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Research Article

Ethical and Professional Implications of Artificial Intelligence for Journalistic Practice in Plateau State, Nigeria

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in journalism is transforming news production, distribution, and fact-checking processes. This study examines the ethical and professional implications of AI in journalism practice in Plateau State, with a specific focus on the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Plateau State Chapter. Anchored on the technological determinism theory, the study adopted the survey research design. The population for this study was 312 registered and licensed journalists at the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Plateau State Chapter. Due to the relatively small size of the population, the study employed a total enumeration approach rather than sampling. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to all members, and 278 valid responses were retrieved and used for analysis. The study found that majority of respondents (55%) were very familiar with AI-powered tools in journalism. 100% of the respondents were aware of AI-powered journalism tools such as ChatGPT, Google News AI, Grammarly, and Automated News Writing Software. In conclusion, this study has highlighted how AI-powered tools enhanced journalistic efficiency, accuracy, and fact-checking while they simultaneously raised concerns about misinformation, sensationalism, and source privacy. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommended that the Nigeria Union of Journalists should encourage training in AI literacy programmes, so as for journalists to use AI-powered tools ethically, enhance accuracy, and participate in policy discussions for responsible AI integration in journalism.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Technology has been and continues to be a crucial factor influencing the practice of journalism. As outlined by Vaglis and Bratsas (2017), the dynamic shifts in journalism can be directly attributed to advancements in technology. Within this context, Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies have emerged as indispensable components, triggering significant transformations within the field of journalism (Galily, 2018). Ombelet et al., (2016) view technology as an objective force driving changes in journalistic practices and skillsets. Modern media production now demands technology integration, leading to the question of how technology fits into news production. Mark et al., (2017) emphasised that AI's role in reporting, content creation, distribution, and audience engagement is growing, with developments in crowdsourcing, brainstorming, and fact-checking tools aiding data collection and structuring. Automation has become pivotal for newsrooms to stay competitive in the industry.

Globally, every profession has its own set of ethics that guide practitioners to achieve excellence. Journalism as a profession embodies ethical principles that must be respected by professionals to gain the trust of the public. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and news medium to adhere to the highest professional and ethical standards (Segun, 2015). One major concern related to the issue of ethical journalism, is the recognition that the internet is eroding the culture of meticulousness associated with the ethics of conventional reporting displacing what most journalists refer to as armchair journalism (Edeh & Uzochukwu, 2017). There was consensus that the internet encourages lazy journalism as journalists currently rely on the internet rather than wandering outside and engaging with employing news sources (Nnaemeka & Benson, 2017). Some journalists pointed to the danger of creating what they portrayed as a Google journalist, i.e. someone who depends on the internet for everything, and what is created by that they lose touch with real people (Ibrahim et al., 2021). While it is difficult to pinpoint the moral tenets of these experts, some journalists' opinions suggest that fact-checking, accuracy, and most importantly, meticulousness, a hallmark of traditional journalistic morality, may be at risk (Edeh & Uzochukwu, 2017). The Nigerian Union of Journalists in Plateau State seeks to promote ethical journalism by ensuring that journalists follow the professional code of ethics. This code incorporates concepts such as truth, fairness, impartiality, respect for privacy, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

AI has been increasingly adopted in journalism to enhance efficiency and productivity. Technologies such as Natural Language Processing (NLP) and machine learning algorithms enable the automation of tasks like news writing, fact-checking, and data analysis (Lewis et al, 2019). For instance, The Associated Press uses AI to generate quarterly earnings reports, freeing up reporters to focus on investigative journalism (Marconi, 2020). AI tools also help personalise content for audiences, improving engagement and user experience (Broussard et al., 2019). However, these advancements bring challenges, including potential job displacement and ethical concerns over algorithmic bias. Despite AI's growing presence, studies suggest varying levels of awareness among journalists about its capabilities and implications. For example,

journalists may use AI-powered tools without fully grasping how algorithms prioritise certain types of content, potentially perpetuating biases or misinformation.

AI's integration into journalism raises significant ethical concerns. Algorithms that curate or create content can introduce biases, undermining journalistic objectivity (Biasin et al., 2021). Additionally, the lack of transparency in AI decision-making processes challenges accountability. Journalists need to understand these implications to ensure responsible use of AI technologies. Ethical training on AI usage should be prioritised to equip journalists with the skills to critically assess AI's impact on their work. Enhancing awareness among journalists about AI's impact requires targeted interventions. Educational initiatives, such as workshops and seminars, can help journalists understand AI's functionalities and limitations (Smith & Anderson, 2020). Collaboration between newsrooms and technology developers is also crucial for creating user-friendly AI tools that align with journalistic values. Furthermore, incorporating AI ethics into journalism curricula can prepare future journalists to navigate these challenges effectively. Awareness among journalists about AI's impact on journalism is critical for the ethical and effective integration of these technologies. While AI offers significant opportunities to enhance journalistic practices, it also presents challenges that require informed engagement. By prioritizing education, ethical training, and collaboration, the journalism industry can ensure that AI supports, rather than undermines, its core principles of truth, accountability, and public service.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into journalism has introduced significant ethical and professional complexities, reshaping the practice of journalism globally. While AI-driven journalism enhances efficiency in content creation, fact-checking, and source verification, it also raises concerns about potential biases, errors, and the erosion of ethical standards. Scholars such as Brandtzaeg et al., (2018) highlight efforts to address these issues through guidelines focusing on transparency, privacy, and fairness. However, the lack of adequate oversight, insufficient training for users, and limited transparency in AI systems exacerbate challenges related to accuracy, objectivity, and editorial accountability (Ali & Hassoun, 2019; Young et al., 2022). Moreover, the adoption of AI technologies in journalism disrupts traditional media workflows, with implications for job security, editorial rigor, and media accountability. The automation of journalistic tasks risks undermining professional creativity, reducing the depth of investigative reporting, and fostering journalistic complacency (Guanah et al., 2020). These concerns are particularly pertinent in developing regions like Plateau State, where the media landscape faces unique challenges related to resource constraints and evolving ethical frameworks.

Despite growing global research on the impact of AI on journalistic ethics and practices (Jamil, 2021; Nwayanwu & Nwayanwu, 2021), there is a noticeable gap in localized studies examining the perception of ethical and professional implications of AI on journalism practice in Plateau State. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating how members of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Plateau State

Chapter, perceive the integration of AI technologies and its influence on the ethical and professional dimensions of their work.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to assess the ethical and professional implications of artificial intelligence in journalism practice. Specifically, the study seeks:

1. To assess the level of awareness among journalists in Plateau State about AI's impact on journalism.

2. To examine how the NUJ (Plateau State Chapter) supports its members in developing AI-related skills and knowledge.

3. To analyse how AI has influenced the professional roles and responsibilities of journalists in Plateau State.

4. To identify the ethical challenges posed by the use of AI in journalism practice within Plateau State.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Journalism

Guanah (2021) posits that the concept of the practice of journalism is a communication act that is based on asking questions such as Who? What? How? Where? When? Why? He went on to say that journalism is anything that contributes to the gathering, selection, and processing of news and current events for the press, radio, television, film, cable, and the internet. It also deals with gathering, analysing, verifying or confirming, and presenting news about current events, trends, topics, and persons. Journalists are those who practise journalism. McQuail in Guanah (2021) defines journalism as "paid writing for public media with reference to actual and ongoing events of public relevance".

Journalism is one of the most important professions today. Journalism is regarded as the Fourth Estate of the realm and it involves gathering, assembling and presentation of news. A journalist informs, creates public awareness, interprets facts, shapes public opinion and entertains (Coombs, 2021). There are different branches of journalism permeating different fields like health, education, investigation, sports, governance, women, children, and finance among others. Journalism, mass media or the press play an even more fundamental role which Farid (2023) sees as occupying: a central position in society. It is basically involved in the information, education, and entertainment as well as cultural transmission. The enormity of the functions of the press makes it imperative for a guiding principle or code of ethics which includes objectivity.

Journalism is an ever-changing profession. Print and electronic media each have their own niche in terms of news generation, delivery, and consumption. According to some researchers, like Biswal and Gouda (2020), print media's dominance in industrialised countries is waning. News via social media, blogs, WhatsApp, and other kinds of digital media has become a significant milestone in journalism. With the passing of time and the advent of modern technology, the practice of journalism has experienced significant modification. This is why Salawudeen (2023) submitted that: Journalism cannot know restrictions again all because the phone is around! Anyone with an internet-powered smartphone or tablet can do/damage reports on events as they unfold; a reality that has brought a new level of

authenticity challenge to the field of news dissemination/reception.

It is also on this backdrop that Farid (2023, p. **1) opines that:**
The development of information technology and the internet has significantly transformed the landscape of media and journalism. Traditional journalism, which relied on print and electronic broadcasting, has evolved into digital journalism supported by online platforms.

3.1.1 Artificial Intelligence

The term Artificial Intelligence is one of the trending concepts in contemporary literature. In other words, Artificial Intelligence is a subject matter that scholars in different fields of endeavor are currently trying to harness its importance and applicability in their unique fields of endeavor. According to Michaeli (2023), Artificial Intelligence (AI), is a term coined by emeritus Stanford Professor John McCarthy in 1955, was defined by him as "the science and engineering of making intelligent machines". Even though in the past, most research on AI prioritises the ability of humans to programme machines to act in an intelligent manner, such as playing chess, whereas in the present day, the emphasis is on the ability of machines to learn, at least in part, in a manner analogous to human beings (Michaeli, 2023).

The term Artificial Intelligence is defined differently by different scholars. According to Peiser (2019), artificial intelligence has to do with a branch of computer/mathematical science that solely focuses on creating intelligent machines that have the potency to perform diverse tasks that require human intelligence. These machines are built in such a way that they reason about information, perceive their environment and also learn from previous experiences. The sole purpose of Artificial Intelligence experts is to develop algorithms and models that can possibly replicate and stimulate cognitive functions, such as problem solving (Schapals & Porlezza, 2020). The above suggests that the goal of artificial intelligence (AI) experts is to enable machines to think like humans, but in a way that surpasses the human way of thinking (Guanah et al., 2020). The goal of AI is to empower machines with the ability to autonomously collect and process data from their environment in order to make decisions and solve problems, as well as to perform other tasks where human thought is required (Wölker & Powell, 2021). AI is increasingly integrated into workflows to enhance task execution and productivity.

3.1.2 News Media Organisations and AI Adaptation

The literature concerning the adaptation of AI by news media organisations converge on several critical themes, highlighting AI's transformative impact on the journalistic landscape. Central to these discussions is the imperative for media organisations to prioritise training and education in AI, enabling journalists to navigate the evolving technological terrain and capitalise on AI's capabilities. The significant impact of AI on media stories makes it imperative for media professionals to understand how to successfully use new technologies and adapt to these technological advances (Sun et al., 2020). Ufarte-Ruiz et al. (2023) have also argued that the changing dynamics of the press and the rise of AI-driven synthetic media means that journalists need to change their jobs and acquire intense training in AI to ensure they remain an essential part of the news creation process.

In newsroom practices, there is evidence of how AI can help in content creation, through the more accurate and quick detection of fake news, and the personalisation of content and audience interaction (Calvo et al., 2024). The scholars also alleged that the emergence of AI models and tools has significantly altered how the journalism profession is perceived and practiced, changing the production of content and the knowledge required by professionals. Considering the many potential benefits AI presents to newsroom routines and the media business itself, de-Lima-Santos and Ceron (2021) suggest that AI be strategically added to media operations while ensuring a fair balance with ethical practices. There are also arguments for the adaptation of AI to business structures to generate new ideas, improve media businesses, remain competitive, and strategically ensure growth and innovation.

Kuo (2023) argues that innovative methods to integrate AI into journalistic work are needed and encourages journalists to learn more about AI to handle the challenges and possibilities that come with it. This view was also shared by Horska (2020), who discussed the importance of using AI's promise for advanced, data-driven news and to deal with the ethical and professional problems that attend to its usage. The adoption of artificial intelligence in newsrooms is mostly motivated by the quest for efficiency and the need to match changing customer expectations (Manisha & Kunjan, 2023).

3.1.3 Challenges of Artificial Intelligence Utilisation in Journalism Practice in Nigeria

The utilisation of artificial intelligence (AI) in the newsrooms of Nigeria is a subject of growing concern. It's often said that Nigeria may take at least eleven years to catch up with the global advancements in AI integration, as highlighted by experts (Olanrewaju, 2018; Ndiomewese, 2017). This lag in AI adoption can be attributed to various pressing challenges and barriers inherent in the Nigerian context.

One of the most fundamental challenges faced by newsrooms in Nigeria is the erratic supply of electricity (Nnamdi & Nwanyanwu, 2021). The consistent power supply is critical for effectively powering the AI applications that are becoming increasingly essential in modern journalism. AI relies heavily on computational processes, and frequent power outages disrupt the seamless operation of AI tools, making them unreliable in a newsroom setting.

Furthermore, there is a dearth of adequate infrastructure to support the integration of AI into newsrooms. AI systems require substantial computing power, storage, and network capabilities. Without the necessary infrastructure, implementing AI tools becomes a daunting task. The lack of investment in these critical areas hinders the progress of AI adoption. (Nnamdi & Nwanyanwu, 2021).

Financial constraints are another significant roadblock to the incorporation of AI in Nigerian newsrooms. Purchasing and maintaining AI equipment, including hardware and software, can be expensive. For many media organisations in Nigeria, allocating the required funds for such investments is a significant challenge, especially given the already strained financial conditions they often operate under (Olanrewaju, 2018).

Cultural and socio-economic factors also play a substantial role in inhibiting the adoption of AI in newsrooms. These factors can encompass resistance to change, traditional work practices, and the perception that AI might replace human jobs. This resistance to change can further slow the integration of AI tools into the journalistic process (Nnamdi & Nwanyanwu, 2021).

The cost of internet connection poses yet another obstacle. AI often requires a high-speed and stable internet connection for data retrieval, analysis, and sharing (Ndiomewese, 2017). In Nigeria, where internet infrastructure is still developing and access can be costly, this poses a significant challenge. Moreover, there is a shortage of skilled individuals who can effectively handle AI tools. The training of AI handlers is an expensive and time-consuming process, and it can be challenging to find professionals with the necessary expertise in AI and journalism.

3.1.4 Professional and Ethical Challenges of AI to Journalists

The following are some of the professional and ethical challenges of AI to journalists:

1. Undermining Creativity: Creativity serves as the cornerstone of journalism, embodying human thought processes, encompassing imaginative writing, interpretation, and more. In this vein, Latar (2018, p. 24) observes that "AI algorithms cannot think beyond the preconceived framework set by their human algorithm designers; they lack the capacity to venture into novel and unforeseen conceptual realms." For example, AI algorithms remain unable to create the ambiance necessary to evoke readers' emotional responses, like laughter (Aljazairi, 2016), or to adeptly respond to scenes of accidents, conduct street interviews, or engage in investigative work. Consequently, analytical skills and creativity remain the principal strengths of journalists when contrasted with algorithms.

2. Lack of Monitoring: Journalism stands as a pivotal force upholding the societal fabric, exerting a significant influence on society. Thus, preserving journalism as a public good in the digital era is of utmost importance. As Latar (2018) contends, "AI algorithms cannot be expected to comprehend and monitor unforeseen and alarming developments; they lack the human capacity to establish connections based on previously unexperienced phenomena."

3. Bias: The most glaring challenge inherent in automated journalism pertains to the potential for biases to infiltrate AI systems, encompassing gender bias (Gbaden et al., 2024) and racial bias. In this context, AI algorithms remain susceptible to human influence, thereby reflecting the values of their creators. Osoba and Welser (2017, p. 25) assert, "The risks of errors and bias in algorithms and AI will persist as long as artificial agents play an increasingly prominent role in our lives, devoid of regulation." Notably, in 2015, Google issued an apology after its Photos app algorithms erroneously tagged two individuals of African descent as gorillas, likely due to inadequate representation in the training dataset.

4. Transparency: Transparency, fundamentally, entails openness regarding data collection and usage, along with minimizing unnecessary data gathering. Notably, transparency is indispensable in cultivating reader trust, necessitating the sharing of underlying data for interactive engagement. Gbaden et al. (2024) define

transparency as trust in the system that transforms data into an article. Hence, publishers should distinctly delineate between content authored by human journalists and that composed by intelligent algorithms (Ombelet et al., 2016).

5. Fact-Checking: In this regard, readers ought to possess insights into the selection of raw data, the rationale behind data choices, verification processes, potential processing of reader personal data, and the mechanisms ensuring source credibility and objectivity (Gbaden et al., 2024).

6. Fairness: Fairness implies the avoidance of detrimental biases and stereotypes impacting people's lives. Consequently, AI presents a fundamental challenge for journalism, especially when data serves as a means of invading privacy, orchestrating social manipulation, and perpetuating oppression. In October 2018, the International Conference of Data Protection and Privacy Commissioners (ICDPPC) released the Declaration on Ethics and Protection in Artificial Intelligence, affirming the necessity to mitigate unlawful biases and discriminations resulting from AI data usage (Gbaden et al., 2024).

4.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored on the Technological Determinism Theory.

Technological determinism is the belief that technology is the principal initiator of the society's transformation. The emergence of this theory is usually attributed to the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen, who formulated the causal link between the technology and the society. Héder (2021) asserts that in technological determinism, any social changes are controlled by the technology, technological development, communications technology and media. The modern information society arises as a result of the development of innovations, new technologies and their social and political implications. Technological determinism is a reductionist theory in assuming that a society's technology progresses by following its own internal logic of efficiency, while determining the development of the social structure and cultural values (Drew, 2021).

According to Thomson et al. (2020), technological innovations shape social structures, human behaviour, and institutional evolution. McLuhan's famous phrase, "the medium is the message," highlights that the form of communication technology affects not just the delivery of content but the very nature of the message itself. In journalism, this theory implies that the tools and platforms used to gather, process, and disseminate information profoundly influence journalistic ethics, practices, and responsibilities.

The incorporation of AI into journalism is a clear example of technological determinism at work. Thomson et al. (2020) assert that AI technologies, such as automated content generation, natural language processing, and machine learning-based analytics, are changing the landscape of journalism in significant ways. These technologies have the potential to improve efficiency, provide data-driven insights, and enhance fact-checking processes. However, they also introduce a set of ethical and professional challenges that impact the integrity of journalism.

5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a survey research design, using a structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The population

consisted of all 312 registered members of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Plateau State Chapter. Due to the relatively small size of the population, the study employed a total enumeration approach rather than sampling. Questionnaires were distributed to all members, and 278 valid responses were retrieved and used for analysis. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review by scholars in Mass Communication and Media Studies, who assessed its clarity and relevance to the research objectives. Reliability was ensured through a pilot test conducted with a small group of journalists outside the study area, and necessary adjustments were made based on feedback. Ethical considerations were strictly observed. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	195	70
	Female	83	30
	Total	**278**	**100**
Age	18–25	30	11
	26–35	53	19
	36–45	42	15
	46–50	103	37
	51 & above	50	18
	Total	**278**	**100**
Marital Status	Single	64	23
	Married	144	52
	Divorced	31	11
	Widow/Widower	39	14
	Total	**278**	**100**
Education	SSCE	33	12
	Diploma/NCE	53	19
	BSc/BA/HND	125	45
	Master's Degree	68	24
	Total	**278**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The findings showed that the majority of respondents were male (70%). 11% are within the age range of 18-25, 19% are within 26-35, 15% are within 36-45, 37% are within 46–50 years, and 18% are 50 and above. They are predominantly married (52%); 12% are SSCE holders, 19% have Diploma/NCE, 45% are educated with BSc/BA/HND, while 24% have Master's Degrees.

Table 2: Awareness and Familiarity with AI in Journalism

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Familiarity	Very familiar	154	55
	Somewhat familiar	124	45
	Total	**278**	**100**
Awareness	Yes	278	100
AI Improves Accuracy	Strongly Agree	134	48
	Agree	86	31
	Indecisive	22	8
	Disagree	19	7
	Strongly Disagree	17	6
	Total	**278**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Results revealed a high level of awareness (100%) and familiarity with AI tools, with most respondents (55%) being very familiar. A significant majority (79%) agreed that AI improves journalistic accuracy and efficiency.

Table 3: Capacity Building and Institutional Support

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
AI Preparedness	Policy participation	128	46
	Training on AI	89	32
	Human oversight	33	12
	Continuous learning	28	12
	Total	**278**	**100**
NUJ Training	Strongly Agree	102	37
	Agree	108	39
	Indecisive	58	21
	Disagree	6	2
	Strongly Disagree	3	1
	Total	**278**	**100**
AI Literacy	Yes	209	75
	No	42	15
	Not sure	28	
	Total	**278**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A sizable number of respondents emphasised policy participation (46%) and training (32%) as key steps for AI preparedness, 12% said human oversight, and another 12% said continuous learning. Most respondents also agreed that NUJ provides training (76%) and promotes AI literacy (75%), indicating active institutional support.

Table 4: Impact of AI on Journalism Practice

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job Changes	Yes	225	81
	No	39	14
	Not sure	24	5
	Total	278	100
Misinformation Control	Strongly agree	120	43
	Agree	68	24
	Undecided	30	10
	Disagree	35	12
	Strongly disagree	25	9
	Total	**278**	**100**
Ethical Concerns	Strongly agree	128	46
	Agree	75	27
	Undecided	25	9
	Disagree	28	10
	Strongly disagree	22	8
	Total	**278**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Findings indicated that AI has significantly influenced journalism practice, with 81% reporting changes in job roles. The majority of respondents (67%) also agreed that AI helps combat misinformation and raises ethical concerns, highlighting both benefits and challenges.

Table 5: Ethical Concerns, Policies and Public Trust

Variable	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
AI Policies	Yes	234	84
	No	39	14
	Not sure	14	5
	Total	**278**	**100**
Public Trust	Sensationalism risk	57	21
	Bias	40	14
	Job displacement	33	12
	Transparency concerns	148	53
	Total	**278**	**100**
Need for Ethical Guidelines	Strongly Agree	97	35
	Agree	78	28
	Undecided	31	11
	Disagree	47	17
	Strongly disagree	25	9
	Total	**278**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The results showed that most respondents (84%) acknowledged the existence of AI policies, and the majority of them (53%) expressed transparency concerns as the major issue affecting public trust. A majority (63%) also supported the need for stronger ethical guidelines and expressed concerns about privacy risks.

5.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In relation to the data gathered, analysed, and interpreted, the researcher's findings are discussed in line with the research objectives.

Objective 1: To assess the level of awareness among journalists in Plateau State about AI's impact on journalism

The findings of the study revealed a high level of awareness among journalists in Plateau State regarding the impact of artificial intelligence on journalism practice. A significant proportion of respondents indicated familiarity with AI tools and their applications in news production. This suggests that AI is no longer a distant concept but an emerging reality within the media space. This finding is aligned with existing literature which notes that digital technologies are increasingly shaping journalism and redefining how news is gathered and disseminated (Calvo et al., 2024).

However, the variation in responses also indicated that awareness is not evenly distributed among all journalists. While some demonstrate strong familiarity, others show limited understanding of AI applications. This suggests that although technology is influencing journalism, its adoption depends on individual exposure and capacity. This supports the view that technological change is not automatic but interacts with human and institutional factors (Thomson et al., 2020).

Objective 2: To examine how the NUJ (Plateau State Chapter) supports its members in developing AI-related skills and knowledge

The findings indicated that the support provided by the NUJ Plateau State Chapter in developing AI-related skills is present but not strongly established. While some respondents acknowledged efforts such as training and knowledge sharing, others expressed the need for more structured and consistent capacity-building initiatives. This suggests that institutional support for AI adoption is still developing.

Furthermore, the mixed responses imply that journalists may rely more on personal initiative than organisational support in acquiring AI-related skills. This highlights a gap between technological advancement and institutional preparedness. It suggests that for AI to be effectively integrated into journalism practice, organisations like the NUJ must play a more active role in training and professional development.

Objective 3: To analyse how AI has influenced the professional roles and responsibilities of journalists in Plateau State

The study found that AI has significantly influenced the roles and responsibilities of journalists, particularly in improving efficiency, speed, and content production. Many respondents agreed that AI tools assist in tasks such as data processing, content generation, and fact-checking. This supports existing literature which argues that AI is transforming newsroom practices and redefining journalistic functions (de-Lima-Santos and Ceron (2021).

However, the findings also revealed concerns about over-reliance on AI and its potential to affect professional judgment. Some respondents noted that while AI enhances productivity, it may reduce critical thinking and originality if not properly managed. This indicates that although AI is reshaping journalistic roles, human input remains essential. It reflects a balance between technological influence and professional responsibility.

Objective 4: To identify the ethical challenges posed by the use of AI in journalism practice within Plateau State

The findings showed that ethical concerns are a major issue in the use of AI in journalism. Respondents highlighted challenges such as misinformation, bias, lack of accountability, and issues of transparency. A strong majority agreed on the need for clear ethical guidelines to regulate AI usage. This aligned with existing studies which emphasised that AI introduces complex ethical risks in journalism (Latar, 2018).

In addition, the findings suggested that journalists are aware of these ethical challenges and recognised the importance of maintaining professional standards. However, the presence of uncertainty among some respondents indicated that ethical frameworks for AI are still evolving. This implied that while AI offers opportunities, its responsible use depends on the development of clear policies and continued ethical awareness within the profession.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into journalism practice in Plateau State presents both opportunities and challenges that require careful ethical and professional consideration. This study has highlighted how AI-powered tools enhanced journalistic efficiency, accuracy, and fact-checking while simultaneously raising concerns about misinformation, sensationalism and source privacy. Despite the presence of guidelines and policies for AI use, there remains a need for clearer ethical frameworks, increased AI literacy, and stronger oversight to ensure responsible implementation. As journalism evolves in response to AI advancements, media organisations and professional bodies like the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) must proactively develop policies that balance innovation with ethical responsibility. Journalists should receive continuous training on AI ethics, misinformation detection, and data security to uphold professional standards.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the study recommends the following:

1. NUJ Plateau State should encourage training in AI literacy programmes to use AI-powered tools ethically, enhance accuracy, and participate in policy discussions for responsible AI integration in journalism.
2. NUJ Plateau State should establish an AI training hub for journalists, offering workshops, ethical guidelines, and hands-on training, and partnering with AI developers for access to essential tools.
3. NUJ Plateau State and other media organisations should collaborate to create AI-focused guidelines, addressing ethical concerns and evolving job responsibilities. These guidelines should emphasize fact-checking AI-generated content, establish accountability measures, and provide journalists with training on misinformation detection and responsible AI use.
4. NUJ Plateau State and media

regulatory bodies to create and enforce ethical guidelines for AI-powered journalism, addressing concerns about sensationalism, privacy risks, and transparency. They should also establish a monitoring framework and provide training sessions to help journalists navigate ethical dilemmas related to AI use.

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