and the Balance platform. The theory was deep-rooted in seminal academic literature on AI and cultural bias.

In total, about 65 sources of data were purposefully sampled and reviewed, using relevant keywords such as GenAI Tamil Nadu, Midjourney graphic design India, Canva AI Chennai, and “Tamil visual culture AI. The data were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase approach. Four major themes emerged: Changes in Workflow, Economic & Labour Effects, Creativity & Originality, and Cultural Representation.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Democratization and efficiency improvement

GenAI brings down the entry barriers massively. Small businesses and entrepreneurs, particularly in retail, real estate and education, say they’ve experienced reductions of 50% to 70% in the time and cost to create marketing visuals. Canva AI in particular, is allowing non-designers to generate professional-quality graphics and posters, encouraging micro-entrepreneurship and increasing access to visual communication.

### 4.2 Labor Market Disruption and Skill Reallocation

Automation of layout design, editing and asset creation has reduced the number of entry-level and freelance opportunities, which are good sources of income and training for junior designers. The professional focus is shifting to curation and creative control of AI results, i.e. prompt engineering.

Automation also speeds up project turnaround times, raising the bar for designers’ productivity and

adaptability. As AI tools continue to evolve, designers will need to up skill to remain relevant and competitive in an ever-changing landscape.

Customers now expect designers to bring something to the table, something that can't be done by automated tools. The role is changing towards strategy, conceptualization and brand story based on human understanding

#### 4.3 Cultural Homogenization

The AI tends to translate the cultural components of Tamil like kolam, traditional typography and festival graphics into generic or stereotypical outputs, therefore endangering the authenticity of the visual vernacular of Tamil Nadu. Thus major Tamil cultural symbols are portrayed in a basic or wrong manner. This might lead to the real appearance and feel of Tamil Nadu's traditions being lost or misinterpreted.

#### 4.4 Disparities in Access and Outcomes

Chennai: Chennai city agencies and tech-savvy independent contractors are using AI for high-value projects. In semi-urban and small-town environments, designers and studios are using AI to challenge non-designers, disrupting long-standing economic models. The rapidity of its adoption is reshaping the local creative economy, forcing professionals to reconsider established business strategies and specialized skills.

#### 4.5 Emergence of Hybrid Workflows

Designers have taken the output of AI and used it as a base on which to improve by hand. The ability to view things critically, to quickly connect time and to curate ethically are becoming new crucial talents. Now creative experts are being tasked with the creative side of AI, taking raw algorithm outputs and turning them into completed things that align with a brand.

The update requires more understanding of technology and visual communication to be new and authentic. The industry is adopting the new normal of human intuition and mechanical efficiency. It's the continual learning and quick adaptation to the growing creative workflows that keeps us competitive.

#### 4.6 Issues of Ethics and Lack of Transparency

A major concern is the lack of industry-wide standards for transparency, consent, copyright and ethical usage, with some clients urging designers to use AI secretly.

4.7 Creativity and Changing Customer Expectations: Quantity vs Quality. Now it is all about speed and volume in the market. And the basic design services become commodities, and the price war is fiercer. GenAI outputs more creative content but concerns are raised about losing conceptual depth and cultural specificity which further risks homogenizing the region's visual landscape.

### 5. DISCUSSION

These findings emphasize the double-edged sword of GenAI as an enabler and disruptor in the creative industry of Chennai. The three dilemmas are efficiency vs job safety, democratized access Vs expertise, and global AI models vs local cultural authenticity. The strategic adaptation of the sector comprises: Systematic up-skilling in AI prompt engineering, workflow management and ethical auditing. Culturally attuned AI is an investment in fine-tuning on Tamil art and aesthetics-based datasets. Transparent ethical frameworks for disclosure and fair compensation. GenAI are changing the creative landscape of Tamil Nadu, and there's no turning back. It provides powerful tools for participation and efficiency but also great risks to professional pathways and cultural authenticity (job displacement, dilution of traditional artistic practices. Guided integration is sustainable progress, a synergetic collaboration between humans and AI, in which designers become strategic directors and cultural custodians.

### 6. LIMITATIONS

The Secondary data served as the foundation for this Study of research. Further study should focus on creating and evaluating open-source, culturally sensitive AI tools as well as conducting primary surveys and interviews with Tamil Nadu-based graphics designers. In a fair, moral, and culturally aware manner, Tamil Nadu can employ GenAI to preserve and creatively enhance its unique visual heritage.

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