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THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ALGORITHMS ON CULTURAL CONSUMPTION: HOW DO ALGORITHMS SHAPE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF ART AND CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

This research evaluates the impact of social media algorithms on cultural consumption, particularly how audience engagement, artwork visibility, and the freedom of artistic expression, all of which are impacted by curation. To achieve this, the study employed a qualitative methodological approach where 15 individuals, comprising social media consumers, content creators, and digital marketers, were interviewed to understand their interactions with algorithmically organized cultural material. Thematic analysis demonstrated that algorithmic bubbles, created through personalization, reduce the range of diverse artistic works, while visibility bias favors over-engagement independent or experimental works. Furthermore, highlight findings from the intensive interviews reveal the effects of platform capitalism where cultural production is increasingly subject to the monetization logic as opposed to the artistic production. Content creators expressed concerns about their increasing reliance on algorithms, with art evolving into a business as they modify their works to fit trends. This study highlights the embedded power relations within algorithmic governance, calling attention to the transparency and regulatory policies as well as ethical programmatic interventions that are necessary to protect and sustain a rich and diverse cultural ecosystem. These outcomes add to the existing scholarship in media studies, digital sociology, and cultural policy by providing a case study revealing how technology, culture, and art interrelate in the age of digitization and globalization. Further studies ought to examine policy-based solutions as well as inter-platform differences to comprehensively analyse the ramifications of algorithmic cultural mediation over time.

KEYWORDS: Social Media Algorithms, Cultural Consumption, Art and Culture, platform capitalism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has significantly impacted how individuals interact with art and culture. People consume culture through publishers, music distributors, galleries, museums, and other institutions that have historically acted as the primary gatekeepers, approving and legitimizing artistic content (Akinlar and Küçüksüleymanoğlu, 2025). Additionally, these collaborative digital platforms that rely on algorithms have made wide-sweeping changes to these older models by making culture easier to access while introducing new methods of control. Users of social media are now influenced by what to consume and see due to algorithms put in place that are meant to maximize social media interactions through customized content recommendations (Ameli and Farzaneh Siasi Rad, 2025). These systems also influence the adaptation of art production to meet algorithmic demands. An increasing number of individuals take advantage of these systems, raising concerns about cultural diversity, artistic value, and the sociocultural landscape. At the heart of this change lays the user's behavior, preferences, and metrics (Angell et al., 2025). TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Spotify are all platforms that younger people use. These sites and applications utilize powerful recommendation systems, which seek and promote content that the user is most comfortable engaging with based on the enormous amounts of data collected from their previous interactions (Burgess et al., 2025).

Though this approach makes it easier to access and see the cultural components, it raises concerns about echo chambers, the reduction of intellectual and aesthetic variety, and the focus on viral and commercially appealing content instead of more complex artistic pieces. The degree to which artistic styles and cultural practices are impacted by these algorithmic systems is a developing topic of research (Chatterjee, 2024). Additionally, the use of social media for a broader audience changes the type of content produced, and not just the way it is consumed. From graphic designers to musicians, writers, and filmmakers, there is an increasing trend in tailoring content to fit a specific niche to get as much attention as possible. These creations are often simplified to fit a trending mold which increases the possibility for dilution and standardization of unique artistic expression (Chayka, 2025). Nevertheless, social media allows new and oppressed makers to gain a wider audience without needing traditional institutions. As a result, disposes of orthodoxy, social media algorithms give extraordinary opportunities for artistic expression while also placing tougher

restrictions on the ways culture can be expressed which requires careful assessment (Christin, 2020, Hazari, 2024). With these intricacies, it is crucial to examine the power of social media algorithms in cultural consumption, articulation, and the distribution of different narratives.

The study aim is to assess the functioning of social media algorithms and their impact on cultural consumption, and how these reach the scope of artistic creation, reception, and the issue of culture meaning construction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Perspectives on Algorithmic Influence on Cultural Consumption

Cultural consumption has always been studied through the lens of media impact, audience reception, and culture capital. With the development of social media algorithms, these phenomena acquire new meanings and require a combination of media studies, information science, and digital sociology (Gillespie, 2016). An example of one of the most pertinent frameworks is Bourdieu (2011) Theory of Cultural Capital which contends that a person's cultural tastes or consumption preferences are a result of specific societal and institutional frameworks. However, factors like these are now largely internalized through algorithmic curation, rather than traditional cultural gatekeeping (Burgess et al., 2025). The automation of cultural distribution through algorithmic mechanisms moves the burden of decision-making from human curators to a machine-driven system and in turn challenges existing theories that depend on human-made logic frameworks in their understanding of cultural distributions (Hazari, 2024).

Another possible approach is McLuhan (2019) "The medium is the message", which emphasizes how certain forms of technology determine what cultural content is available to be displayed. Social media does not passively curate information; instead, it engages in the production process by prioritizing revenue through engagement, often at the expense of artistic or intellectual value (Lury and Day, 2019). This is in line with critical algorithm studies that claim these systems operate as "black boxes" that conceal the logic of visibility and engagement (Mahoney and Myers, 2025). Also, Molina and Subias (2024) "algorithmic power" addresses how digital platforms control access to cultural material what audiences are allowed to interact with, and which frameworks are made available for the ascription of cultural meaning. The combination of these theories serves as a point of departure in discussing the ways

algorithmic mediation transforms relations of cultural consumption and production (Lury and Day, 2019).

2.2. Social Media Algorithms and the Personalization of Cultural Content

Social media use highly depends on sophisticated recommendation algorithms that personalize cultural content for each user. They are meant to optimize engagement by predicting behavior, preferences, and interactions to offer content that can yield retention (Onyejelem and Aondover, 2024). This personalization model improves accessibility and user experience as a product is offered that matches their needs. At the same time, it increases the problem of creating "filter bubbles" where content presented to users is only that which supports their likes and opinions, thus narrowing the range of artistic and cultural content that they are exposed to (Moravec et al., 2025).

Algorithmic curation can impact cultural exploration in deep ways as evidenced by the multitude of studies. One example is research on streaming services such as Spotify and Netflix, where the recommendation algorithms tend to favor popular content over-specialized or innovative ones (Molina and Subias, 2024). Another example is research on the "For You" page of TikTok which shows that the algorithm supports virality by pushing content that has lots of user interaction which is detrimental to less popular, non-commercial, or non-conformist artistic content (Putra and Afrilian, 2025). While theoretically, user customization opens the gate for everyone, especially independent content creators, in reality, these systems deepen the pre-established social structure by promoting content that receives positive feedback from the platform's engagement metrics (Onyejelem and Aondover, 2024).

In addition, social media platforms profit from the immoral exploitation of preceding algorithms meaning that there is a culture bias. Social media companies run their business unlike any public institutions which base themselves on historical and educational value. These companies push content optimized for social media consumption out at the expense of quality, drowning out nonalgorithm-appealing content which as per Moravec et al. (2025) results in outputting unexplainable censorship. Because of this, users of the culture face increasing comfort and engagement due to algorithmic personalization, they also face the concern of cultural consumerism issues.

2.3. Impact on Artistic Production and Creative

Autonomy

Social media does more than shape what the audience consumes; its algorithms have a deep effect on art's creation. Due to increasing dependence on algorithmic visibility metrics, it has become common for artists, musicians, and writers to 'go with the flow' and tailor their work to platform-centric fads to be noticed (Molina and Subias, 2024). As a result, there are worries about the commercialization of art, as content creators are likely to prioritize increasing views and engagement at the expense of creativity (Park and Chun, 2025).

E-albums and digital art showcase a new form of merriment that empirical research, along with music and video art, has highlighted during the investigation of algorithmic environments. YouTube and Instagram studies suggest that platform algorithms favor frequent posting, high engagement rates, and sticking to certain envelope forms due to the impression impact on their artistic choices (Read, 2025). Streaming musicians on platforms like Spotify are also subjected to this pressure because recommendatory algorithms favor short, repetitively composed songs that allow listeners to stay the longest (Park and Chun, 2025). The concern is now whether digital platforms foster artistic creativity or simply serve preset boundaries for engaging content and no innovation.

Simultaneously, social media has opened doors for many independent and marginalized artists to bypass traditional gatekeepers as never before. The TikTok and Instagram platforms have fostered the viral success of marginalized artists who build direct audiences without institutional intercession (Putra and Afrilian, 2025). Nevertheless, this digital accessibility is only superficial as it does not erase the added social structural constraints that come with algorithmic visibility. While a few of them may go viral, most of them grapple with what has been termed algorithmic discoverability issues and require substantial amounts of money to be invested in data marketing to achieve a minimal level of visibility on these platforms (Putri et al., 2024). Thus, the algorithmic governance of cultural production comes as a double-edged sword: it offers more freedom to access the resources but at the same time brings new forms of subjugation and commodification.

2.4. Cultural Homogenization vs. Diversity in Algorithmic Curation

Inappropriate efforts aimed at algorithmic management of cultural consumption do pose a great threat in terms of potential homogenization. The

social media platform's primary concern involves the privileged narratives being culture in an attempt to optimize content delivery where engagement-focused metrics drive the systems. The unintended consequences of art forms that can be considered alternative or experimental are often ignored (Molina and Subias, 2024). Such prompts are very profound in areas like music and films, where powerful algorithms have been put in place. Popular content tends to get featured more and more, leading to decreased chances of exposure to less-known artists and independent productions (Roy, 2024).

The fear of cultural homogenization is associated with critiques encompassing platform capitalism, claiming that the overarching goals of digital platforms shift the focus from diversity to profitability (Shafirova and Araújo e Sá, 2025). Studies examining the patterns of amplification performed by algorithms suggest normatively standardized content, both in an aesthetic and thematic sense, has a higher chance of being algorithmically visible, while more innovative works aiming at obscuring mainstream perceptions are much less likely to stand out (Shakespeare et al., 2025). This leads to valid doubt about whether social media channels nurture authentic cultural plurality or use the illusion of personalization merely to strengthen already existing cultural hegemony.

Some experts point out how algorithmic systems can increase cultural diversity by exposing the public to culturally peripheral and irrelevant material that is not noticed in the existing media frameworks (Shafirova and Araújo e Sá, 2025). For instance, the algorithm of TikTok has been said to have facilitated the worldwide success of a variety of indigenous music and 'digital' avant-garde art forms (Roy, 2024). These results point out that, while there is the possibility of algorithms contributing to homogenization, it is equally possible, depending on the particular design and incentives provided within the platform architectures, to amplify diverse voicing.

The moderation of specific aspects of the overarching tension posed by cultural diversity as well as homogenization remains an underdeveloped area of research but one that is critical for the future of cultural policy and platform governance (Shakespeare et al., 2025). To confront these issues,

there needs to be deep questioning of what algorithmic decision-making structures are capable of creating inclusivity and equity in cultural representation. There ought to be a focus on algorithmic transparency controls and policies that aim to restrict the level of user-focused customization and enhance the level of cultural diversity in the expected output.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design. Given the complexity of algorithmic interplay, semi-structured interviews were used to gather detailed information from participants. This approach was more practical because of flexibility, which meant that participants could tell their stories and perceptions while the researcher was free to look for deeper meanings in the emerging themes. A qualitative approach suited well for subjective analysis of social reality and lived experiences (Takona, 2024). Therefore, it was able to capture the social, cultural, and creative impacts of algorithmic curation on diverse digital spaces.

3.2. Participants

Participants were stratified into key stakeholder groups to form a heterogeneous sample of 15 participants using purposive sampling. A sample size of 15 participants was selected to ensure rich, in-depth qualitative insights, in line with qualitative research recommendations that prioritize data saturation over large sample sizes (Sharma et al., 2024). The sample consisted of social media users from different segments of the culture, content creators who were actively attempting visibility through algorithms, and digital marketers who understood the dynamics of the platform. This combination covers broad aspects of the issue under discussion. The attempt was made to capture different ages and professions and even artistic workers to see the breadth of how algorithms are dealing with different levels of digital engagement. All participants were guaranteed regarding ethical considerations, like informed consent and anonymity. Participant profile is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Participant Profile.

Participant Number	Age	Gender	Profession
P1	22	Female	Social Media Influencer
P2	30	Male	Digital Marketer
P3	26	Male	Independent Musician
P4	35	Female	Visual Artist

P5	28	Male	YouTube Content Creator
P6	40	Female	Marketing Strategist
P7	24	Male	TikTok Video Creator
P8	32	Female	Journalist
P9	27	Male	Filmmaker
P10	45	Male	University Professor (Media Studies)
P11	21	Female	Instagram Fashion Blogger
P12	38	Male	Advertising Consultant
P13	29	Male	Podcaster
P14	34	Female	Writer
P15	31	Male	Graphic Designer

3.3. Data Collection

The method of primary data collection was semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants to talk about their experiences. Interviews took about 45-60 minutes and were either conducted through Zoom or in person based on the participant's convenience. The importance of doing interviews is in allowing thorough in where the participants' experiences, perceptions, and behaviours can be explored, and producing rich qualitative data which goes beyond quantitative measures to reveal more nuanced points of view (Hazari, 2024). Important areas of focus included algorithms, biases in visibility, creative diversity, and culture diversity. Participants were asked to explain their critical thoughts in detail so as to utilize their open-ended responses fully. For the best transcription with context accuracy, all interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. To make the study reliable, clarifying follow-up questions and response

expanding themes were introduced.

3.4. Data Analysis

The gathered information was processed via a thematic analysis, which is the preferred procedure used to describe the dataset through its qualitative properties. For codification, NVivo or other platforms for qualitative analysis were used as they offer more effective control over the data, and transcripts were coded in order. Thematic analysis involved familiarizing with the data, listing primary codes, defining themes, gathering details, and drawing pre-determined conclusions. These steps facilitated an in-depth interpretative understanding of the effects of algorithms on cultural consumption and creativity, giving an understanding of possible impacts on digital legislation, artistic interventions, and public comprehension.

4. RESULTS

Table 2 shows themes extracted from Nvivo.

Table 2: Themes Extraction.

Theme	Keywords	Participant Numbers
Algorithmic Personalization and Cultural Filter Bubbles	Filter bubbles, personalization, engagement, content curation, cultural diversity, self-reinforcing loops	P1, P2, P3, P6, P8, P10, P12
Visibility Bias and the Dominance of Popular Culture	Visibility bias, viral content, mainstream dominance, algorithmic favorability, niche suppression	P2, P4, P5, P7, P9, P11, P14
Platform Capitalism and the Commercialization of Art	Monetization, commodification, business model, artistic compromise, engagement-driven economy	P3, P5, P6, P8, P9, P12, P15
Creative Adaptation and Algorithmic Dependency	Algorithmic constraints, content frequency, audience reach, creative trade-offs, platform dependency	P1, P4, P7, P10, P11, P13, P14

Theme 1. Algorithmic Personalization and Cultural Filter Bubbles

The most relevant observation extracted from the data focused on algorithms of personalization regarding cultural consumption. Participants stated that social media was curating content based on their previous interactions with the platform (Chayka, 2025). People had mixed feelings toward the personalization—in contrast to some who tended to appreciate the convenience of algorithmic recommendations, others voiced concern for 'filter

bubbles' and were concerned that they would repeatedly consume same type in their endeavors to appreciate different cultural offerings (Burgess et al., 2025). Participants' impressions illustrated that social media companies prioritize engagement over diversity, rather than broadening cultural boundaries. A regular user of TikTok and Instagram shared their insights with me in the example below. P1, P2, P3 and P6 stated that:

The more I engage with a specific type of content, the less variety I get. At first, it was nice because it seemed like the algorithm was learning my preferences. But with time, it changed into this weird

feeling of no escape where I was stuck in this loop of the same type of music, art and discussions.

The quote demonstrates the paradox of personalization, which refers to the situation of enhanced user experience as a result of the algorithmic curation of content. It enables creativity and fuels reinforcement of cultural identity simultaneously (Hunt, 2025). Numerous participants noted their content feeds became more predictable over time, which meant they would have to actively search for unexpected cultural material or new content. P8, P10 and P12 stated that:

As a marketer, I understand how these recommendation systems work. Their focus is on engagement because that is what keeps users on the platform. As a user, it's annoying because I hardly come across fresh views or unknown artists unless I go looking for them."

This statement helps clarify some of the profit-driven motives that lie behind algorithmic personalization. Social media platforms operate under a business model focused on maximizing user retention, which often results in serving users content that aligns with their existing comfort zones (Koç, 2023). There is an almost guaranteed focus on engagement from the algorithmic perspective, which favors highly interactive, emotionally appealing, or viral content. These types of content do not integrate artistic and cultural diversity (Lury and Day, 2019).

Algorithmic personalization improves navigation and encourages the users to interact more with the content, but also poses systemic obstacles to the users' engagement with different cultures (McLuhan, 2019). With little to no active attempts to escape algorithmic patterns, users become trapped within a self-reinforcing feedback loop, which restricts access to new and diverse cultural expressions.

Theme 2. Visibility Bias and the Dominance of Popular Culture

A participant concern was that social media algorithms privilege popular and commercially viable content, creating obstacles for independent and lesser-known creators to be discovered. Many participants remarked that platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube favored posts that had high engagement, further instating popular culture's supremacy at the cost of alternative or niche artistry (Koç, 2023). This visibility bias precluded an ever-increasing number of viral creations regardless of any artistic or cultural merit while amplifying them, and made sure that experimented or lesser-known pieces of art struggled to gain traction (Moravec et al., 2025). P2, P4, P5 and P7 stated that:

I make music that is unusual and doesn't conform to mainstream popular music, and my posts are 'seen' only if they receive a lot of engagement in the first hour. The algorithm appears to favor content that has already received high engagement. That makes it almost impossible for smaller artists to be heard

The quote above exemplifies how visibility of a user's is directly linked to the user's initial engagement with the content, hence turning positive feedback into more positive feedback, popular content grows more popular, and other novel or unique creative content gets obscured.

A number of creators are worried that this system reduces forms of art to simple commodities, meaning they have to tailor their art to suit an algorithm instead of being original (Mahoney and Myers, 2025). P9, P11 and P14 stated that:

I used to make abstract, experimental digital art, but splashing content is not favored by Instagram's algorithm. I now make trendier content that is visually more captivating just to capture the eyes. It is frustrating because I feel like I am creating for the algorithm rather than for myself.

This captures the burden of the artist's work in accommodating the aesthetic of the platform which often gives more importance to visibility as opposed to art. An artist's ability to express themselves in a culturally iconoclastic manner is further stifled by the logic of engagement-oriented algorithms which makes sure that the culturally significant content which is most widely available controls the rest (Molina and Subias, 2024). The same fits in the context of the existing discourse surrounding platform capitalism when digital spaces shallows the content diversity by giving priority to the user engagement and advertisement profit over welfare (Koç, 2023).

Theme 3. Platform Capitalism and the Commercialization of Art

A common thread within discussions included the art commercialization issue, which stems from the influence of social media algorithms. Many creators cited digital platforms transforming their artwork into data and engagement driven economies where success was often tied to an algorithm's visibility, not actual artistic value (Onyejelem and Aondover, 2024). Some participants noted how Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube operate not as neutral tools for artistic distribution, but as business-centric ecosystems wherein commercially friendly content was given priority. P3, P5, P6 and P8 stated that:

When I started to post my work online, the art I was creating at the time served a purpose: it was art. I came to realize, rather quickly, however, that in order to get any visibility I was going to have to succumb to the whims of the algorithm...begging people to pay attention through shorter videos, shoving trending sounds and clever clickbait captions down their throats. My hands are tied where I am forced to present my creativity in a manner that best suites the business model of the platform.

This answer illustrates the problems of platform capitalism and its impact on art production: the need to modulate every artwork to guarantee maximum coverage and visibility gets in the way (Koç, 2023). As opposed to functioning as an open market for diverse artistic expression, social media platforms reward engagement-centric content, forcing artists to adhere to commercial aesthetic norms (Onyejelem and Aondover, 2024). Thematic analysis found that this shift was more problematic for independent creators who did not have access to the financial means necessary to fund social media advertisement or influencer marketing, which further perpetuated discrimination in artistic representation.

In addition, participants pointed out how the stated social media monetization policies deepened the commodification of art. With revenue from advertisements and sponsorship deals becoming the primary income stream for digital artists, content creation inevitably evolved into a business transaction instead of an artistic pursuit (Mahoney and Myers, 2025). P9, P12 and P15 stated that:

It is no longer about making music that speaks to you, now it's making content that meets the requirements of the algorithm. Songs are getting shorter, hooks are being frontloaded, you are basically making music for TikTok trends rather than albums.

The response shows that algorithmic governance has an impact not only on the visibility of art, but also its substantiation and form, which culminates in content homogenization. Molina and Subias (2024) argues that social media has undoubtedly amateurised audience access and it has brought about novel forms of gatekeeping where algorithmic preference usurps editorial and curatorial selection. Consequently, creators are often trapped in a struggle between inauthentic artistic expression and the need to exist algorithmically, in a world where commercial success is increasingly based on platform engagement workings rather than creative effort.

Theme 4. Creative Adaptation and Algorithmic Dependency

The participants tapped into how they are often required to transform their creative work towards algorithmic visibility, indicating a clear form of dependency on the platform mechanics. Most artists, musicians, and content creators admitted that while the social media offered them unprecedented access to audiences, it had also trained them to strategically alter their creative decisions in accordance with what runs the algorithms (Onyejelem and Aondover, 2024). This change was usually referred to as both a strategic imperative and a creative trade-off, as engagement metrics dictated everything including how often and when to post as well as the content theme and style (Putra and Afrilian, 2025). P1, P4, P7 and P10 stated that:

I used to spend weeks on a single piece, carefully constructing it and adding details to the story for each piece. Now I have to post something every day or every second day, otherwise the algorithm hides my work. So I end up throwing away detail and rushing through my art pieces to remain relevant. It is ridiculous, but if I take a break, I vanish from people's feeds.

The statement reveals the temporal constraints and production pressures that are imposed by the algorithmic platforms. Social media platforms, unlike traditional art markets which place importance on the longevity and depth, suffer from fast-paced engagement cycles (Read, 2025). Social media rewards artists for constant content output which makes it difficult to maintain sustainability. Social media users have stated that this has created a new form of artistic labor in which creativity has become subordinate to meeting the requirements of the algorithms which deepens the issues regarding platform capitalism's impact on cultural production (Putri et al., 2024).

Moreover, participants emphasized how their dependence on algorithmic curation impacted their ability to control audience engagement and reach (Park and Chun, 2025). Social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube work under non-transparent algorithmic logics, users often had to rely on blind experimentation to maintain visibility (Putri et al., 2024). P11, P13 and P14 stated that:

'I can post something today and it can reach a lot of people, but the next day, most of my posts do not reach any audience. I am not informed on the reasons because the platform does not share that information with me. I am perpetually in a loop of adapting – posting at different times, changing captions, using trending hashtags – everything in hopes to figure out what will work. It is like a game with ever changing rules.'

The response sheds light on the type of psychological and professional uncertainty that social media creators have to deal with considering how exposed they are to growing their careers online. Feeling unsure of oneself was a common experience in regard to how opaque algorithmic systems functioned, as content could either be visible or hidden for no reason at all (Molina and Subias, 2024). This unpredictability contributed to strategic over-adjustment, or excessive anxiety concerning a particular issue, in which artists became so concerned with platform mechanics that they refused to hone their craft. The phenomenon of creative adaptation and algorithmic dependency poses uncomfortable concerns regarding artistic agency and self-governance within the digital realm (Putri et al., 2024). It is no question that the advent of social media has made cultures more accessible, but this phenomenon has also made it possible to impose additional restrictions to artistry, with success becoming more and more determined by algorithmic parameters rather than creativity.

5. DISCUSSION

The results from this study indicate a clear gap in relationship between algorithmic curation and cultural consumption. Firstly, social media algorithms grant increased outreach. Users can interact with a broad spectrum of artistic and cultural content independent of prior gatekeepers. Nonetheless, this highly conditional state is flawed as recommendation systems use engagement-driven metrics that are predictable and repetitive constantly reshaping user experiences. Filter bubbles described by Putra and Afrilian (2025) can be seen in participant responses. Many reported their feeds becoming increasingly super homogenous, simplifying cultural exposure instead of broadening it. This phenomenon issue is often referred to as cultural fragmentation, one that is created as personalization curation curtails opportunities for unplanned discovery. In addition, participant also reported disappointment with the lack of transparency regarding algorithms' actions, complaining how content getting promoted and suppressed appeared completely outside their sphere of influence. Aligning with existing literature of algorithmic bias, these findings support the perspective that, as Park and Chun (2025) expresses, there is a clear gap between how digital platforms assert their neutrality and how they operate, the ranking and curation system they use tends to prioritize specific types of cultural content in comparison to others.

Another primary outcome is visibility bias towards mainstream cultural productions which is concentrated on commercial entertainment content leaving alternative, niche, or independent artistic expressions ignored (Putra and Afrilian, 2025). Participants, especially contents' creators, talked about the ease with which algorithmic ranking systems favor engagement-driven content, remarking the obscure and experimental pieces find it virtually impossible to gain recognition (Molina and Subias, 2024).

As a result, it seems that creators are constantly refining their artistic approaches in ways that cater to an algorithm's logic, ultimately creating works that are structured around the metrics of a platform rather than the artistry it encapsulates. This resonates with some of the literature that has raised red flags on the commercialization of cultural production (Park and Chun, 2025), in which social media platforms favor monetisable attention at the cost of diversity in art and culture. Respondents pointed out that content creation transcends artistic ingenuity to encompass the design and execution of algorithmic frameworks, one development of which is erosion of creative freedom and artistic diversity. The unpredictable character of the algorithms caused anxiety and professional disruption, as respondents reported being powerless against algorithmic changes that could instantly alter their reach and engagement metrics. This demonstrates the importance of the public debate regarding the responsibility and regulation of algorithms in relation to cultural engagement diversity or overuse of homogenization algorithms amplification (Chatterjee, 2024). As it stands, social media will continue being a dominant culture narrative usage tool instead of fostering authentic creativity to diversity.

6. CONCLUSION

This analysis explains the impact of social media algorithms on cultural consumption and artistic production, which is both informative and, at times, paradoxical. These platforms are said to provide greater access to and democratization of cultural distribution, while also perpetuating algorithmic bias, visibility hierarchies, and commercialism. This clearly suggests that algorithmic personalization contributes to cultural filter bubbles, which is over-reliance on certain dominant content with less exposure to diverse artistic expressions. Moreover, it has been shown that visibility bias tends to favor the always available content that is mainstream and engagement driven. Thus, creators are forced to conform their work to the dictated algorithm

objectives, stifling creative freedom. This also reminds us of the platform capitalism, whereas the example showed, cultural production is forced by monetization opportunities rather than artistic values. Overall, the findings deepen the discourse over the impacts exposed algorithm governance has for the cultural landscape. This underscores the need for more stringent measures, monitoring, and regulations to ensure that digital spaces nurture diversity rather than promoting standardization driven by commercial attention.

6.1. Limitations

This study has its own limitations within the findings. The sample size is the first limit; the study had a rather small sample, 15 which is not enough to generalize the results across the cultural and artistic communities. Moreover, the study used primarily qualitative approaches by conducting semi-structured interviews that were descriptive, albeit lacking the possibility for generalizability. Future research may improve this study by using quantitative approaches like surveys or secondary analysis to scope out the degree to which algorithms affect cultural consumption and artistic production. Another limitation is the participant bias regarding their views about the algorithms because such algorithms are dependent on user activity and engagement. In addition, the study did not consider variations across platforms, as different social media platforms have their own algorithms and each works

with specific engagement and visibility models. Responding to these deficiencies would permit a more detailed glimpse of the ways algorithmic curation impacts cultural production across various digital ecosystems.

6.2. Future Directions

Future studies ought to analyse the impact of artificial governance on cultural diversity over time, especially concerning new AI-based content recommendation technologies. Examining how various social media affect the permeability of artistic work and the freedom to create within different cultural industries would lead to deeper insights. Furthermore, cross analyses for the cultural consumption of platforms and media within traditional frameworks** may shed light on whether or not algorithms reproduce or disrupt pre-existing cultural structures. Policy based research could also be very important in addressing the regulatory gaps that allow, or even encourage, negative algorithmic bias, content homogenization, and over commercialization of independent authors. In addition, analyzing the impact of algorithmic transparency and access control mechanisms would be helpful to understand the extent to which platform governance can be activated to restrict participation and promote inclusivity of diverse cultures. After all, future studies cannot refrain from the study of the nexus of technology, culture, and power if we are to accomplish a sustainable digital cultural ecosystem.

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