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ENC1102-Spring 26

24 February 2026

Research Project

Intro

AI has caused a huge debate about its effects, with people challenging if it's a cheating device, a great helper, a job replacer, or the savior/destroyer of humanity. I will be looking at both the overall sentiment towards AI as well as more niche topics talking about AI. Research about sentiment of AI has boasted mostly positive opinions in recent times (Xu, 2024), although some certain fields show negativity, such as the declining morale of the work industry (Fodor & Szabina 2025). This topic is important to study because of, what some people argue is, the future of humanity. It is an ever developing technology, getting upgraded every day, with some people making bold predictions in the very near future about massive effects, which also makes this a timely topic. As said before, a major relief is that the sentiment from the large studies has been mostly positive. However, one large issue that is present within the existing research is how generalized the data is. Most of the studies I found and likely many others use sentiment analysis which is optimized for filtering and generalizing large amounts of, in this case, Reddit comments about AI. This leaves an unresolved gap to evaluate niche & individual comments of how people specifically feel and what they bring up. This is an interesting spot my research aims to fill; I can manually find specific interesting facts or opinions in comments which usually would have been

obfuscated by large sentiment analysis models. Bringing them to light will let people know about more complex thoughts of AI, even in specific fields. For example, in the work industry AI sentiment may have been determined mostly negative, yet individual comments could also propose a positive outlook and on a certain topic in their field. In summary, this analysis will investigate the inbetween of the black and white view of current research about sentiment of AI: How do the general and specific views from Reddit users differ about Artificial Intelligence?

Literary Review

My secondary sources are composed of using large sentiment analysis models to analyze what people think about AI on Reddit throughout different topics. The ones I will be focusing on in this review are sources #1 by Naing, Su, and Udomwong, #2 by Bervar & Mitja, and finally #3 by Fodor, Szabina, and Boncz. According to Naing, the overall opinion about AI, specifically ChatGPT, on Reddit is mostly positive. This source is also important towards my research question since it highlights the overall opinion throughout 2023. This means it will answer questions pertaining to the release of any models that year as well as the general opinion throughout all fields. The second is talking about AI sentiment mainly in creative industries; this will focus on my research by diversifying the content to also include generative image AI such as DALL-E and focus on a specific field. Finally, the third source is talking about perceptions of the future of work with AI. The problem they are addressing here ~~or the thing that will help out my research~~ is the difference in sentiment regarding the work field. Already looking at the results, they are mostly negative compared to the overall positivity as seen in source #1.

These sources will hold great value within my research since they all attack different aspects of AI. The first study will primarily serve as a base line to all of the other ones, showing the overall opinion. The second source will also be important to tell how it compares to something like source #3 or even just the overall sentiment of AI. Although source #1 is focused on general sentiment, Naing utilized an analysis method that shows niche topics as well. This will assist in reinforcing the content from source #3, which is focused on the work industry. Source #3 will help with generally showing the growth or decline in sentiment since its content covers 2013-2024. Comparing this source to the creative industry sentiment towards AI from study #2 will also be interesting since it will show almost how opposing fields think of AI (For example, art vs. engineering). Overall, all of them either cover something the other sources didn't or they completely add an interesting niche to my research.

Methods

Moving onto the research methods, I analyzed certain Reddits where I gathered primary research. The subreddits I analyzed were r/aiArt, r/Art, r/Marketing, r/Jobs, and r/ArtificialIntelligence. These subreddits were discussed in many of the secondary sources and serve as general spaces to answer my research question. I will now describe the process I applied to each of the subreddits I looked at, in sequential order. To filter some of the content I searched the term “ai” as well as filtered by “relevance” and “all time.” The longest time frame Reddit offers other than “all time” is “last year,” which doesn’t encompass the development of AI. For this reason I will also include the dates of each post later on. I looked at 5-10 interesting comments from each subreddit. I deemed these “interesting” by looking at their highest upvotes, and their relevancy to the topic. The benefit of this is that a lot of people agree with comments

that have a large amount of upvotes. The only downside to this as is with any handpicked selection of comments is that some opinions will be excluded here. I tried to look at comments that mentioned something relevant towards AI that the large analysis studies wouldn't really find. I organized all of the data in a large spread sheet. I collected the comments post date, as well as the posters' names. The other columns I included were a general positive, negative, or neutral label and a small more detailed label that would read something such as "Angry about job replacement but optimistic about general growth." Using these two labels I was able to later group some comments into batches where I could also directly quote from what they said. Using this coding strategy helped narrow down comments and make them more specific to my answer to my research question as well as support it. The primary data also helped tie into the secondary sources.

Results & Analysis

Overall, each field yielded its expected results for the overall percentages of sentiment compared to the secondary sources. However, there were many intriguing comments and some of the minority opinions were very interesting. Throughout all of the subreddits I analyzed, I found a total of 20 (*to be updated*) comments that met the requirements stated in the methods section of this paper. Looking at the data, in the job market subreddit (r/jobs), the majority sentiment was negative; out of the 8 comments I looked at in r/jobs, there was only one positive comment. A lot of the data consisted of talking about how "AI is taking our jobs." There were some other comments that also strayed off into their own topics, with the second most common being about job applications/hiring issues as shown by "I'm finding an insane number of "jobs" that are just training AI to be replace me" (psychedelicdevilry). Moving onto r/art, there was a

common trend where posts would debate if the art was AI or not, and often the art had to be verified by moderators. This reinforces the overall bad sentiment of AI in this subreddit, with only 1 post being positive compared to 4 negative out of 7 comments. In this subreddit especially, the term “AI slop” emerged a lot. This is a new phrase dedicated to show how some users and artists label AI generated images as “steal[ing] from preexisting art made by real artists, and [being] utterly soulless garbage trying to artificially mimic what it can never be” (lilerds [comment 1, reply 5.1](#)). Most of the users on the r/art subreddit treat AI art as a mockery to real art and mainly say it is obstructing their creativity and popularity as also described in this comment saying “...it’s difficult being an artist when AI slop is popular” (chimpstarandrainbow [comment 1, reply 1](#)). The neutrality shown in this community is users being lean with AI, as shown in one comment which states “We have to remember that just because a human made it, doesn't mean it isn't also slop.” (CMDR-L). The only positive comment in the art community which I found said “I like AI art, it's a new form of art” (dranaei); however, it is notable that this comment received -4 upvotes. This means the r/art community sees AI as a tool to steal work and destroy reputations rather than see any real benefits from it. Moving on to the rival subreddit, r/aiArt, which showed an increase in positive comments compared to r/art. For this community the posts talking about a neutral or positive sentiment of AI images boasted a lot more upvotes than the negative ones. Looking at the only negative comment I found, it says similar things as stated in r/art, where the author states that “AI art cannot help but look painful and strained” and that it is “outright copying someone else's portfolio” (carlett_Upp). It is notable that this community was focused more on comedic and persuasive images, I couldn’t display this well in comments as this research is focused on the sentiment of AI. The only post talking about sentiment had several comments which I included. These all seemed neutral or positive as people

were more tolerable, as seen in the comment saying “Why does it seem to bother some people? I posted AI art in another sub and got down voted all to hell” (ItchClown).

Discussion

AI has definitely impacted all of the fields in our real world. All of its effects are becoming more apparent every day. This research should have shown a clear example of how overall sentiment differs from the actual content in comments about AI. Each subreddit had interesting takes on AI which was only shown by looking directly at comments instead of the general sentiment. Although most users disliked AI in the communities I explored, there were still users that saw light of it. Many people have unique situations and show their own level of understanding of the uprising technology. Some may have misunderstood the scope of AI and its effects, others such as the art community hate it, and some think it is a good technology to help. There were two primary limitations in this research which I would like to address. The first limitation is that this research was conducted mainly throughout March 2026, which means that the secondary research is slightly outdated as AI’s effects are more prominent and it is always expanding, even within the little time that has progressed. The second limitation, as mentioned earlier, is that there may have been some bias as I selected comments deemed “interesting.” However, this was mainly done to keep the paper straight forward and focused on the scope of what most think. This is backed up by comparing the percentages of sentiment between the small sample sizes of comments I found with the large secondary research that incorporates a lot more comments.

(Note, more subreddits will be analyzed for the final draft and there will be a revision of sources. As an effect of this, there will also be a slight revision of methods & discussion to improve clarity & flow)

Sources

Xu, Zhaoxiang, et al. “The Public Attitude towards ChatGPT on Reddit: A Study Based on Unsupervised Learning from Sentiment Analysis and Topic Modeling.” *PloS One* [United States], vol. 19, no. 5, 2024, p. e0302502, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0302502>.

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