

UNDERSTANDING PUBLIC RECEPTION

Towards the Ghiblification Trend

on X/Twitter using Sentiment and
Topic Modeling Analysis





Author

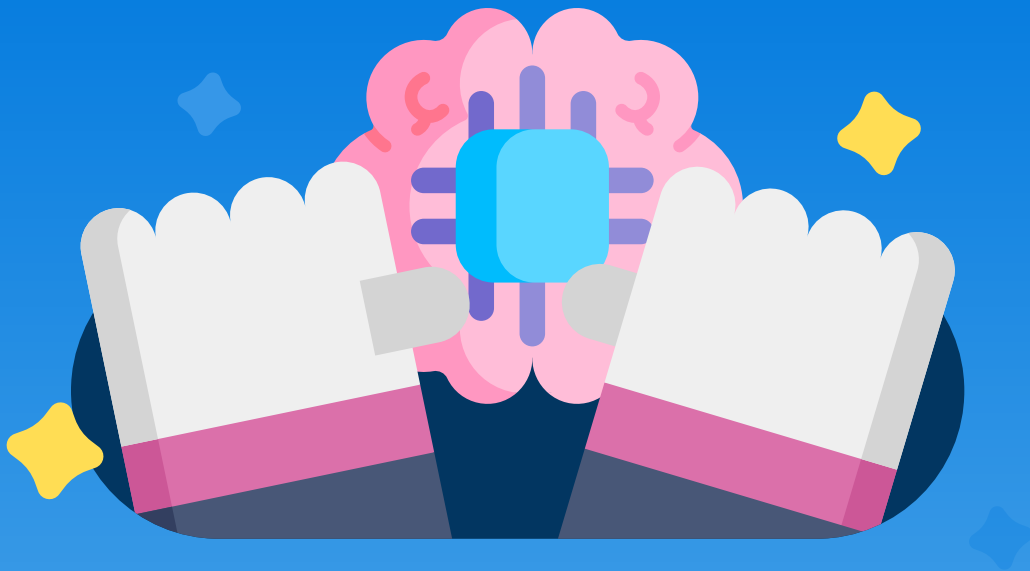
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➔ Introduction

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has brought significant transformation across various fields, from writing, music, and video, to now visual arts. Recently, OpenAI launched a feature on ChatGPT that allows users to generate images by mimicking the distinctive aesthetics of Studio Ghibli, a legendary animation studio from Japan famous for its highly characteristic works. This feature has sparked a viral trend known as "Ghiblification."

Immediately after its launch, social media platforms like X (Twitter) and Instagram were flooded with users sharing selfies, landscapes, and even photos of their pets transformed into the Ghibli style. The trend's popularity skyrocketed for several reasons. First, Studio Ghibli has a very loyal global fanbase, with films like *Spirited Away* and *My Neighbor Totoro* being their iconic popular films. Second, the feature's accessibility makes it easy for anyone to transform themselves into those classic anime.

Amidst this euphoria, the Ghiblification phenomenon has also ignited various controversies. Serious concerns have emerged regarding the legal, ethical, and privacy aspects of using a distinctive art style without permission from its owner. Furthermore, this trend has reopened the debate about the long-term impact of AI on the future of the creative industry, including how this technology could displace the role of human artists and change society's perception of the value of an artwork.

➔ Problem Formulation



How are the sentiment distribution and dominant topics in the public conversation on the X/Twitter platform regarding the Ghiblification phenomenon?

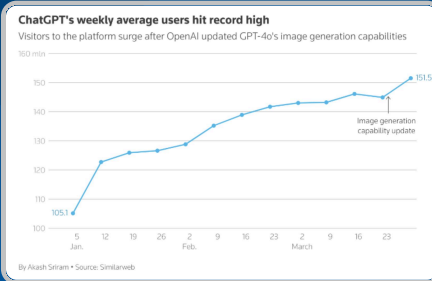


How does the Ghiblification phenomenon raise concerns about the future of the creative industry, particularly in legal (copyright), ethical (originality of work), and its impact on artists?

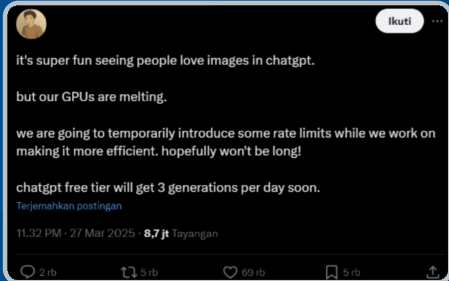


➔ The Development of GenAI and Its Ability to Mimic the Studio Ghibli Style

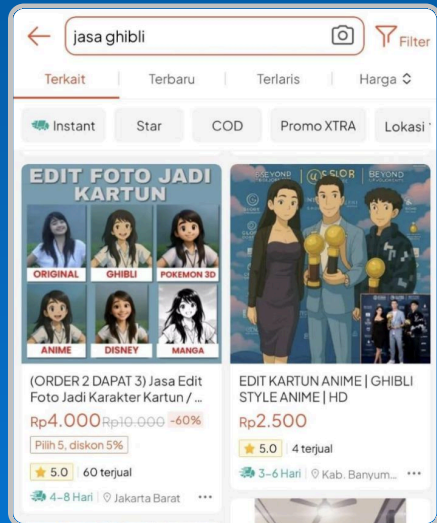
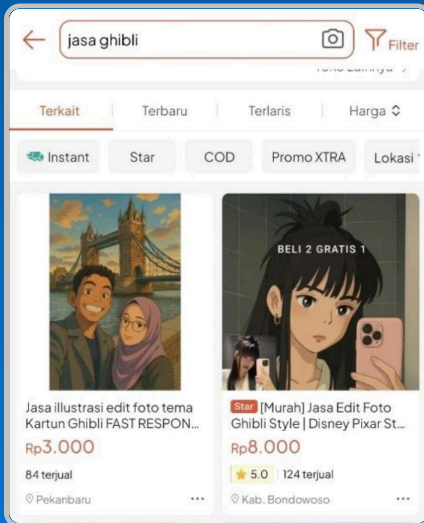
The Ghiblification phenomenon in Indonesia coincided with the Eid al-Fitr 1446 H celebration, where many people uploaded family photos that were then converted into the Ghibli style. The desire to see oneself in the Ghibli anime style was extremely popular. According to Reuters, data from Similarweb indicates the viral trend helped push the service's average weekly active users beyond 150 million for the first time ^[1]. The demand for this service was so massive that OpenAI CEO, Sam Altman, stated that their graphics processing units (GPUs) were "melting."



Graph by Reuters based on data from SimilarWeb, from an article by Akash Sriram (2023)



Unlike traditional digital illustration, which requires years of skill and practice, GenAI allows users to produce stunning visuals in mere seconds. This democratization of creativity is one of the main reasons for the popularity of AI-generated art [2]. However, this very ease is what triggers concern among professional artists, who feel that their years of hard work and artistic ability are now overshadowed by machine capabilities. This trend has even given rise to paid services to convert photos into the Ghibli style, which are scattered across various online stores like Shopee at relatively low prices.



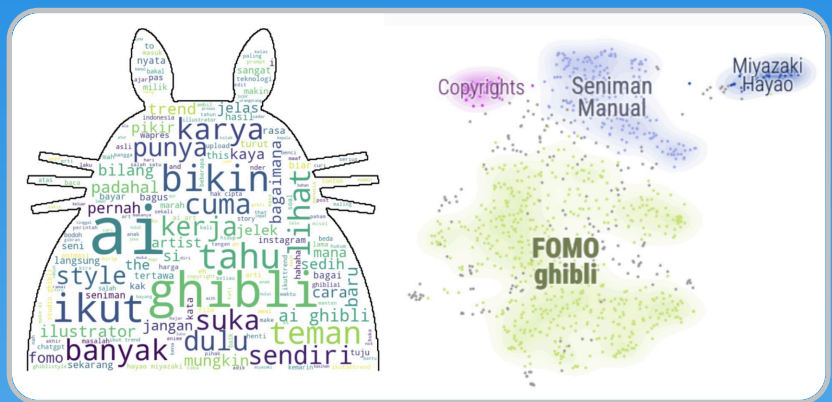
➔ The Ghiblification Trend and the Distribution of Discussion Topics

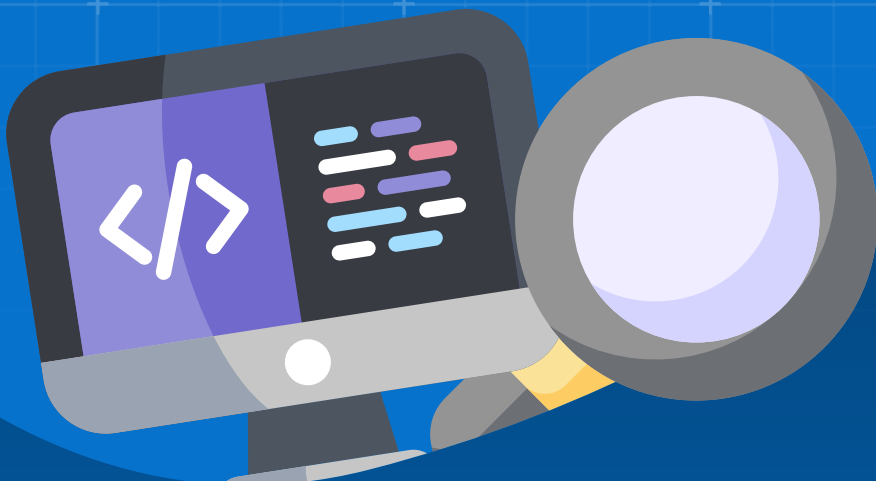
In Indonesia, the Ghiblification trend also spread widely, especially on social media platforms like X/Twitter and Instagram. The phenomenon was not only followed by the general public but also by popular accounts that shared Ghiblified results of various moments. Some even transformed important moments featuring political figures such as Prabowo Subianto, Joko Widodo, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, and even Soeharto, which garnered millions of views.



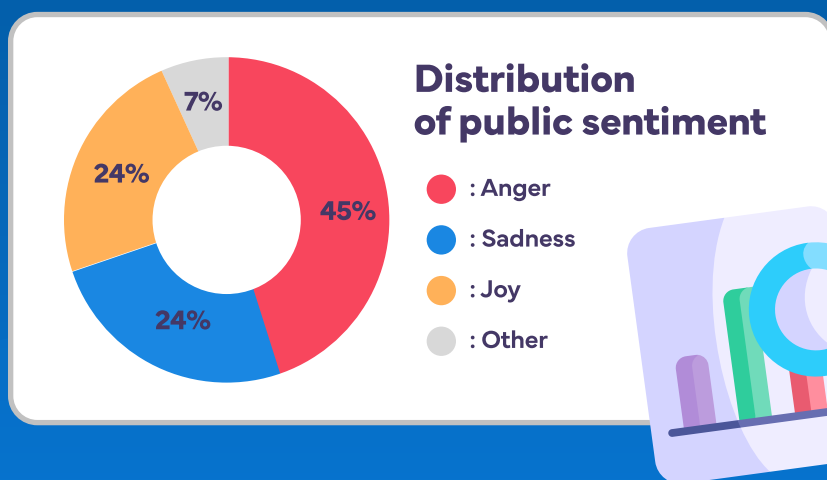
To understand the public response in Indonesia to this phenomenon, an in-depth analysis of conversations on the X/Twitter platform was conducted during the period of April 2025. Using the keyword "ghibli," a total of 1,036 of the most popular tweets from users in Indonesia were collected. This data was then processed using topic modeling and sentiment analysis methods, employing the pre-trained IndoBERT machine learning model, which is trained to understand sentiment to identify conversational themes and measure the distribution of public emotion.

The analysis results show that the public conversation tends to be critical, with many viewing the trend as a fear of missing out or FOMO without a deep understanding of its impact. The next major topic that also dominated the discussion was the criticism of Ghiblification as an insult to the manual labor of artists, where true art is considered to be born from human emotion and touch, not from a machine. Copyright issues also came under sharp scrutiny, with concerns that the AI model was trained using millions of copyrighted images to replicate a similar style. More specifically, many users felt that this trend disrespected Hayao Miyazaki, the central figure of Studio Ghibli.





The discourse on these topics is reflected in the distribution of public sentiment. The analysis shows that the emotional response was dominated by anger (45%), followed by sadness (24%) and joy (24%), with a small portion for other emotions like disgust and love (totaling 7%). his distribution shows that the gossip phenomenon tends to cause negative reactions dominated by the emotions of Anger and Sadness.



The sentiment of anger (45%) was the most dominant reaction. This was largely triggered by disappointment with the bandwagon phenomenon (FOMO) and the perception that the trend disrespects the hard work of illustrators and talented local artists. This anger was often expressed through strong ethical arguments. For example, some users explained that when AI "takes" the Ghibli style, it is essentially taking an illustrator's style without giving any credit, an act considered detrimental and disrespectful to the creative process behind it. Indeed, people's reluctance to suddenly transform their photos into Ghibli style needs to be scrutinized and educated on its impact before it escalates.



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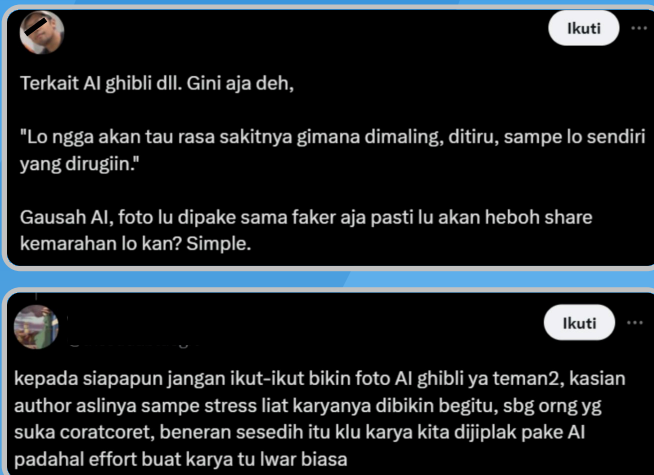
Mgkn awam byk yg blm tau ya, Al itu ngambil style ilustrator. Dlm hal ini style Ghibli. Jd kl km pk style Ghibli, km ngambil style ilustrator tsb. tanpa ngasih credit apa2 ke dia. Ini jelas merugikan dan ga menghargai kerja keras sang ilustratornya.

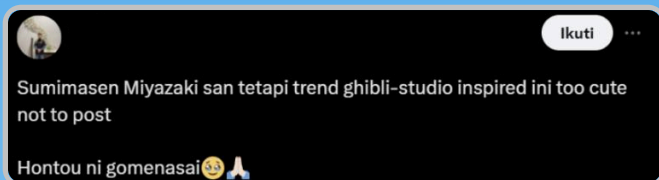


Ikuti

trend ai ghibli itu sangat menyakitkan buat para pekerja seni. karena itu jelas2 banget mencuri hak cipta orang lain secara terang2an.

The sentiment of sadness (24%) emerged as the second most significant emotional response, focusing on pity and empathy for artists who felt their work and unique style were being plagiarized and devalued. This sentiment often came from users who are also creators or at least understand the creative process. They expressed their sadness by imagining the feelings of the original artists whose work was being imitated. This feeling was reinforced by the argument that one can never understand the pain of having their work "stolen" until they experience it themselves. AI has gone too far in casually copying an artist's signature style, which requires a lot of effort.







➔ Future Concerns Regarding the Capabilities of GenAI in the Art World

Generally, copyright law is established to protect works created by individuals. However, the emergence of AI-generated art introduces a fundamental question of ownership, leaving it unclear whether the copyright belongs to the AI developer, the user who provides the command, or the AI system itself. In the context of Indonesia, Law No. 28 of 2014 concerning Copyright implicitly states that a work created entirely by a machine without significant human intervention does not receive copyright protection. This legal position suggests that works from AI can be considered part of the public domain and may be used freely.

Besides copyright complexities, there are also significant cybersecurity and privacy risks. Cases have been documented where user accounts on AI platforms were stolen and sold on the dark web, exposing their interaction history and generated images ^[3]. Furthermore, the use of Ghibli-style AI could potentially constitute copyright infringement, as the models are often trained using Studio Ghibli's visual works without permission. This infringement is not merely a legal issue but also creates a security loophole ^[4]. Imitative content without attribution can be exploited by irresponsible parties for digital extortion or social engineering, posing a long-term security risk that often escapes users attention.

→ Conclusion

The Ghiblification phenomenon serves as a relevant case study to examine the intersection of technological innovation, popular culture, and its ethical and legal implications. The trend highlights public enthusiasm for the ease of access to creative expression, but simultaneously sparks fierce debate about authenticity, copyright, and the future of artists.

The sentiment analysis of conversations on the X/Twitter platform in Indonesia shows that the public response is not uniform. Although some enjoy it as entertainment, the dominant sentiment is decidedly negative, centered on anger and sadness. This indicates a critical awareness among a segment of society regarding the issues of respect for artists, ethics, and intellectual property rights.

Ultimately, this trend underscores the urgency of creating a clearer and more adaptive regulatory framework for AI-generated art. A constructive dialogue is needed between technology developers, artists, policymakers, and the public to find a balance. This balance must be able to foster innovation without sacrificing fundamental values such as originality, respect for the creative process, and the protection of the rights of artists who are the backbone of the creative industry.

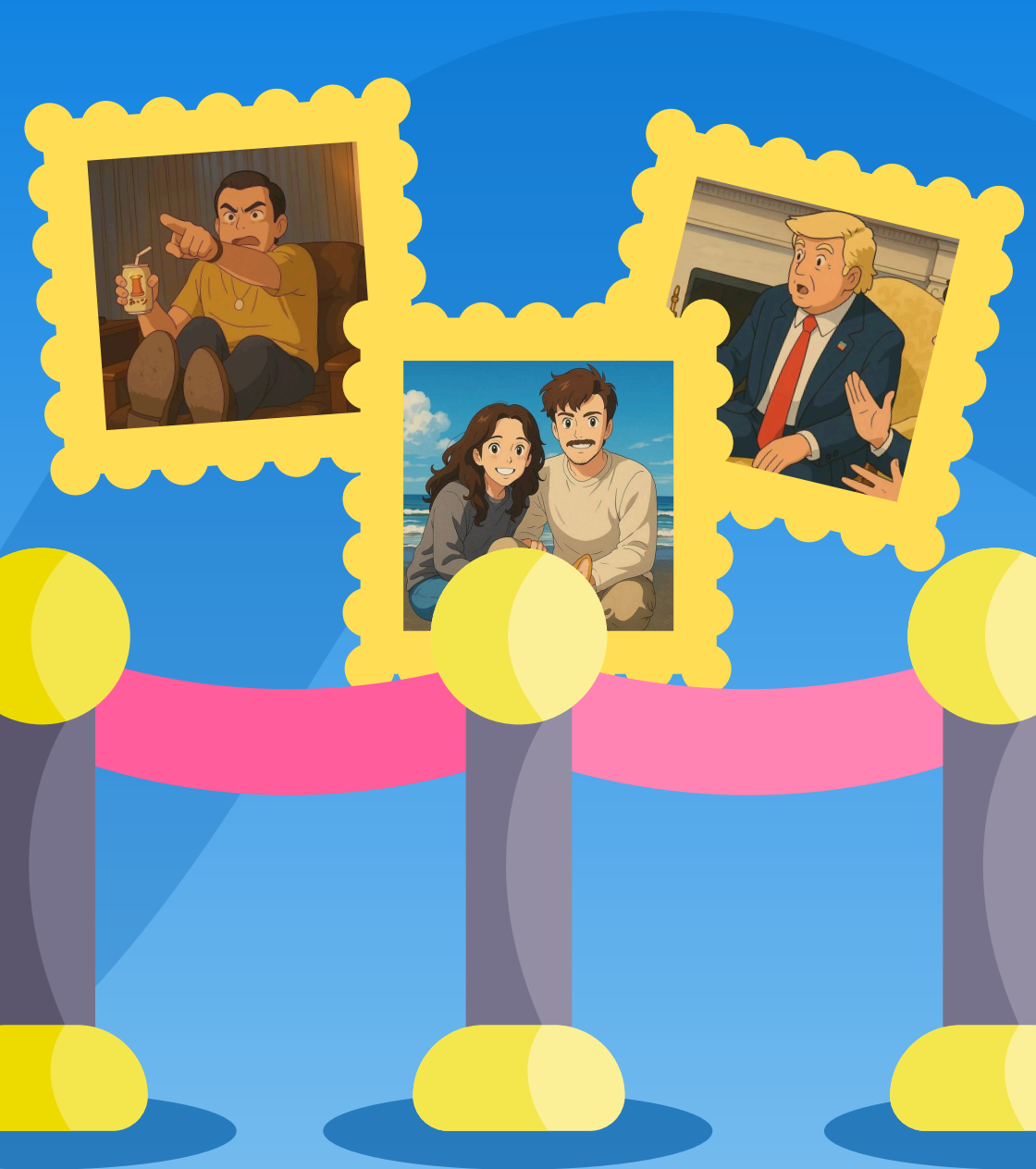
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