

Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Media Practices and Ethics: A Study of Channels Television and the Guardian Newspaper

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Abstract—This study examines the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in Nigerian journalism, with particular focus on its current use, its effects on newsroom processes and workflows, its ethical implications, and the future relevance of journalists in an AI-driven media environment. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, using data collected from 10 respondents drawn from selected media houses. Findings reveal that AI has become an important tool in journalism practice, supporting activities such as news writing, research, transcription, fact-checking, data analysis, and content production. The study further shows that AI enhances efficiency, speed, and accuracy in news production, while also expanding access to information and reducing operational costs. However, the findings also indicate that AI presents significant challenges, including the risk of over-reliance, job displacement, data security concerns, and ethical issues such as plagiarism, misinformation, and reduced originality. In terms of ethical implications, the study highlights concerns regarding accuracy, objectivity, accountability, and the potential manipulation of information through AI-generated content. Despite these challenges, the study finds that AI is unlikely to replace journalists entirely, but rather to complement their roles by automating routine tasks and enabling greater focus on investigative and creative functions. The study concludes that while AI is transforming journalism practice in Nigeria, the human element remains indispensable. It recommends the development of ethical guidelines, investment in training and infrastructure, and the adoption of AI as a supportive tool to enhance, rather than replace, journalistic practice.

Index Terms—Artificial Intelligence, Journalism, Nigerian Media, News Production, Media Ethics, Technology Adoption

I. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to the development of computer systems capable of performing tasks associated with human intelligence, such as learning, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving (Castro & New 2016; Carlson:2016). It is broadly described as the simulation of human intelligence by machines (Broussard et al. 2019; Britannica; Merriam-Webster), encompassing technologies such as machine learning, neural networks, and speech recognition (Saleh 2019). This study conceptualises AI as the scientific programming of machines to perform human-like functions through coded instructions, enabling applications across sectors including healthcare, finance, education, and media.

Historically, AI dates back to the 1956 Dartmouth Conference, widely regarded as the foundation of the field, where pioneers such as John McCarthy, Alan Turing, Marvin Minsky, Allen Newell, and Herbert Simon formalized the concept of intelligent machines (Dartmouth Workshop, 2023). Since then, AI has driven innovations in surveillance systems, digital communication, automation, and virtual interactions, significantly enhancing efficiency and productivity across industries.

Journalism, defined as the systematic gathering, processing, and dissemination of information in the public interest (Thuram, Lewis & Kunert 2019), plays a vital role in democratic societies. It is guided by principles such as truth, accuracy, objectivity, and ethical responsibility, while adapting to technological advancements (American Press Institute 2023). Modern journalism operates across print, broadcast, and digital platforms, increasingly incorporating tools

such as data analytics and AI to improve content creation and distribution (Britannica). However, the integration of AI into journalism raises concerns about job displacement, ethical standards, and the preservation of originality.

Media practice encompasses the processes of media production, distribution, and consumption, including their societal impacts. It involves key dimensions such as media effects, ethics, regulation, and innovation. Media ethics emphasize values like fairness, accountability, and social responsibility, while media regulation ensures compliance with legal and professional standards. Media innovation, driven by technological advancements, has expanded access and audience engagement (Oxford Academic).

In Nigeria, media practice is characterised by a dynamic, yet challenging environment shaped by political interference, economic constraints, and ethical concerns. Despite constitutional guarantees of press freedom, media practitioners often face censorship, poor welfare conditions, and professional limitations. Regulatory bodies such as the National Broadcasting Commission and the Nigerian Press Council play key roles in maintaining standards, while ongoing reforms aim to strengthen ethical compliance and media independence (Guardian Nigeria).

Ethics in media practice addresses issues such as privacy, bias, misinformation, and accountability, particularly in the context of emerging technologies. Nigerian media ethics are guided by frameworks such as the Code of Ethics of Journalists in Nigeria (2022) and the Media Co-Regulation Framework, which promote professionalism and responsibility while addressing contemporary challenges in the media landscape (Guardian Nigeria).

AI is increasingly transforming media organisations in Nigeria, including Channels Television and The Guardian Newspaper. Channels Television utilises AI for automated video editing, content recommendation, and news verification, enhancing efficiency and audience engagement. Similarly, The Guardian employs AI for digital storytelling, audience analytics, and automated journalism processes, while exploring emerging technologies such as augmented reality and chatbot-driven interaction.

Overall, the integration of AI into journalism represents a significant shift in media practice, offering opportunities for innovation and efficiency while raising critical ethical and professional

concerns. This evolving relationship underscores the need for balanced adoption, regulatory frameworks, and continuous capacity development within the media industry.

II. HISTORY OF THE TWO MEDIA HOUSES

Channels Television began operations following the deregulation of Nigeria's broadcast sector in 1992 and was licensed in 1993, transmitting on UHF channel 39. Since commencing full broadcast two years later, it has grown into a leading television station with an audience exceeding 20 million viewers. The station was established to provide an alternative platform for communication, promote government accountability, accommodate diverse viewpoints, and uphold the principles of balanced reporting, objectivity, and fairness. Renowned for its professionalism, Channels Television has received multiple national awards, including the Nigerian Media Merit Award for Best Television Station of the Year 14 times, earning it the title "Station of the Decade." Its workforce comprises over 200 trained professionals, many of whom have received international training and recognition.

The Guardian Nigeria, founded in 1983, is an independent newspaper committed to balanced reporting and the promotion of Nigeria's national interest. It maintains no affiliation with political, ethnic, or religious groups and upholds democratic ideals, individual freedom, and social responsibility. The newspaper supports free enterprise while advocating responsible state intervention to ensure equity and access to basic needs. It emphasizes justice, accountability, and equal protection under the law, while also recognizing Nigeria's role in the global community. Its guiding philosophy is reflected in its motto, "Conscience, nurtured by Truth," symbolising its commitment to integrity, ethical journalism, and national development.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid advancement of technology has accelerated the digitalization of mass media, leading to the widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) across various sectors, including journalism. While AI offers significant opportunities for enhancing efficiency and productivity in media practice, journalism remains a profession governed by

established ethical standards that regulate its operations and ensure credibility.

Existing studies have examined the impact of AI on journalism, particularly in relation to newsroom transformation, content production, and professional roles (Lopez et al., 2020; de Lima Santos & Ceron, 2021). However, these studies have paid limited attention to the ethical implications of AI integration within media practice. This gap raises concerns about how AI adoption may affect core journalistic values such as accuracy, originality, accountability, and fairness.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the extent of AI adoption in media practice, its influence on newsroom processes and workflows, and its implications for journalistic ethics. By focusing on these dimensions, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the intersection between AI, media practice, and ethical standards.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the specific applications and current extent of artificial intelligence (AI) adoption in the selected media organizations?
2. In what ways does the integration of artificial intelligence influence the processes, routines, and overall workflow of media practices within the selected media houses?
3. What are the ethical implications of artificial intelligence usage on journalistic practice, particularly in relation to professional standards such as accuracy, objectivity, accountability, and originality?

Empirical Review

Kim (2019), in “AI in Journalism: Creating an Ethical Framework,” examined the ethical implications of artificial intelligence in journalism and proposed a framework for its responsible use in newsrooms. Using in-depth interviews with twelve participants from journalism, technology, and law, the study identified key ethical concerns such as bias, lack of transparency, regulatory challenges, and issues of algorithmic attribution. It recommended the adoption of structured ethical guidelines and best practices to guide AI integration in journalistic processes.

Similarly, Amponsah and Atianashie (2024), in “Navigating the New Frontier: A Comprehensive

Review of AI in Journalism,” investigated the integration of AI in journalism, focusing on its impact on professional practice, ethics, and future developments. Through an in-depth analytical approach supported by case studies, the study highlighted both the benefits of AI such as improved efficiency, personalisation, and data-driven reporting and its associated challenges, including ethical concerns, job displacement, and the spread of misinformation. The findings showed that AI is transforming journalism through automation, augmentation, verification, and personalisation, while raising ethical issues related to transparency, accountability, and bias. The study emphasised the need for ethical standards and industry-wide collaboration.

Also in a related study, Nnamdi and Nwanyanwu (2021), in “Utilisation of Artificial Intelligence in Journalism in Nigeria,” explored the adoption, challenges, and opportunities of AI in Nigerian journalism using a descriptive and analytical approach based on secondary data. The study found that AI contributes to newsroom automation, investigative reporting, fact-checking, and personalised content delivery. However, it also identified challenges such as infrastructural deficits, including inadequate electricity supply, limited technological infrastructure, financial constraints, high internet costs, and insufficient training. Ethical concerns such as bias, lack of transparency, and reduced creativity were also highlighted. The study concluded that AI enhances rather than threatens journalism and recommended increased adoption and adaptation among journalists in developing countries.

Despite these contributions, existing studies largely focus on the general impact of AI on journalism, its technological applications, and broad ethical concerns. There is limited empirical attention to how AI specifically influences media practice and ethical standards within particular media organisations, especially in the Nigerian context. Furthermore, few studies adopt primary data approaches to examine the lived experiences and perspectives of media practitioners regarding AI integration. This study therefore addresses this gap by providing an in-depth, qualitative analysis of the impact of AI on media practice and ethics, with specific reference to selected Nigerian media organizations.

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Mediamorphosis Theory

Mediamorphosis Theory, propounded by Roger Fiddler (1997), explains the evolution of media forms as a continuous process shaped by technological, social, and economic factors. The theory posits that new media do not replace existing ones but rather coexist, adapt, and interact within an evolving media ecosystem. It provides a useful framework for understanding the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into contemporary media practice.

In the context of this study, AI represents a significant technological advancement driving the transformation of media practices in Nigeria. Consistent with the principles of mediamorphosis, media organisations are adopting AI tools for functions such as automated journalism, data analysis, and audience engagement. For instance, AI enables the generation of news content, summarisation of information, and the use of chatbots and virtual assistants to enhance real-time interaction with audiences. These developments illustrate the convergence of traditional journalism with emerging technologies.

The theory also highlights the role of changing audience behavior in shaping media evolution. With increasing demand for personalised, interactive, and immediate content, AI-driven systems such as recommendation algorithms and tailored newsfeeds have become essential in meeting audience expectations. This reflects the adaptive nature of media systems as they respond to shifts in consumption patterns.

Furthermore, mediamorphosis theory underscores the ethical implications of technological integration. The use of AI in journalism raises concerns related to transparency, bias, accountability, and data privacy. Media organisations must ensure that AI-generated content is clearly disclosed, algorithms are designed to minimize bias, and user data is handled responsibly. These ethical considerations are critical to maintaining public trust and professional standards.

Additionally, the theory situates media within a broader ecological system, emphasizing the impact of AI on media consumption, communication dynamics, and societal interactions. It also highlights the need for journalists to adapt to technological changes through continuous training and skill development, particularly in AI literacy.

In conclusion, mediamorphosis theory is highly relevant to this study as it provides a framework for understanding how AI is reshaping journalism practice in Nigeria, while also emphasising the coexistence of new and traditional media forms and the need to address emerging ethical challenges.

VI. METHODOLOGY

Research design refers to the logical structure that links empirical data to research questions and conclusions (Trochim, 2005; De Vaus, 2001). This study adopts a qualitative research design, which is appropriate for exploring non-numerical data and gaining in-depth insights into the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on media practices and ethics in selected media organisations. Qualitative research involves the collection and analysis of textual, audio, or visual data to understand experiences, perceptions, and concepts (Bhandari, 2020).

The primary data collection method employed in this study was in-depth interviews. This method enables the researcher to obtain detailed information regarding participants' perspectives, experiences, and insights on AI integration in journalism (Bhandari, 2020). It is particularly suitable for exploring complex issues such as media practices and ethical considerations.

The sample size for this study were 10 respondents which comprises of editorial and managerial staff of the selected media organisations: Channels Television and The Guardian Newspaper in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, the sample includes four (4) line editors, one (1) editor, and one (1) managing editor from The Guardian, as well as one (1) general manager and three (3) line managers (news, current affairs, and programs) from Channels Television, resulting in a total of ten respondents.

These respondents were purposively selected based on their roles, experience, and active involvement in newsroom operations and decision-making processes. Their positions provide them with relevant knowledge and insights into media workflows, professional practices, and the ethical implications of AI adoption. The selected media houses were chosen due to their established reputation for professionalism and adherence to ethical standards.

In this study, data was collected from the editors, managers and line editors of the selected media houses through the use of a structured question guides. The

line editors interviewed are the editors of the news, feature, politics, business, health and the Managers of program, current Affairs and news respectively. These beats were chosen because of their consistency in reporting.

The Guardian newspaper is located at House 103 Rutam 109, Apapa Oshodi expressway, Lagos State and the Channels Television is at 44/48 Channels Avenue Isheri North Lagos State respectively. The data collected in the study was analysed thematically.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Research Question 1: The Current Use of AI in Nigerian Journalism Practice

Findings from the 10 respondents across the two selected media houses indicate that artificial intelligence (AI) has been significantly integrated into contemporary journalism practice in Nigeria. Respondents reported that AI is utilised in various professional tasks, including news writing, voice-to-text transcription, automated fact-checking, information gathering, and data analysis. In addition, AI supports key production processes such as story development, scripting, editing, commentary generation, content creation, streaming, and video editing. It also plays an important role in audience analytics by enabling journalists to understand audience preferences, including patterns in viewers' interests and engagement.

Furthermore, respondents identified AI as a valuable educational and research tool that facilitates learning and professional development. It enhances the ability of journalists to study media trends, evaluate audience reach and participation, and contribute to agenda-setting processes within the media landscape. In the context of news gathering, AI is employed to identify trending topics and emerging issues, which are subsequently developed into news content within the newsroom. The findings also highlight the role of advanced technologies, such as satellite systems, in enabling the rapid acquisition and dissemination of information. This contributes to the timeliness and immediacy of news reporting. Moreover, AI-driven applications are capable of automatically generating news stories and improving content quality by detecting and correcting errors in language, structure, and tone, in accordance with user-defined standards.

Research Question 2: The Effects of AI on the Processes and Workflows of Nigerian Media Organisations

Findings from the respondents indicate that the effects of artificial intelligence (AI) on the processes and workflows of Nigerian media organisations are dual in nature, encompassing both positive and negative dimensions.

On the positive side, respondents noted that AI enhances efficiency and productivity within media operations. It simplifies task execution and assists in identifying details that may be overlooked by human journalists due to fatigue or time constraints. AI enables real-time information generation, rapid data processing, and swift dissemination of news content. It also supports automated fact-checking, thereby improving the accuracy and credibility of information before publication. Furthermore, AI facilitates research and learning by providing quick access to background information with a high degree of speed and accuracy.

In addition, AI contributes to increased speed in news production, expanded access to informational resources, and reduced operational costs. It supports data verification, content recommendation systems, and automated article generation, while also helping media organisations to identify potential viral stories and trends. These capabilities collectively enhance newsroom efficiency and responsiveness.

However, respondents also highlighted several challenges associated with the integration of AI into media workflows. A major concern is the risk of over-reliance on AI, which may diminish the human element in journalism and result in content that appears mechanical or lacking in depth. Issues related to copyright, ethics, and accountability were also identified, alongside concerns about the reliability of machine-generated information, which may still contain errors.

Moreover, respondents expressed concerns about the potential impact of AI on employment, suggesting that it may contribute to job displacement and encourage intellectual complacency, particularly among less experienced journalists who may depend heavily on automated tools for content creation. Additional challenges include the need for specialised training to effectively deploy AI systems, risks of data breaches and cybersecurity threats, and the potential for information theft through system vulnerabilities. Cost

implications and infrastructural limitations were also identified as barriers to effective AI adoption. While AI offers significant benefits in improving efficiency and productivity in Nigerian media organizations, its limitations underscore the continued importance of human involvement. Human journalists remain essential for contextualizing stories, engaging with sources, and ensuring ethical standards and accountability in the practice of journalism.

Research Question 3: The Implications of AI on the Ethics of Journalism

The findings reveal that artificial intelligence (AI) has significant implications for journalistic ethics, particularly in relation to core principles such as accuracy, objectivity, truthfulness, and accountability. Respondents emphasized that while AI can support fact-checking processes, its misuse or over-reliance may undermine the verification of information and the credibility of news content.

A key ethical concern identified is the issue of proper attribution and plagiarism. The use of AI-generated content raises questions about originality and intellectual ownership, as journalists may rely on machine-generated outputs without adequate citation of sources. This practice has the potential to compromise established ethical standards related to transparency and accountability in journalism.

Furthermore, respondents noted that excessive dependence on AI for writing and content creation may diminish journalistic creativity and encourage intellectual complacency among reporters. This could ultimately weaken originality and reduce the depth and quality of reporting.

The findings also highlight the risk of AI being used to generate misleading or false narratives, thereby facilitating the manipulation of information and contributing to unethical reporting practices. In particular, the use of AI-enhanced visual and audiovisual content, such as altered images or videos, raises serious ethical concerns, as such materials may misrepresent reality and violate established broadcasting standards. This is especially significant in relation to regulatory frameworks, including those enforced by national bodies such as the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC), as well as similar regulatory institutions in other jurisdictions. While AI offers valuable tools for enhancing journalistic practice, its integration poses critical ethical

challenges. These challenges underscore the need for responsible use, adherence to professional standards, and the continued oversight of human journalists to ensure ethical compliance in media practice.

Research Question 4: The Future Relevance of Journalists in the Era of Artificial Intelligence

The findings indicate that the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) has generated considerable debate regarding the future relevance of journalists and the profession of journalism. Respondents acknowledged that the adoption of AI remains uneven, as not all journalists have fully integrated these technologies into their professional practice.

Participants observed that the increasing use of AI may lead to the emergence of leaner newsrooms, characterised by reduced workforce requirements. While such transformations may enhance operational efficiency, there are concerns that they could also diminish the depth, creativity, and critical analysis traditionally associated with journalism. This suggests that although AI has the potential to streamline newsroom operations, it may simultaneously challenge the qualitative richness of journalistic output.

Despite these concerns, respondents generally expressed optimism about the continued relevance of journalists in the evolving media landscape. They emphasized that journalists would remain central to the processes of information gathering, verification, interpretation, and dissemination. The human element particularly in terms of contextualisation, ethical judgment, and engagement with sources is expected to remain indispensable.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that AI is more likely to augment rather than replace journalistic practice. By automating routine and repetitive tasks, AI can enable journalists to focus on more complex, investigative, and creative aspects of their work. In this sense, AI is positioned as a complementary tool that enhances efficiency and innovation within the profession. While AI may contribute to a reduction in the number of personnel required in newsrooms, it is unlikely to render journalists obsolete. Instead, it is expected to redefine and elevate the role of journalists, integrating them into a more technologically advanced and adaptive model of media practice.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings, the study recommends that media organization invest in continuous Training and Capacity Building. Skill development programs equip journalists with the knowledge and competencies required to effectively use AI tools. There should be Development of Ethical Guidelines. Regulatory bodies and media organisations should establish clear ethical frameworks for the use of AI in journalism, particularly in areas such as content generation, attribution, and verification.

Media organizations should adopt AI as a complementary tool rather than a replacement for human journalists, ensuring that human oversight remains central to news production. In other words, there should be a Balanced Integration of AI. Also, measure should be put in place to strength data security. Media Organisations should implement Robust Cyber security Systems to protect against data breaches, hacking, and information theft associated with AI technologies. Investment in Infrastructure is needed to support the effective deployment of AI in Nigerian media organisations. Promotion of Originality and Creativity is crucial necessity. Journalists should be encouraged to maintain originality and critical thinking in their work, even when using AI tools. Government and relevant regulatory bodies should develop Policy Formulation and Regulation to guide the responsible use of AI in media practice, ensuring accountability and transparency.

IX. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that artificial intelligence is playing an increasingly significant role in shaping journalism practice in Nigeria. Its integration into media workflows has introduced greater efficiency, improved content production, and enhanced access to information. However, the adoption of AI also presents critical challenges, particularly in the areas of ethics, professional standards, and employment. The risks associated with misinformation, loss of originality, and over-dependence on automated systems highlight the need for cautious and responsible use of AI technologies.

Importantly, the study concludes that AI cannot replace the human elements of journalism, such as critical thinking, ethical judgment, creativity, and the ability to contextualize information. Instead, AI should be viewed as a supportive tool that enhances journalistic practice.

Therefore, the future of journalism lies in the effective integration of AI with human expertise, ensuring that technological advancement does not compromise the core values of the profession.

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