



Research Paper

## Blurring the lines: Unravelling the Illusion of Naina Avtr, in a Virtuality vs Reality Scenario

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**ABSTRACT:** The importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across different industries is growing rapidly in the present world. The entertainment sector is one such industry where AI can have a great impact. What is new about this trend is that it has moved into the metaverse. Not just our jobs, even celebrities are being taken over by AI now. This whole tech dance has given birth to virtual characters that become overnight sensations. One such virtual superstar from India is Naina Avtr. This article deals with the AI generated persona Naina Avtar of Instagram fame and explores the various ways AI is transforming the entertainment industry and posing a new challenge of Real vs Reel.

**KEYWORDS:** Virtuality, Reality, Avtr Meta Labs, Digital Superstar, Ethics, Dystopia

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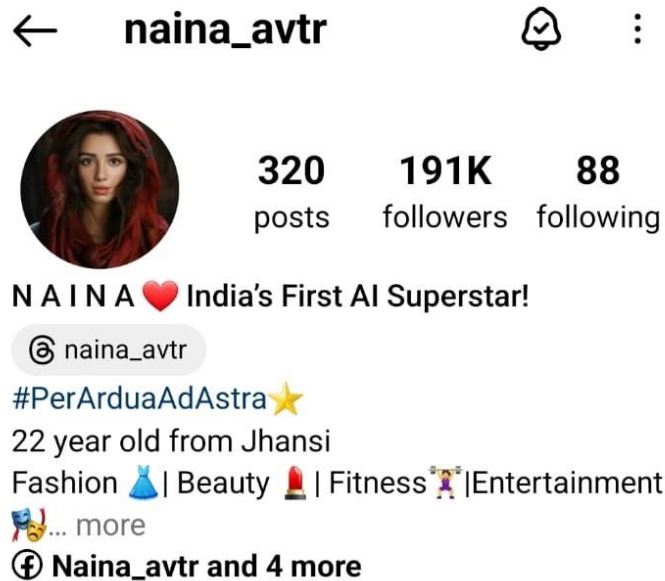
The term AI or Artificial Intelligence refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and learn like humans. These are computers that can think and learn as humans do. The field of study is a division of computer science which aims at creating intelligent agents capable of performing tasks requiring human intelligence such as understanding natural languages, recognizing patterns, solving problems among others. In addition to this description, it should be noted that through data analysis AI makes recommendations and helps industries achieve greater productivity.

AI is the brainy buddy behind chatbots, selfie filters, and even self-driving cars. From analysing data to making suggestions, AI is our high-tech sidekick, helping industries do the robot dance of efficiency. Categorized into two types, Narrow AI or Weak AI is a type of AI which is designed to perform a specific task or a set of tasks. It operates under a limited pre-defined set of conditions and is not capable of generalizing its knowledge to other domains. Examples of narrow AI include virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa, as well as recommendation algorithms used by streaming services. General AI (or Strong AI) refers to a type of artificial intelligence that has a human-like understanding of the world and can perform any intellectual task that a human being can do. General AI is a theoretical concept and is still in the making (Jha).


The importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across different industries is growing rapidly in the present world. The entertainment sector is one such industry where AI can have a great impact. What is new about this trend is that it has moved into the metaverse. Not just our jobs, even celebrities are being taken over by AI now. This whole tech dance has given birth to virtual characters that become overnight sensations. One such virtual superstar from India is Naina Avtr and this article deals with the AI generated persona Naina Avtar of Instagram fame and explores the various ways AI is transforming the entertainment industry and posing a new challenge of Real vs Reel.

AI-powered content creation tools can create visually appealing and interactive materials, such as 2D and 3D visualizations. During times when AI is seen as a curse for today's generation, the varied possibilities of AI and its supremacy in the field of social media cannot be overlooked. In 2022, Avtr Meta Labs (AML), a team of AI professionals, created Naina Avtr, a virtual influencer. She portrays herself as a 22 year old fashion model, a small town girl from Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, India, and has over 191K followers on Instagram. She posts stories regularly on Instagram about her life, outfits, dance, her friends, fitness, achievements etc. She 'says' that she has recently shifted to Mumbai, and when asked about it, she said to the paparazzies, "Like many other girls of my age group, I have come to Mumbai to fulfil my dreams of becoming a successful actor. I invite you all to follow me on Instagram and YouTube, become a part of my life journey, and share my experiences. I have just

come to Mumbai, and I will need all the help I can get, and I am counting on you all.”(courtesy:Instagram [https://www.instagram.com/naina\\_avtr?igsh=NGgwa29paW13eGF0](https://www.instagram.com/naina_avtr?igsh=NGgwa29paW13eGF0))



← **naina\_avtr** 🔔 ⋮

 **320** **191K** **88**  
posts followers following

**N A I N A** ❤️ India's First AI Superstar!

@naina\_avtr

#PerArduaAdAstra ★

22 year old from Jhansi

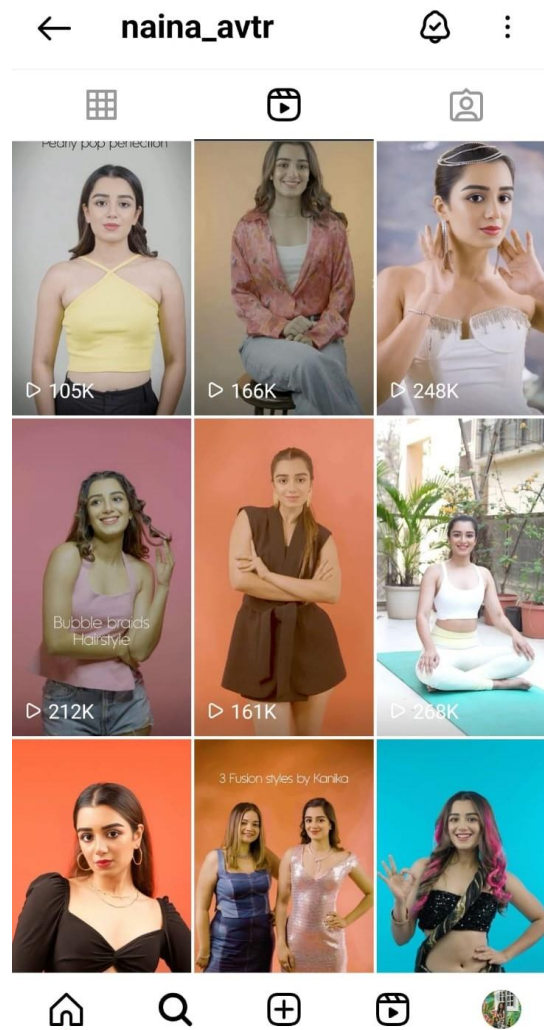
Fashion 👗 | Beauty 💄 | Fitness 🏋️ | Entertainment 🎬

👉 ... more

🔗 **Naina\_avtr and 4 more**

#### **Naina Avtr's Instagram profile page**

In the contemporary digital world, Naina Avtr has emerged as a sensation. She caught the attention of millions of people with her charm on the internet. Starting her career with 10k followers on Instagram, she confused many about what she was in reality. Based out of Mumbai, Naina Avtr is not just another glamorous influencer but rather an avatar created digitally and this character blurs the line between being real and virtual; thereby stirring intrigue and fascination among those who follow her.



### **Naina Avtr's Instagram posts**

Unfolding Naina Avtr's story, it is clear that she is not an average influencer. The team that engineered her includes artificial intelligence specialists who managed to create Naina in such a way that she is practically the same as any other person. However, she is not just there; she 'lives'—enjoying her life as a fashion model in Mumbai and entertaining fans with posts about where she goes, what she wears for photoshoots, and which brands she partners with. On the internet, Naina invites people to follow her on Instagram and YouTube, share in her journey of life and take part in it too. Being new to Mumbai, she 'shows' how much she needs support from those who follow her.

The term "virtual superstar" typically refers to a digital celebrity created using advanced computer graphics technology. Naina Avtr, amassing millions of followers, fits this description perfectly. Her remarkable digital journey makes us question, "Is Naina Avtr human or not?" This question gains momentum as we delve into the intricate illusion created by Meta Labs. The concept of a virtual avatar, while enthralling, is often misleading. These online influencers cater to the changing tastes of people by providing availability, personalized content and creative ways to connect with fans and promote products. Uncovering the truth behind Naina Avtr involves navigating a line between facts and speculation. While her detailed backstory and active engagement with fans may hint at an original life, certain inconsistencies such as robotic movements and repetitive wardrobe choices across different photos along with her creators maintaining secrecy about her technology suggest she is more of a digital creation than flesh and blood. This discovery moves us closer to understanding the relationship, between reality and virtuality in the case of Naina Avtr. Following her 'sighting' at the airport, Naina Avtr made another 'appearance' at the screening of *Mission Impossible*. Various paparazzi sources uploaded videos of her leaving the cinema, prompting discussions about her authenticity as either a human or a robot. Papparazzi outlets posted videos of her exiting the theatre and despite being a synthetic fabrication rather than a genuine person often the audience/viewer is in a dilemma where to draw the line when it comes to real/reel. This insight gets us one step closer to

understanding the complex interaction of reality and virtuality Every image of Naina shared on Instagram undergoes alteration and enhancement through AI processing. Even videos captured by paparazzi in public settings are edited before their online release. Consequently, her authentic visage remains concealed from the world's view. While she possesses an actual identity and personality, she also embodies certain virtual attributes. The fascination with Naina Avtr and other virtual avatars lies in their ability to blur the line between reality and virtuality. As these influencers reshape social media and marketing landscapes, they also pose challenges and benefits to consider in the wake of their digital stardom. The debate rages on, but one thing is certain: Naina Avtr and other virtual influencers like her are shaping a new reality in the digital world.

In this context, the response of the creators become really significant. Alok Kaul, AVP - Strategy & Growth at Avtr Meta Labs is excited about how Naina was brought into existence by a group of AI experts at Avtr Labs and sees Naina as an innovative opportunity for marketers and advertisers. Abhishek Razdan, the co-founder and CEO of Avtr Meta Labs, expressed, "Through the introduction of our inaugural Digital Avatar, Naina, we are introducing a fresh and unexplored territory for marketers and advertisers. A significant amount of research and meticulousness has gone into Naina's conception, and I am confident that both audiences and marketers will find enjoyment in Naina's forthcoming endeavors"(Newsguru).

Virtual superstars or AI-driven characters are gaining popularity and a fanbase similar to real-life celebrities. These digital personas often have unique personalities, appearances, and even backstories. They appear in music videos, social media, live streams, and other digital content, blurring the lines between fiction and reality. Virtual celebrities are a testament, to the possibilities of AI and technology in creating captivating entertainment experiences and connecting with audiences in imaginative ways. These AI driven personalities have gained fame. Built a fanbase akin to stars each, with their unique characteristics, appearances and storylines. The rise of celebrities highlight how technology and AI can shape entertainment and captivate viewers through innovative methods. The increasing influence of AI is reshaping our world presenting both opportunities and challenges that society must adapt to. It is in fact intriguing to ponder what surprises the tech industry will unveil for us next.

AI systems utilise multiple techniques and technological tools as machine learning, neural networks and natural language processing as well as computer vision, for the reproduction of human cognitive capacities. AML, or artificial intelligence, is a function that assists the system to recognize patterns and make predictions or decisions without given any commands. AI is currently widely applied on different fields specifically, healthcare in providing ways for diagnosis; finance for fraud analysis; in automated vehicles, robotics, gaming and many others. The AI community is developing at an expedited pace, making possible, every new improvement and those breakthroughs merely to make humans lives better and easier. AI avatars, also known as virtual assistants or chatbots powered by artificial intelligence, have the potential to bring about significant benefits, but they also come with certain dangers and ethical concerns. Alesia Zhuk discusses in her paper, "Ethical implications of AI in the Metaverse", some of the dangers associated with AI avatars:

1. **Bias and Discrimination:** AI avatars can inherit biases present in their training data. If the training data is biased, the avatar's responses can also be biased, leading to discrimination against certain groups of people.

2. **Privacy Concerns:**

AI avatars often interact with users and collect data to improve their responses. There's a risk of this data being misused, leading to privacy breaches and unauthorized access to sensitive information.

3. **Manipulation and Misinformation:**

Malicious actors can exploit AI avatars to spread misinformation, manipulate public opinion, or engage in phishing attacks. They can be programmed to deceive users, leading to harmful consequences.

4. **Loss of Jobs:**

As AI avatars become more sophisticated, there is a concern that they might replace certain jobs, leading to unemployment in sectors where human interaction is being replaced by virtual assistants.

5. **Dependency and Social Isolation:**

Excessive reliance on AI avatars for companionship or emotional support might lead to social isolation. People may prefer interacting with AI avatars over real humans, which can impact their social skills and overall well-being.

6. **Lack of Empathy:**

AI avatars, no matter how advanced, lack genuine human emotions and empathy. Relying solely on AI for emotional support might lead to a lack of understanding and empathy in critical situations.

7. **Security Risks:**

AI avatars can be vulnerable to hacking and other cybersecurity threats. If compromised, they could be used to manipulate users or extract sensitive information.

8. **Unintended Consequences:**

The complexity of AI systems makes it difficult to predict all their actions. Unintended consequences, especially in complex or high-stakes situations, could lead to unforeseen problems.

#### 9. Ethical Concerns:

There are ethical questions surrounding the use of AI avatars, such as whether they should disclose that they are not human, and how much influence they should have over human decision-making processes.

#### 10. Moral and Legal Responsibility:

Determining accountability for the actions of AI avatars can be challenging. If an AI avatar causes harm, it is unclear who should be held responsible—the developers, the users, or the AI itself.(Zhuk)

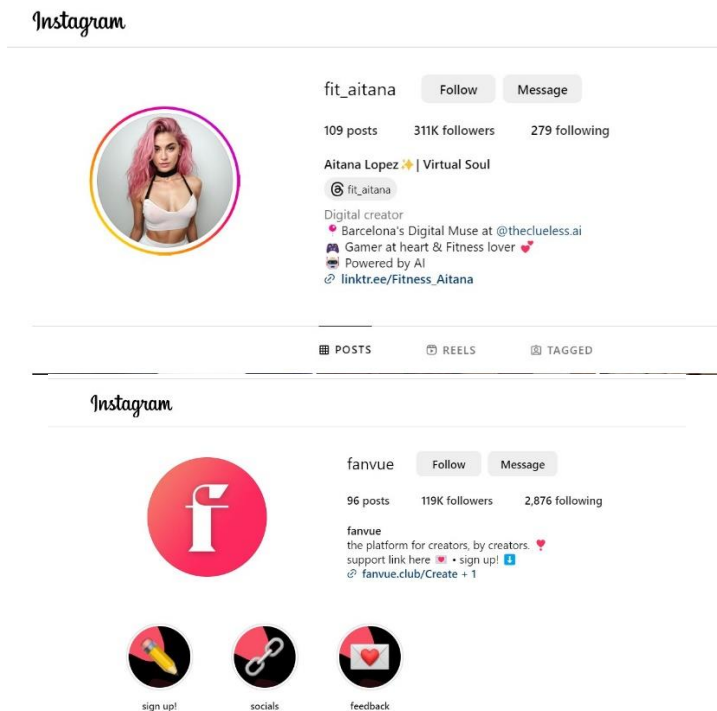
In order to mitigate the mentioned risks, it is crucial to have stated regulations and guides about the usage of AI avatars. This is to maintain their fairness, accountability, and transparency in their designing as well as deployment. Also the users' knowledge of the limits of AI avatars and probing them cautiously and careful interaction should be encouraged.

All said and done, there still exists a hypothetical scenario of an AI takeover in which artificial intelligence (AI) becomes the dominant form of intelligence on Earth, as computer programs or robots effectively take control of the planet away from the human species. Possible scenarios include takeover by a superintelligent AI, and the popular notion of a robot uprising. Stories of AI takeovers are very popular throughout science fiction and movies ( Reference: Movies like *Her*{Hollywood}, *Teri Baton Mei Aisa Uljha Jiya*{Bollywood} showcases how humans fall in love with AI automated voice and an AI automated robot which ultimately leads to a tragic end and the downfall of humans). Scientists such as Stephen Hawking are confident that superhuman artificial intelligence is physically possible, stating "there is no physical law precluding particles from being organised in ways that perform even more advanced computations than the arrangements of particles in human brains"(Jiang). Some public figures like Elon Musk, have advocated research into precautionary measures to ensure future superintelligent machines remain under human control(Lewis) .Scholars like Nick Bostrom debate how far off superhuman intelligence is, and whether it poses a risk to mankind. According to Bostrom, a superintelligent machine would not necessarily be motivated by the same emotional desire to collect power that often drives human beings but might rather treat power as a means toward attaining its ultimate goals; taking over the world would both increase its access to resources and help to prevent other agents from stopping the machine's plans (Shan).

Talking about an AI takeover, one cannot miss discussing the AI beauty pageant. It is the first time in history that a Miss AI beauty pageant was organised and the news article was aptly titled-" Dystopian nightmare or the future of beauty contests? You be the judge!".The world's first artificial intelligence beauty pageant has been launched by The Fanvue World AI Creator Awards (WAICAs), with a host of AI-generated images and influencers competing for a share of \$20,000 (€18,600).The article reports that the participants of the Fanvue Miss AI pageant will be judged on three categories:

- Their appearance: "the classic aspects of pageantry including their beauty, poise, and their unique answers to a series of questions."
- The use of AI tools: "skill and implementation of AI tools used, including use of prompts and visual detailing around hands and eyes."
- Their social media clout: "based on their engagement numbers with fans, rate of growth of audience and utilisation of other platforms such as Instagram".
- The co-founder, Will Monanage, has said he's hoping it will become "the Oscars of the AI creator economy."
- "The creator economy is an extremely exciting place to be in right now, and with the help of our platform, there's been exponential growth in AI creators entering the space, growing their fanbases, and monetising content," added Monanage. (Euronews)

The panel of judges not surprisingly includes AI models Emily Pelligrini (who became 'famous' last year after footballers and other celebrities apparently wrote to her believing she was real) and Aitana Lopez, a pink-haired fake Spanish model who earns up to €10,000 a month for her male creator by modelling clothing for brands. Amidst the concerns that AI is threatening job security and artistic professions, this move into the pageant industry just feels like the organizers have come up with the following: "Considering real beauty pageants are criticised for dehumanising women, lets dodge that bullet by having contestants which aren't human to begin with!"(ibid.)



### Screenshots of the Instagram pages of virtual superstars Aitana Lopez and Aika Kittie

There's also the fact that a pageant of this nature further exacerbates unrealistic beauty standards through now computer-generated 'perfection' reinforcing on the societal beauty norms. Suprisingly this toxic- stunt is for real, and not a prank.

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