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The Rise of AI in Journalism: Ethical and Practical Implications

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ABSTRACT
This study explores the rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within journalism, critically examining its ethical and practical implications. Employing a narrative analysis approach, a systematic literature review was conducted across prominent secondary data databases including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Key search terms used were "AI in journalism" OR "automated journalism" OR "robot journalism," "AI ethics in media" OR "journalistic ethics and AI," and "AI practice on news industry" OR "future of journalism and AI." The analysis identifies three main areas of focus: Ethical implications highlight critical issues of bias, credibility, and accountability inherent in AI-driven journalistic practices. Practical implications are discussed in terms of the increased efficiency and cost reduction afforded by AI technologies, contrasted with concerns over potential job displacement within the newsroom. Lastly, the study addresses transparency and trust, exploring audience reception and the broader societal acceptance of AI-generated news. This research aims to contribute to a nuanced understanding of the evolving role of AI in journalism, emphasizing the necessity for balanced ethical considerations alongside technological advancement.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Journalism, Ethics, Practice, Technological Advancement

INTRODUCTION

Integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into journalism has revolutionized news production, content creation, and audience engagement. AI-powered tools, such as natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning algorithms, now assist in generating automated news articles (Peng et al., 2024), fact-checking (Gutiérrez-Caneda and Vázquez-Herrero, 2024), and data-driven reporting (Iordanishvili and Kacharava, 2024). These advancements enable media organizations to increase efficiency (Subroto et al., 2024), reduce costs (Horska, 2020), and provide real-time coverage (Huang et al., 2023). However, as AI-driven journalism evolves, numerous ethical dilemmas and practical challenges require critical evaluation.

One of the primary concerns is credibility and accuracy (Adams, 2020; Al-Zoubi et al., 2024). While AI-generated content can rapidly process and disseminate news, it is prone to errors, misinformation, and biases inherent in the training data (Sonni et al., 2024). Additionally, bias and fairness arise, as AI systems may unintentionally reinforce discrimination or promote selective narratives (Ferrara, 2023). The lack of transparency and accountability further complicates AI's role in journalism, raising questions about who is responsible for the content generated by AI-driven systems (Franzoni, 2023). Furthermore, AI's increasing role in journalism raises concerns about job displacement as automation threatens traditional journalistic roles (Karim Schapals, 2020; Møller et al., 2025).

Beyond ethical considerations, the practical implications of AI in journalism warrant discussion. AI enhances the speed and efficiency of news production but also reduces the necessity for human oversight (Sharma et al., 2024; Sonni et al., 2024), potentially affecting journalistic integrity. It provides a cost-effective solution for media organizations yet may diminish the depth and investigative rigor of journalism (Aljalabneh et al., 2024). Additionally, AI-generated news is generally perceived as less credible than human-written news. This perception can negatively impact the acceptance of AI-generated content among audiences (Waddell, 2018; Wang and Huang, 2024).

This concept paper explores these ethical and practical implications through a narrative analysis of existing literature. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how AI-driven journalism is framed in academic discussions while identifying key challenges and proposing future directions for responsible AI integration in journalism.

AI in Journalism: Evolution and Applications

The evolution of AI in journalism has reshaped how news is produced, distributed, and consumed, bringing both opportunities and challenges to the media industry. Early applications of AI in journalism primarily focused on automating structured, data-heavy reporting, such as financial summaries, sports recaps, and election results (Quinonez and Meij, 2024). News organizations like Reuters, Bloomberg, and The Washington Post have successfully integrated AI-driven tools, such as Lynx Insight, Cyborg, and Heliograf, to generate news stories with minimal human intervention (Aissani et al., 2023; Quinonez and Meij, 2024; Taha et al., 2024). AI tools have revolutionized journalism by enhancing efficiency, reducing the time required to produce news stories, and enabling the rapid dissemination of information (Albizu-Rivas et al., 2024). These tools also play a crucial role in minimizing human errors, particularly in data-

heavy reporting like financial news, where precision is paramount (Kuaiber et al., 2024). Additionally, AI-driven systems allow news organizations to expand their coverage to a broader range of topics and events without a proportional increase in human resources (Sharma et al., 2024), making news production more scalable and cost-effective (Santos-Gonçalves, 2024).

While AI-generated news can enhance speed and scalability, scholars argue that it lacks the depth, investigative rigor, and human intuition necessary for nuanced storytelling (Chu and Liu, 2024; Longoni et al., 2022). There is also growing concern about how AI systems select and prioritize information, particularly in politically or socially sensitive topics where algorithmic biases may shape narratives (Palacios Barea et al., 2023; Peters, 2022). As AI continues to evolve, its role in journalism is no longer limited to automation; it is increasingly being used in fact-checking (Dierickx and Lindén, 2024), audience engagement (Sonni et al., 2024), and content personalization (Sharma et al., 2024), offering new possibilities for the media industry while simultaneously raising ethical and editorial challenges. The question remains whether AI will serve as a complement to traditional journalism or eventually redefine the profession altogether.

METHODOLOGY

This concept paper employs a narrative analysis approach to explore the ethical and practical implications of AI-driven journalism. A qualitative secondary data analysis is conducted using scholarly discussions and existing literature to understand how AI's role in journalism is framed within academic and media discourse. By examining various perspectives, this study seeks to identify emerging themes, ethical dilemmas, and practical concerns surrounding AI integration in journalism. The study relies on secondary data collected from reputable academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. The data sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference proceedings, ensuring a comprehensive overview of AI-driven journalism from multiple academic and professional standpoints.

A systematic literature search is conducted using key terms such as:

- “AI in journalism” OR “automated journalism” OR “robot journalism”
- “AI ethics in media” OR “journalistic ethics and AI”
- “AI practice on news industry” OR “future of journalism and AI”

To ensure data credibility, an inclusion and exclusion criterion is applied. The study includes research published within the last 5 years, focusing on AI's ethical and practical implications in journalism. Studies that focus purely on AI technical development without media relevance, opinion-based articles without empirical support, or non-academic sources are excluded. A narrative analysis is used to categorize and interpret the collected literature. The analysis identifies key patterns and discursive themes regarding credibility, bias, transparency, accountability, job displacement, audience reception, and regulatory challenges. By examining how scholars and media experts discuss AI in journalism, this study aims to provide a structured overview of the ethical and practical considerations shaping AI’s role in

news media. Since this study is conceptual in nature, it does not involve primary data collection or empirical testing. Instead, it synthesizes existing knowledge to highlight research gaps and propose directions for responsible AI integration in journalism.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Ethical Implications of AI in Journalism: Bias, Credibility, and Accountability

The rise of AI in journalism has undoubtedly introduced significant advancements in how news is produced and disseminated. However, with these benefits come substantial ethical concerns, particularly around bias, credibility, and accountability. These issues cannot be ignored as AI systems are increasingly tasked with creating content, fact-checking (Gutiérrez-Caneda and Vázquez-Herrero, 2024) and even influencing editorial decisions. One of the most pressing concerns is bias. AI systems, after all, learn from data, and the data they use can be inherently biased. Whether it is training data that reflects historical prejudices, or the biases embedded in algorithms themselves, AI can easily perpetuate stereotypes and reinforce harmful narratives (Baines et al., 2024; Leiser, 2022). Furthermore, AI models trained on biased datasets can perpetuate societal biases, leading to skewed reporting. This is particularly concerning in journalism, where AI is increasingly used to automate news writing, data analysis, and content personalization (Mahony & Chen, 2024). For instance, biased datasets can result in AI systems favouring certain demographics or viewpoints, thus influencing the narrative and potentially spreading misinformation (Leiser, 2022; Wu et al., 2022).

However, there are counterarguments that suggest AI can help reduce bias. Xivuri and Twinomurinzi (2023) argue that, when designed thoughtfully, AI can process vast amounts of data more objectively than human journalists, who may also carry their own biases. In this sense, AI could, in theory, reduce human errors and unconscious bias in reporting. However, this optimistic view often overlooks the fact that AI's "objectivity" is only as good as the data it has trained on (Roshanaei, 2024). If AI systems are trained using biased historical data, the results will inevitably mirror those biases. This makes it critical for AI developers and media organizations to actively work on mitigating bias by diversifying datasets and continuously testing their models for fairness.

Another major ethical concern is the credibility of AI-generated news. Given that AI can produce news quickly and at scale, the question arises: Can we trust this content? AI may be able to generate grammatically correct and factually accurate reports on topics like financial markets or sports, but how reliable is it when covering complex political events or human-interest stories? As Jones et al. (2022) discuss, while AI's efficiency is advantageous, its lack of nuance and contextual understanding can lead to superficial or misleading content. For example, AI may fail to capture the human element of a story or miss subtle but important details that a human journalist would instinctively understand. When it comes to sensitive topics, such as elections or public health crises, this lack of depth can erode the credibility of AI-generated news (Aljalabneh et al., 2024; Leiser, 2022).

On the other hand, some argue that AI's credibility can be ensured through the proper integration of human oversight. For instance, Ningish (2024) emphasizes that AI can be a tool

to support journalists, not replace them. AI can handle routine tasks like reporting sports scores or stock market movements, while journalists focus on more complex reporting requiring human judgment. This division of labour could ensure that AI's speed and efficiency do not compromise the overall credibility of the journalism produced (Quan, 2024). However, again, this relies on a careful balance: human oversight can catch errors, but it does not eliminate the fundamental issue that AI cannot still think critically or understand the broader implications of its outputs.

Lastly, the issue of accountability is one of the most significant ethical challenges when it comes to AI in journalism. If AI produces misleading or biased content, who is responsible? Unlike human journalists, AI systems cannot be held accountable in the traditional sense. Sonni et al. (2024) highlight the complexity of assigning responsibility when AI makes errors, as the decision-making process of AI systems is often opaque and difficult to trace. If AI-generated content goes viral and misleads the public, does the responsibility lie with the media organization that deployed the AI? The developers who created the algorithm? Or the AI itself, which cannot be held accountable in the same way a human journalist could?

Lee et al., (2024) suggest AI developers and media organizations must work together to create frameworks that distribute accountability according to each party's expertise. This collaboration ensures that AI systems are contextually relevant and ethically sound, as developers may lack the necessary understanding of journalistic values. When AI is used to generate content, media organizations must ensure that their audience knows it is AI-produced, and that clear human oversight is involved. This level of transparency could help build trust and provide a clearer chain of accountability, making it easier to address ethical lapses (Olanipekun, 2025).

In summary, while AI offers tremendous potential for transforming journalism, it also presents significant ethical dilemmas that cannot be overlooked. The issues of bias, credibility, and accountability require careful consideration and a balanced approach. It is clear that AI, while efficient, needs to be used thoughtfully, with proper safeguards in place to ensure that it upholds the ethical standards of journalism. By addressing these concerns and integrating human oversight, AI can become a tool that complements, rather than compromises, the integrity of the news industry.

Practical Implications: Efficiency, Cost, and Job Displacement

As AI becomes more integrated into journalism, its practical implications are undeniable. From improving the efficiency of news production to lowering operational costs, AI promises to alter how newsrooms operate significantly. However, along with these benefits come concerns over the displacement of traditional journalism jobs and the potential for AI to diminish the depth and quality of news coverage.

One of the most lauded advantages of AI in journalism is its ability to enhance efficiency. AI systems can quickly process vast amounts of data, generate news reports, and even tailor content to specific audiences. Automated tools like Bloomberg's Cyborg and Reuters' Lynx Insight automate the generation of news stories, particularly in areas like financial reporting and sports, where data is abundant and structured. This automation allows

for the rapid production of news articles, ensuring timely dissemination of information, automates the creation of financial news stories, allowing for rapid response to breaking news and provides depth in data analysis (Quinonez and Meij, 2024). This speed is invaluable, particularly for time-sensitive topics where real-time updates are essential. Verma (2024) noted that AI enhances data reporting and personalization, allowing newsrooms to quickly deliver tailored content to audiences. This capability is crucial for maintaining relevance and competitiveness in the fast-paced news industry.

However, this efficiency comes with a trade-off. While AI excels at producing large volumes of content quickly, it often lacks the depth and contextual understanding that human journalists bring to complex stories (Lermann Henestrosa et al., 2023; Sonni et al., 2024). For example, AI systems are adept at generating straightforward news reports but struggle with topics requiring investigative reporting, emotional nuance, or ethical judgment. Sonni et al. (2024), highlights that while AI can handle routine tasks, such as summarizing earnings reports, it may fall short when it comes to investigative or analytical reporting that is central to traditional journalism. Without the critical thinking and human insight that journalists bring, AI-generated content could potentially lead to more superficial or formulaic news coverage.

On the topic of cost, AI offers significant cost savings for news organizations. By automating routine tasks like writing short-form articles or producing financial updates, media outlets can reduce the need for large editorial teams (Banafi, 2024; Yeung and Dodds, 2024). This cost efficiency is particularly appealing in an industry that has faced financial pressures, with many traditional news outlets struggling to adapt to the digital age.

However, this reduction in costs also raises concerns about job displacement. With AI automating tasks previously handled by journalists, such as generating reports or curating news, many fear the impact on jobs within the media industry. Asmarantika et al. (2024) stated that AI technologies are employed for administrative and essential functions, such as transcribing and initial research, which traditionally involved entry-level journalists. This automation can lead to job displacement in roles focused on repetitive tasks.

On the other hand, some researchers argue that AI's impact on jobs may be less dramatic than expected. Gutierrez Lopez et al. (2023) suggest that AI should not be viewed as a replacement for human journalists but that it will still play a vital role in maintaining journalistic integrity and values. AI tools enhance efficiency and reduce costs by automating mechanical processes, rewriting texts, and generating content ideas, which can replace human labour in these areas (Yuan Fanbu et al., 2024). In this view, AI can be seen as an augmented tool rather than a substitute, enhancing the work that journalists already do, rather than eliminating it. For example, AI could help journalists identify trends in data or quickly generate basic reports, allowing them to spend more time on in-depth investigations or feature pieces that add value beyond what an AI can generate.

Still, the fear of job loss remains significant for many journalists. The rapid pace of AI development means that job displacement is a real concern, especially in roles that do not require advanced expertise. The automation of entry-level jobs is already happening in industries like finance and retail, and the same trend is likely to spread to journalism. This raises the question of how media organizations can balance the cost-saving benefits of AI with the need to preserve jobs in the newsroom. Human-AI collaboration, as suggested by Wang and Lu (2025) and Santhosh et al. (2023), might be the way forward. AI can support journalists by automating menial tasks while journalists focus on storytelling, investigative reporting, and

ethical considerations. This collaborative approach could help alleviate the fear of widespread job loss while still benefiting from the efficiency of AI. It also has the potential to create new job opportunities by generating demand for new activities and enhancing human capabilities (Lanamäki et al., 2024).

In summary, while AI brings considerable benefits in terms of efficiency and cost savings, its impact on job displacement and the quality of journalism is more complex. AI can enhance productivity and reduce costs, but these gains should not come at the expense of journalistic integrity or the human element of storytelling. A balance must be struck where AI complements human journalists rather than replaces them. As the media industry navigates this transformation, ongoing discussions about job displacement and the ethical implications of AI in journalism will continue to shape the future of news production.

Transparency and Trust: Audience Reception of AI-Generated News

As AI becomes increasingly integrated into the fabric of journalism, the issue of transparency plays a crucial role in maintaining public trust. The rise of AI-generated news has introduced significant challenges regarding how audiences perceive the trustworthiness and authenticity of the content they consume. Transparency the clear communication of when and how AI is involved in content creation is not just a technical detail but a matter of ethical responsibility for media outlets. This discussion explores how disclosing AI involvement can impact audience trust and how transparency practices can help bridge the gap between AI technology and the audience's expectations.

The first point of concern is that audiences may not trust AI-generated news as much as human-produced content. Many people still perceive news created by AI as less authentic, despite the impressive advancements in machine learning and natural language processing. The public remains sceptical of AI-generated content, fearing that it lacks the human insight, contextual understanding, and ethical judgment that come with traditional journalism (Da, 2024; Toff and Simon, 2024; Jia et al., 2024). This scepticism is rooted in the belief that human journalists are better equipped to navigate complex, nuanced stories, especially in areas like politics, ethics, or social issues, where AI may struggle to fully grasp the broader implications. As Toff and Simon (2024) suggests, while AI is effective in processing large datasets and producing factual reports on straightforward topics, it cannot yet replicate the critical thinking and contextual nuance human journalists bring to more complex stories. This can lead audiences to question the authenticity of AI-generated news, especially when it comes to sensitive or controversial topics (Chen, 2024; Kirk and Givi, 2025).

However, some researchers argue that AI can be trusted, provided the systems are designed ethically and transparently. Klein and Walther (2024) suggest that, if media organizations are open about their use of AI and clearly disclose when a piece of content has been AI-generated, audiences may be more inclined to accept it. They argue that transparency such as labelling AI-generated content and explaining the role of AI in news creation can help build trust by demystifying the process and allowing audiences to understand how the content is produced. This openness could mitigate the fears that AI is operating in a "black box," where decisions are made without clear accountability or oversight (Kwao et al., 2023). The key is not necessarily that AI is involved in content creation, but rather how it is presented to the audience. When readers know that an article was generated by AI and are made aware of the

system's limitations, they may be more willing to engage with the content critically, rather than dismissing it outright.

This brings us to the issue of how transparency is practiced. It's one thing to disclose that AI is involved, but how that disclosure is done matters just as much. Park and Yoon (2024) emphasize that, it must be a clear explanation of the algorithms and data that drive the AI, as well as the editorial processes in place to ensure the quality of the content. Transparency needs to be meaningful and informative; it's not enough to simply say, "This article was created by AI." Instead, media outlets should provide context on the sources of the data the AI uses, how it analyses that data, and how editorial standards are upheld even when AI is part of the process (Cools and Koliska, 2024). This deeper level of transparency would not only help build trust but also create a clearer line of accountability. If AI-generated news goes wrong whether due to error, bias, or misinformation having a detailed account of how the content was produced would help determine responsibility and guide corrective actions.

Moreover, the audience's reception of AI-generated content is also influenced by cultural perceptions and trust in technology. While some audiences are more open to accepting AI-generated news especially in markets where AI is more widely trusted others remain wary. In societies where there is a general mistrust of technology or AI, audiences may be more reluctant to accept AI-driven journalism, regardless of transparency practices. In such cases, transparency alone may not be enough to overcome deeply ingrained fears about AI (Laitinen and Sahlgren, 2021).

In summary, transparency is a vital element in maintaining audience trust in AI-generated journalism. While AI offers significant efficiencies and capabilities, its integration into news production requires careful consideration of how to disclose its involvement without undermining trust. By practicing transparency not just in labelling content but in explaining the processes behind AI-generated news media organizations can help mitigate scepticism and ensure that their audiences remain engaged and informed. However, as with any technological shift, the effectiveness of transparency will depend on both the quality of disclosure and audience reception, which varies across different cultural and societal contexts. Ultimately, clear and honest communication about AI's role in journalism will be key to bridging the gap between the technology and the expectations of the public.

CONCLUSION

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in the media industry should be fully utilized and not regarded as a threat. However, it is crucial to establish a proper code of ethics for AI usage to prevent its exploitation for unethical purposes, such as collecting information from unknown sources which could undermine the integrity and quality of journalism. AI can undoubtedly assist journalists in several ways, including expediting the research process and identifying emerging trends, but it cannot take the essential role of journalists in delivering the public with accurate, significant, and high-quality news. In other words, AI serves as a tool to support and enhance journalists' work, but it cannot take the place of journalists' actual roles. Articles produced by AI are unlikely to match the standards of those produced by experienced journalists, and even articles produced by AI may be questionable in their authenticity. Journalism scholars in Malaysia argue that there is a need for clear regulations and policies on the use of AI in journalism to protect privacy, ethics and news quality. They also emphasize

that the expertise of journalists remains essential in the industry, particularly in providing a human perspective and reporting on real-life situations (Sualman, 2024; Heong, 2024).

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