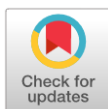


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Utilisation, Effects, and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in Journalism Among Practitioners in North-East Nigeria

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence represents the climax of the invention and deployment of digital technologies in journalism across the globe. There is no doubt that AI has contributed to the automation of journalism, thereby boosting efficiency and productivity in the process. The focus of this research is on the uses and gratifications of AI in journalism amongst journalists in North-East Nigeria. The three selected states include Adamawa, Borno, and Gombe. The research design used was a survey, while the population of the study included a collection of all the registered journalists in the three select states (1, 642). The sample size was 286, while the sampling techniques were multi-stage and simple random sampling. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, while the methods of data analysis were frequency tables, simple percentages, mean scores, and charts. A major finding of the research, amongst others, was that there were several uses of AI amongst the journalists in the three select states in the North-East, including, but not limited to, fact-checking, data analysis, newswriting and reporting, and interview transcription. Regarding the effects of AI on journalism, a majority of respondents noted that AI has led to the automation of journalism, while the major challenge was the potential loss of jobs. The recommendation aligned with other researchers in the suggestion to Nigerian software developers to develop an AI software by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), in partnership with Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), so as to take care of the peculiarities of journalism.

Keywords: artificial Intelligence, journalism, Nigeria, North-East, practitioners

Introduction

In the last decade, especially with the evolution of ChatGPT on November 30, 2022, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has snowballed into a dominant issue

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in the media industry across the globe. This development has ignited intense debates about AI's potential negative impact on journalism, especially concerning ethical issues, quality and standards. There is no disputing that AI is experiencing exponential growth in its use in journalism, particularly in newsrooms (Newman, [2020](#)). AI generally enables the “codification of tasks and routines in algorithms, creating outputs similar to those produced by humans” (Tunez-Lopez et al., [2018](#)). It is important to note that the variant of AI that raises concerns in journalism is Generative Artificial Intelligence, otherwise known as “GenAI” or “GAI” (Noain-Sanchez, [2022](#)). GenAI has the “capacity to operate text, images, videos, or other data, using generative models, often in response to prompts” (Ignatidou, [2019](#)). According to Shin and Sun ([2024](#)), Generative Artificial Intelligence as a technology is based on algorithms and models that are designed to create text, audio, images, videos, and code, and GAI also includes several technologies and architectures created to learn the subliminal patterns and correlations in data, and as a consequence, generate content based on the knowledge acquired. It is worth noting that AI, especially Generative AI, is being deployed to assist in and accelerate certain procedural tasks such as content creation, fact-checking, data processing, image generation, speech conversion, and translation, among others (Casswell et al., [2021](#); Nishal & Diakopoulos, [2024](#)). With the pervasive adoption of Generative AI in news production, three perspectives have emerged: the first perspective is comparing GAI-assisted journalism and traditional journalism; the second perspective is how GAI is used in journalism in particular countries or regions; for example like how Gondwe ([2023](#)) examined the use of Generative AI in journalism in sub-Saharan Africa; while the third perspective is concerned with the associated ethical challenges of the use of GAI as well as the imperative need to maintain the highest standards of professionalism and journalistic values (Hong & Tewksbury, [2024](#); Pinto, [2024](#); Wang et al., [2023](#)).

It is important to note that AI has been evident in journalism practice for the past decade, especially in the West. For example, the Associated Press (AP) was one of the earliest transnational news agencies to deploy and integrate AI into news production (Radcliffe, [2023](#)). In 2014, Associated Press began deploying AI to process news reports on corporate earnings. Before deploying AI, the editors and journalists at AP spent significant resources on producing financial reports, which unfortunately diverted their attention from more important news stories. However, in spite

of the tremendous investments of AP in AI, the global news agency was able to generate only 300 financial reports in a quarter, leaving thousands of other corporate earnings unreported. Following the trailblazing path of AP, other global media organizations such as Bloomberg, Forbes, Reuters, BBC, The New York Times, and The Washington Post, amongst others, started using AI in news production. The main applications of AI in these global media houses include news gathering, production, and dissemination (Shin & Sun, [2024](#)). Thus, by November 2022, OpenAI released ChatGPT, an AI-driven natural language processing tool powered by the neural network architecture of Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3.5. This innovative tool is engineered to process sequential data, allowing it to understand language and generate text. Being trained on extensive datasets of real-world conversations, ChatGPT has a wealth of knowledge and can engage in conversations that closely resemble human interactions. Generative AI can be useful to contemporary journalism in particular and to the mass media in general in many ways. Firstly, Generative AI can be used to generate news stories or articles, thereby allowing journalists ample time to focus on other aspects of journalism. Secondly, Generative AI can be used to create personalized content for individual readers based on their interests and preferences. Thirdly, Generative AI can automatically generate summaries of long articles or news stories, making it easier for people to get key points from these journalistic works.

In Nigeria, it is important to note that Generative AI has revolutionized the media industry by generating data for training machine learning models, producing top-notch images and videos, developing advertising texts, conducting awareness campaigns, and scripting virtual assistant dialogues for customer service and chatting (Dubai Future Foundation, [2023](#); Umeora, [2025](#)). In addition, Labaran ([2025](#)) argues that in Nigeria, AI has the potential to improve ethical monitoring, accuracy of facts, and efficiency in media production, avoid sensationalism, and ensure balanced reporting. The focus of this research, therefore, is on the utilization, effects, and challenges of AI in journalism in North-East Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

There is no gainsaying the fact that the revolution in digital technologies, especially in the area of AI has created profound ramifications on the landscape of journalism (Noain-Sanchez, [2022](#)). Calvo-Rubio and Ufarte-Ruiz ([2020](#)) argue that fears about the negative implications of AI

for journalism are unfounded, as the technology will not have negative effects on journalism, and that journalists should instead brace for incorporating these new technologies into their journalism practices. They argue that these ethical concerns could be seen in the areas of accountability, bias in algorithms, inclusiveness, and content creation. However, the above position is at variance with that of Yu et al. (2020) who argue that AI has the capacity to displace journalists from their jobs. At the same time, Shin and Sun (2024) equally note that there are ethical concerns and implications of using AI in journalism; while in Nigeria, Umeora (2025) equally supports the views of Shin and Sun (2024). Arising from the two differing viewpoints above, a question remains regarding the utilization of AI by journalists in North-East Nigeria, along with the implications of this usage on journalism practice.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- How do the journalists in North-East Nigeria use AI in journalism practice?
- What are the effects of using AI in journalism practice in North- East Nigeria?
- What kinds of AI tools do the journalists in North-East Nigeria use in journalism practice?
- What are the challenges of using AI in journalism practice amongst the journalists in the select states of North-East Nigeria?

Literature Review

Artificial Intelligence and Journalism

The term “Artificial Intelligence” (AI) was coined by John McCarthy, a Professor Emeritus at Stanford University, in 1955. He defined it as the science and engineering of making intelligent machines” (Davenport & Kalakota 2019). However, Alan Turing, an English mathematician, computer scientist, cryptanalyst, logician, philosopher, and theoretical biologist, is credited as the first person to conduct substantial research into that area of computer science, which he called “machine intelligence”; thus, by 1956, AI had already become an academic discipline (Gutierrez-Caneda et al., 2023). AI, also known as “machine intelligence”, is a kind of

intelligence demonstrated by machines in contrast to natural intelligence demonstrated by human beings. The implication is that machines can be made to perform tasks usually associated with intelligent beings like humans (Martinez-Martinez et al., [2022](#)).

Journalism is such a versatile discipline that it can be thought of as a profession, an industry, a phenomenon, and also culture (Zelizer, [2015](#)). According to Deuze ([2005](#)), journalism is an ideological occupation concerned with the gathering, processing, and dissemination of news and other kinds of information. Kovach and Rosenthal ([2021](#)), identify five traits or values of journalism as follows: (1) public service- journalists provide a public service, such as being watchdogs or “newshounds”, as well as being active gatherers and disseminators of information; (2) objectivity- journalists are expected to be impartial, neutral, credible, fair, and should also have integrity; (3) autonomy- journalists must be autonomous, free, and independent of any influence; (4) immediacy- journalists must embrace actuality and speed, just as some of the determinants of news; and (5) ethics:- journalists must have a keen sense of ethics, professionalism, and legitimacy.

Review of Empirical Studies

Although AI is a relatively new trend in the digital technology revolution, there are some empirical studies in this area. Gutierrez-Caneda et al. ([2023](#)), in their study designed around in-depth interview methodology, note that AI was found useful in the automation of mechanical processes, rewriting of texts, analysis of data, and even serving as a content idea creator. They also discovered risks associated with AI, such as inaccurate data and a lack of empathy. The authors concluded that a majority of respondents believed that, while AI would not replace journalists, it could change journalistic routines. Kioko et al. ([2022](#)), in their research, underlined that the Adoption of Artificial Intelligence in Newsrooms in Kenya, using a multi-case study approach, found that there were six factors behind the adoption of AI, or the lack of it. These included “management buy-in, cost, technical skills, clarity of user case, perception, and company structure. The researchers also found out that there were three challenges posed by the adoption of AI. These included a lack of high-quality data, ethical concerns, and the unpredictability of technology’s impact. The researchers, however, note that AI still offers a golden opportunity for newsrooms in Kenya to explore.

Udoh et al. (2021) underlined that all the journalists registered under the umbrella of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in Ebonyi State, are aware of the use of artificial intelligence for news production, and that a majority of the respondents (76.8%) expressed their willingness to be trained for AI skills acquisition. Further, the researchers found that respondents preferred to use AI across different aspects of news production. These were: video coverage (18%), editorial (16.8%), news writing (34.8%), news reporting (10%), commentary (8%), and documentary (2.4%). The researchers also found out the fears of the respondents concerning the use of AI in news production. As a result of this, the following were discovered: fear of AI to cause mass unemployment (37.2%), fear of feeding AI with incorrect data (11.2%), concern that only experts can effectively use AI technologies (20%), and creator/user bias (15.6%). Further, Guanah et al. (2020) carried a study using survey research design, the researchers found out that 57% of the respondents agreed strongly that automated journalism through AI will bring about remarkable improvement in journalism, and that these improvements would be seen in the area of news accuracy (15-83%), time management (18%), time saving (15%), extrication of bias (13.33%), job loss (10.83%), and creation of new jobs (8.33%). In addition, the study revealed that a majority of the respondents (61.66%) expressed very high fear regarding job security which could be jeopardized by AI. Onwe et al. (2023) found that there was a scarce adoption of AI tools in journalism; that media organizations in the state do not accept the use of AI in journalism because of a lack of professionalism and a lack of development in AI technology. The researchers further noted that concerns about the long-term impact of AI on employment remained prevalent among journalists.

Lan and Zhou (2023), revealed that when the number of words to be broadcast was 1000, the broadcast accuracy of the AI presenter and the real (human) presenter was 100%; when the number of words was 10,000, the accuracy of the AI presenter was 100%, while the real presenter was 99.23%, which they found not to be significant. Moreover, when the number of words became 50,000, the accuracy of the AI presenter was 99.65%, while that of the human presenter, was 96.84%. Further, the researcher from the experimental research approach, discovered that when the respondents were asked their preference regarding watching a programme hosted by an AI presenter compared with a human presenter, 32% of them chose “very acceptable” for the programme presented by the AI anchor, 15% chose

“somewhat acceptable”, 25% chose “casual”, 18% chose “not very willing to accept”, while another 18% chose “no”. None of the reviewed empirical studies identified the types of AI tools used in journalism. Moreover, it was also discovered that none of these studies focused on North-East Nigeria. This research will make a modest attempt in filling the gaps in this regard.

Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Mediamorphosis Theory.

Technology Acceptance Model

TAM was developed by Davis et al. ([1989](#)) as an extension of Ajzen and Fishbein’s Theory of Reasoned Action. The theory believes that when users are presented with a new technology, there are some factors that determine the decision on how and when to use such technology. These factors are: Perceived Usefulness (PU), which means the extent to which a person believes that using a particular technology would enhance his or her job performance; and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), which means the degree to which a person using a new technology believes that using it will be without stress. It follows, therefore, that the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of AI in journalism will lead to its adoption and utilisation among the practitioners.

Mediamorphosis Theory

The Mediamorphosis Theory was developed by Roger Fidler in 1990. The theory explains the kind of transformation that occurs in media production, distribution, and consumption. According to Fidler, these changes, or transformation, can be seen in the contemporary structure of broadcasting, which uses digital technologies. He further identified the six principles of metamorphosis to be the “coexistence and coevolution of media forms”; “the gradual mediamorphosis of new media from old ones”; “the spread of dominant traits in media forms; the survival of media forms and companies in a changing environment”; “the advantages and necessity of adopting new media”; and the widespread adoption of new media” (Fidler, [2003](#), p. 13). So, the theory is relevant in this research because it demonstrates how AI has transformed the changed landscape of journalism globally, as well as the factors responsible for it.

Methodology

The research design used in this study is survey, which according to Babbie is one of the most used research designs in the social sciences. The objective of survey is to collect data from a representative sample of a population. So, the population of the study included 1, 642 journalists from the three select states of Adamawa, Borno, and Gombe. The sample size of the study was 286, based on Singh and Masuku's (2014) Sample Size Determination Table, which states that at + or – 5%, where the confidence level is 95%, and $p=0.5$, and the population is over 1000, but less than 2000, the sample size should be 286. The sampling techniques used were multi-stage and simple random sampling techniques. In this case, North-East was divided into three parts, while three states were selected, and the capitals of each of these states were ultimately selected. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire, while the validity and reliability of the instrument was based on Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded 0.8. This showed that the instrument was very reliable. So, based on the application of even numbers, the selected states are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1
The Selected States Used for the Study

S/N	State	Capital
1	Adamawa	Yola
2	Bauchi	Bauchi
3	Borno	Maiduguri
4	Gombe	Gombe
5	Taraba	Jalingo
6	Yobe	Damaturu

Further, the instrument for collecting data was the questionnaire, while the methods of data analysis were frequency tables, simple percentages, and charts.

Results

Out of a total of 286 copies of questionnaires distributed, 280 copies, representing 97.9% were returned, and also found properly-filled. According to Babbie (2020), when the response rate of a quantitative research is 70% and above, the results derived from such research can be said to be valid. Below is the presentation of the socio-demographic data of

the respondents:

Table 2

Socio-Demographic Data of the Respondents

Items	Respondents	Percentage
Sex		
Male	196	70
Female	84	30
Age-range		
25-29	33	11.8
30-34	142	50.7
35 & above	105	37.5
Education		
HND	37	13.2
Bachelor's Degree	192	68.6
Master's Degree	51	18.2
Years of Experience		
1-5 years	43	15.4
6-10 years	88	31.4
11-15 years	134	47.8
16 years & above	15	5.4

Although in recent times, more women have taken to journalism, however, from Table 1 above, it is still glaring that there is a preponderant number of men in the journalism profession. Even when it comes to investigative reporting and sports reporting for instance, the men dominate overwhelmingly. The distribution of the age-range of the respondents showed that those who are 30 years and above constitute a majority of the registered number of journalists in the three select states. In terms of education, while a majority of the respondents have Bachelor's Degrees, it is gratifying that some journalists now have Master's Degrees, compared with some decades ago, when journalism was seen as a mere vocation. Concerning the years of experience of the respondents, many of them are well-experienced.

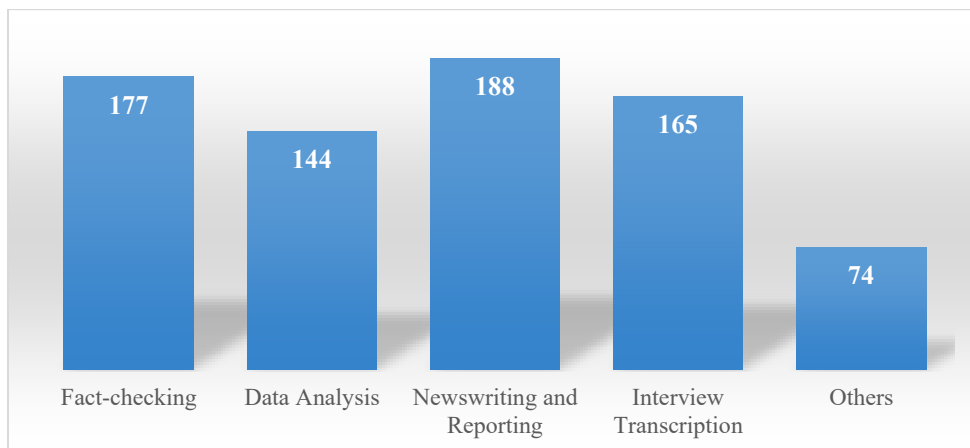
Research Question 1: How do the journalists in North-East Nigeria use AI in journalism practice?

The above research question was pertinent to a major variable of the

study. But before presenting the data on the above, the respondents were asked a preliminary question regarding their awareness of AI. All the respondents (280), representing 100%, answered in the affirmative. On the use of AI in journalism by the respondents, below is the presentation of the result:

Figure 1

The Use of AI in Journalism



From Figure 1 above, there is no doubt that AI is gradually being incorporated into journalism in the North-East. For example, fact-checking has become quite important in modern times, especially owing to the prevalence of information disorder (misinformation and disinformation). AI is also important for journalists to wade through a maze of data to get what is relevant; newswriting and reporting, especially in broadcasting, needs AI; the transcription of data from interviews may no longer be done manually; AI now comes to the rescue; and these are some of the uses of AI in journalism, amongst others. The implication of the above is that it can lead to efficiency and productivity in the practice of journalism.

Research Question 2: What are the effects of using AI in journalism practice amongst the journalists in North-East Nigeria?

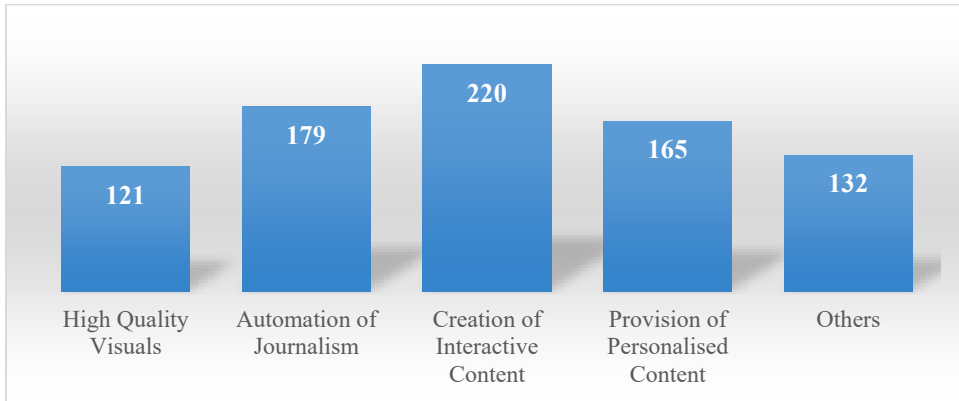
This research question was quite imperative because there must be some positive effects of AI in journalism. Below is the presentation of the result:

From Figure 2, AI has further expanded the frontiers of the use of digital technologies in journalism; and in the end, the profession and the audience

benefit from it. Certain tasks have been simplified; content has become more interactive and personalised, and journalism can now operate automatically, because AI has reduced some aspects of human interventions.

Figure 2

Effects of the Use of AI in journalism

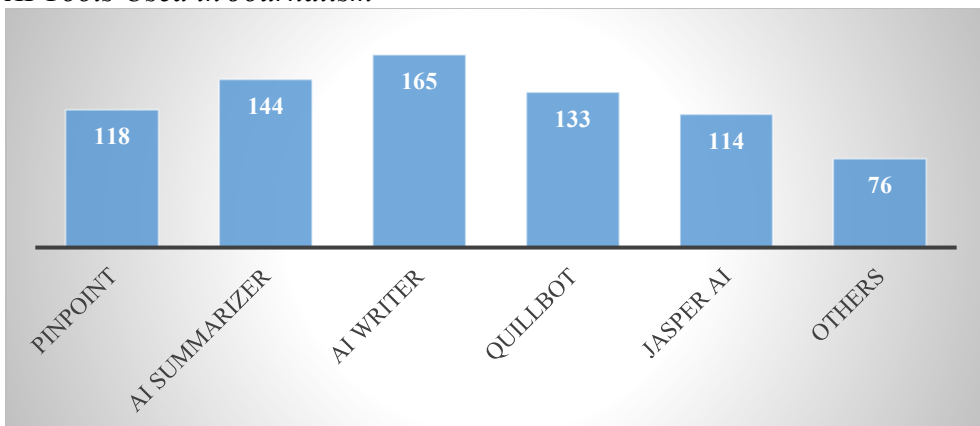


Research Question 3: What kinds of AI tools do the journalists in North-East Nigeria use in journalism practice?

There are different kinds of AI tools used in the media. Some are general tools, while some are specific to the categories of the media (print, online, social, and broadcast). Below is the presentation of the results.

Figure 3

AI Tools Used in Journalism



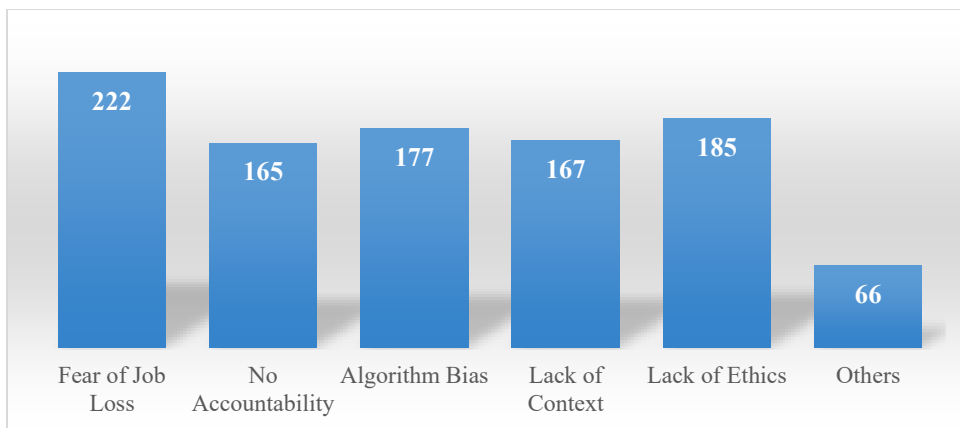
From Chart 3 above, it is clear that there are many AI tools used in journalism, performing different tasks. For example, Pinpoint owned by Google is used to analyse PDFs, strip text from images and used to transcribe audio; AI Summarizer is used in newsrooms to create high-quality texts and reports; AI Writer is a content writing platform used in providing comprehensive drafts of an article, and it can also reduce the time spent by a journalist; QuillBot is used to rewrite and paraphrase text, while ensuring that the content retains the correct tone; while Jasper AI is a powerful and versatile AI content generator that assists in the streamlining of work flows.

Research Question 4: What are the challenges of using AI in journalism practice amongst the journalists in North-East Nigeria?

The ethical concerns of the use of AI in journalism have generated debates and scholarship globally. To this end, this research question sought to identify the challenges of using AI in journalism among the respondents. Below is the presentation of the result.

Figure 4

Challenges of Using AI in Journalism



The leading challenge posed by the use of AI in journalism not only in the North-East, but also globally is the fear of losing one's job. Already, AI has started displacing some people from their employment in the West. Also, AI is not accountable to anybody; not even the inventor, so it can be prone to flaws. Furthermore, AI can gather, analyse, and disseminate data efficiently; however, it may not fully understand the socio-cultural and

religious contexts in which information is produced and consumed. As a result, AI-generated content may not always align with professional journalistic standards and ethical principles without human oversight.

Discussion

This research focused on the utilization, effects, and challenges of AI in journalism among practitioners in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Findings from the research indicated that all the respondents were aware of AI, either as a concept or in practical terms, justifying Udoh et al. (2021), who also found the same in their study. Concerning the use of AI in journalism, this research found that there are some uses of AI in journalism, ranging from fact-checking to interview transcription, amongst others, justifying Gutierrez-Caneda et al. (2023), who equally found out a similar trend. Regarding the different AI tools used in journalism, this research found that the respondents were not only aware of these tools but also used them, ranging from AI Summarizer to AI Writer, among others. In addition, it was also discovered that there were some challenges in the use of AI in journalism, as expressed by the respondents. These challenges range from fear of job loss to lack of accountability, amongst others, justifying Guanah et al. (2020), who found out something similar. There is little doubt that AI will continue to play an important role in journalism worldwide. However, the key challenge is ensuring that AI is used responsibly, ethically, and under human supervision, particularly in an era of widespread misinformation and information disorder. The human element will remain important in journalism; everything cannot be surrendered to AI, especially in a developing country like Nigeria, with ethno-religious faultlines. In addition, the two theories used were found to be relevant to the study.

AI has and will continue to play tremendous role in journalism. AI has contributed to efficiency and productivity in journalism. The automation of routine and human tasks in journalism is becoming a reality with every passing day. The emergence of the network society and the attendant Platformisation process has made the Fourth Industrial Revolution to significantly alter the news production process. In this regard, the application of AI for the gathering, processing, and dissemination of news as well as the personalisation content on digital platforms will lead to exponential ramifications in society. In spite of the technological deterministic and techno-centric euphoria surrounding AI in journalism, there are still some ethical challenges that cannot be glossed over.

Recommendations

Below are the recommendations of this research:

- The human element and intuition should not be taken out entirely in the use of AI in journalism; nothing should be left to chance in this regard. There should be a mandatory and continuous training of journalists in all the departments.
- Journalists using AI should be more circumspect because there is always the possibility of AI bias in journalism practice.
- Nigerian software developers should be encouraged to develop software by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), in partnership with Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), so as to take care of the journalistic peculiarities.
- The challenges of AI in journalism should be addressed through legal and policy framework in Nigeria.

Author Contribution

Barikui Nnaane: Sole author

Conflict of Interests

The author of the manuscript has no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study will be made available by the corresponding author upon request.

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Generative AI Disclosure Statement

The authors did not use any type of generative artificial intelligence software for this research.

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