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Articles including graphs and tables should not be more than 20 pages on A4 paper (double line spacing) on M.S Word, 12-point type (New Times Roman). Papers should be with an abstract of not more than 250 words, and six key words. All submissions must conform to American Psychological Association (APA) referencing format.

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Abstract

The emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is gradually having effects on every facet of the society; the mass media, being an indispensable part of any society, are not exempted from this AI bug hence they must synergise with new technologies to remain relevant. This study looked at how editors as gatekeepers in the AI Era: balancing human expertise and automation in news editing. To achieve this goal, four research questions were raised in line with the objectives. The study was anchored on the Gatekeeping theory. Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for the study and data were gathered through the use of questionnaire. The population of this study was drawn from all the registered members of Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) in Lokoja. The population is composed of 178 registered members of NUJ in Lokoja as at May 2020. A total of 123 instruments were administered to male and female members thus bringing the total number of sampled respondents to 123. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while the respondents' demographics were analysed with percentage and frequency count. Among other findings, the study revealed that, AI has significantly altered the decision-making process in newsrooms. Editors reported becoming more reliant on automated tools and systems, with AI assisting in tasks such as selecting stories based on pre-set algorithms and audience engagement metrics. These AI systems, which process vast amounts of data quickly, now play a key role in story prioritization, often determining what is published and when based on patterns and trends identified in the data. Therefore, the paper recommended that, editors should maintain a strong role in overseeing AI-generated content to ensure that it adheres to journalistic standards and ethical guidelines.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Journalism, Editors, Gatekeeping, News Editing

Introduction

The digital transformation of journalism has fundamentally disrupted traditional editorial practices, positioning artificial intelligence (AI) as a critical technological intervention in news production and information dissemination. Editors, historically serving as primary gatekeepers of information, now confront unprecedented challenges in maintaining journalistic integrity while integrating advanced technological capabilities (Diakopoulos, 2019; Usher, 2020). The contemporary media landscape demands a sophisticated understanding of how human expertise can coexist and collaborate with algorithmic decision-making processes. Technological innovations have dramatically altered the traditional editorial workflow, introducing complex computational tools capable of processing vast amounts of information at unprecedented speeds. Machine learning algorithms and natural language processing systems can now generate preliminary content, perform initial fact-checking and analyse data with remarkable efficiency. However, these technological capabilities do not negate the fundamental role of human editors in providing contextual understanding, ethical judgment and nuanced narrative construction.

The emergence of AI in newsrooms represents a paradigmatic shift that requires a recalibration of professional roles, institutional practices and epistemological frameworks governing journalistic production. Empirical research increasingly suggests that the most effective approach involves a symbiotic model where AI technologies augment rather than replace human editorial expertise. This collaborative framework necessitates developing new professional competencies that integrate technological literacy with traditional journalistic principles of accuracy, fairness and critical analysis. The intersection of human judgment and algorithmic processing represents a critical frontier in contemporary media studies, challenging established conceptualisations of editorial gatekeeping and information dissemination (Karlsson & Clerwall, 2018).

The technological capabilities of AI in news editing present both remarkable opportunities and significant challenges for contemporary journalism. Advanced machine learning algorithms demonstrate unprecedented potential in automating routine editorial tasks, including content categorization, preliminary fact-checking and rapid information synthesis (Noble, 2018). These technologies can process and analyse massive datasets exponentially faster than human editors, identifying patterns, trends and potential news stories with remarkable precision. Natural language processing systems can generate initial draft content, summarise complex information and provide real-time language translations, potentially streamlining newsroom workflows.

However, the computational efficiency of AI technologies does not inherently guarantee journalistic quality or ethical integrity. Machine learning models are fundamentally limited by their training data, potentially perpetuating existing biases, misinterpreting contextual nuances and failing to comprehend the complex social and ethical dimensions of news reporting. The algorithmic decision-making processes inherent in AI systems risk reducing journalism to a purely computational exercise, potentially undermining the critical interpretative and contextual understanding that human editors provide. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that AI technologies excel at data processing and pattern recognition, but struggle with tasks requiring sophisticated moral reasoning, emotional intelligence and nuanced cultural interpretation. The most effective newsroom strategies thus involve viewing AI as a complementary tool that augments human editorial capabilities rather than a wholesale replacement for professional journalistic expertise. This approach requires developing advanced interdisciplinary skill sets that combine technological proficiency with traditional journalistic principles of investigative rigours, ethical considerations and narrative complexity (Christin, 2020).

The ethical implications of AI integration in editorial processes represent a critical area of scholarly investigation and practical concern. Machine learning algorithms, inherently trained on existing datasets, risk perpetuating and potentially amplifying systemic social biases embedded within historical information sources. This technological challenge extends beyond mere computational limitations, touching fundamental questions of representation, fairness and journalistic responsibility (Gillespie, 2018). Algorithmic decision-making processes can inadvertently reinforce existing social hierarchies, marginalize underrepresented perspectives and reproduce discriminatory narratives under the guise of objective information processing. Human editors play an irreplaceable role in identifying and mitigating these potential biases, providing critical contextual interpretation that transcends pure computational logic.

The implementation of AI technologies in newsrooms necessitates robust institutional frameworks that prioritise human agency, ethical considerations and continuous technological adaptation. Successful organisational strategies require developing flexible governance models that can rapidly respond to technological innovations while maintaining core journalistic principles. This involves creating interdisciplinary teams that integrate technological experts, professional editors, ethicists and data scientists to develop comprehensive AI implementation strategies (Flew, 2021). Institutional approaches must emphasise continuous

learning, allowing for iterative refinement of AI tools based on ongoing performance assessments and ethical evaluations. News organizations need to invest in sophisticated technological infrastructure that supports responsible AI integration, including advanced monitoring systems, algorithmic auditing mechanisms and transparent decision-making protocols. The development of comprehensive performance metrics becomes crucial, moving beyond traditional quantitative assessments to include qualitative evaluations of algorithmic performance, bias identification and narrative complexity. Collaborative governance models that involve multiple stakeholders—including journalists, technologists, ethicists and community representatives—can help ensure that AI technologies serve broader societal interests rather than narrow institutional or commercial objectives (Singer, 2019).

The future of editorial practice lies in developing sophisticated, adaptive models that recognize the complementary strengths of human expertise and artificial intelligence. This requires a paradigmatic shift from viewing AI as a replacement for human capabilities to understanding it as a powerful collaborative tool that can augment journalistic potential. Successful integration depends on cultivating a culture of continuous learning, technological reflexivity and ethical commitment (Pavlik, 2022).

News organizations must invest in developing advanced technological infrastructure, comprehensive training programmes and robust governance frameworks that prioritize human agency and societal impact. The most effective approaches will likely emerge from interdisciplinary collaborations that bring together perspectives from media studies, computer science, sociology and ethics. Technological innovation in journalism should be guided by a fundamental commitment to enhancing informational quality, expanding access to diverse perspectives and promoting more nuanced, contextually rich storytelling. This involves developing AI tools that can process complex information while preserving the critical interpretative capacities that distinguish high-quality journalism (Winch, 2019). The ultimate goal is not to replace human editors but to create a more dynamic, responsive and ethically grounded media ecosystem that leverages the best of both human and technological capabilities.

Statement of the Problem

The primary challenge lies in addressing algorithmic bias and ethical limitations inherent in AI-driven news editing. Machine learning systems, trained on existing datasets, risk perpetuating systemic biases, marginalizing underrepresented

perspectives and compromising journalistic integrity. These technologies struggle with nuanced contextual understanding and moral reasoning, creating significant gaps in comprehensive news representation. The fundamental problem emerges from the tension between computational efficiency and the complex, interpretative nature of journalistic storytelling, challenging the core principles of balanced and ethical reporting.

The transformation of professional roles and institutional frameworks presents another critical problem. Editors must rapidly develop new technological competencies while maintaining traditional journalistic values, navigating an increasingly complex technological landscape. Existing educational models are inadequately equipped to prepare journalists for AI integration, creating significant skill gaps. The lack of comprehensive governance models and standardized approaches to technological implementation further complicates this challenge, leaving newsrooms struggling to develop responsible strategies for AI adoption that balance technological innovation with human expertise.

The most profound issue centers on maintaining the quality, depth and ethical standards of journalism in an increasingly automated environment. The risk of reducing news production to computational processes threatens the nuanced storytelling, investigative depth and critical analysis that define high-quality journalism. Transparency in algorithmic decision-making remains limited, creating accountability challenges. News organizations must develop robust frameworks that view AI as a complementary tool rather than a replacement for human editorial judgment, ensuring that technological innovations enhance rather than diminish the fundamental purpose of journalism: to provide meaningful, contextually rich and ethically grounded information to the public.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine editors as gatekeepers in the AI Era: balancing human expertise and automation in news editing. The specific objectives are to:

i. Examine the traditional role of editors as gatekeepers in the news industry and how it is being reshaped by the integration of AI technologies.
ii. Evaluate audience perceptions of the credibility and transparency of AI-integrated news editing systems.
iii. Analyze the challenges of using AI tools in news editing.
iv. Develop strategies for balancing human expertise and AI automation in news editing while upholding journalistic integrity.

Research Question

The following research question will guide the study:

i. How is the traditional role of editors as gatekeepers in the news industry being reshaped by the integration of AI technologies?
ii. What are audience perceptions of the credibility and transparency of AI-integrated news editing systems?
iii. What are the challenges associated with using AI tools in news editing?
iv. What strategies can be developed to balance human expertise and AI automation in news editing while maintaining journalistic integrity?

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on the Gatekeeping Theory. Gatekeeping theory, introduced by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s, describes the process by which information flows through communication channels and is filtered by "gatekeepers" who determine what content is allowed to pass through. Originally applied to the study of decision-making in household food consumption, the theory was later adapted to the field of mass communication by David Manning White in 1950. White's seminal study examined how an editor (referred to as "Mr. Gates") made decisions about which news stories to publish. This theory emphasizes the role of individuals or entities in shaping the flow of information, which has significant implications for media, journalism and communication studies (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). Gatekeeping is foundational for understanding how news editors decide what is disseminated to the public.

In the digital era, gatekeeping has evolved significantly with the advent of the internet, social media and AI. Traditional gatekeepers, such as editors and journalists, now share their roles with algorithms and automated systems that curate, filter and distribute information. These AI-driven systems analyse large datasets to prioritize content based on user preferences and engagement metrics. While this democratization of information increases accessibility, it also raises concerns about the reliability and integrity of content. Algorithms, unlike human gatekeepers, lack ethical reasoning and may perpetuate biases embedded in their training data. As Vos and Heinderyckx (2015) note, the traditional gatekeeping process has shifted to a collaborative and automated model, presenting both opportunities and challenges for editorial decision-making.

The integration of AI into the gatekeeping process introduces ethical and practical challenges. AI tools can efficiently filter vast amounts of information but may

inadvertently amplify misinformation or marginalise certain perspectives. For instance, algorithms may prioritize sensational content to maximize engagement, potentially undermining journalistic standards. Human editors must now act as "meta-gatekeepers," overseeing AI systems to ensure ethical and balanced content curation. This shift complicates the traditional understanding of gatekeeping, as responsibility becomes shared between humans and machines. Shoemaker and Vos (2009) argue that the theory must adapt to account for the hybrid nature of gatekeeping in the digital age, where both human and automated processes influence the flow of information.

Gatekeeping theory remains highly relevant in journalism, especially as newsrooms grapple with the challenges of integrating AI technologies. The theory provides a framework for understanding the balance between human expertise and automation in deciding what news is published. It underscores the importance of ethical oversight and critical judgment in maintaining journalistic integrity. As digital tools continue to evolve, gatekeeping theory serves as a reminder of the need for accountability and transparency in information dissemination. According to Barzilai-Nahon (2008), the future of gatekeeping lies in finding equilibrium between technology and human intervention, ensuring that news content reflects societal values while leveraging the efficiencies of AI.

Conceptual Review

AI encompasses a broad range of concepts and techniques aimed at creating machines that can perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence (Russell & Norvig, 2020). These include machine learning, where algorithms learn from data to make predictions or decisions, natural language processing (NLP) to understand and generate human language, computer vision for interpreting visual information, robotics for physical tasks and many more (Goodfellow et al., 2016). AI has applications across various fields like healthcare, finance, transportation and entertainment, revolutionizing industries and changing the way we interact with technology (McCarthy et al., 2019).

AI stands as one of the most transformative technologies of the 21st century, promising to reshape industries, redefine human-computer interaction and revolutionize how we approach problem-solving (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2017). At its core, AI seeks to imbue machines with the ability to perform tasks traditionally requiring human intelligence. This multifaceted field encompasses diverse techniques, methodologies and applications, ranging from machine learning and natural language processing to robotics and computer vision (Schmidhuber, 2015).

Artificial intelligence represents a paradigm shift in computing, empowering machines with cognitive abilities once exclusive to humans (Bostrom, 2014). From machine learning and natural language processing to computer vision and robotics, AI technologies are reshaping industries, redefining human-computer interaction and unlocking new frontiers of human ingenuity. As AI research and innovation progress, it is vital to remain aware of the ethical implications and societal impact, striving toward a future where AI serves as a force for positive change, enhancing human lives and advancing societal well-being (Floridi & Cowls, 2019).

One of the most notable advancements in AI is its impact on automation, which has transformed industries such as manufacturing, logistics and customer service. In these sectors, AI-powered systems can handle repetitive tasks, analyse vast amounts of data and optimize processes more efficiently than humans. However, this also raises concerns about job displacement, as machines replace roles traditionally held by humans. As AI continues to evolve, it is essential for policymakers and business leaders to develop strategies that balance automation with the need for human workers, ensuring that economic growth benefits society as a whole.

The integration of AI into healthcare has the potential to revolutionize patient care and medical research. AI-driven algorithms are increasingly being used for early disease detection, personalized treatment plans and predictive analytics, allowing for more accurate diagnoses and faster response time. In addition, AI-powered robots are assisting in surgeries, improving precision and reducing human error. Despite these promising advances, there are concerns about data privacy, the security of medical AI systems and the potential for bias in algorithmic decision-making. Addressing these concerns will be essential for ensuring the safe and ethical use of AI in healthcare.

AI also raises important questions about ethics and accountability. As machines become more autonomous and capable of making decisions, the responsibility for their actions becomes less clear. For example, AI algorithms used in law enforcement, hiring practices and credit scoring have been criticized for perpetuating bias and reinforcing societal inequalities. Ensuring that AI systems are transparent, fair and accountable is a critical challenge that requires input from a diverse range of stakeholders, including technologists, ethicists and policymakers. As AI becomes more integrated into everyday life, it is crucial to

develop frameworks that ensure these technologies are used in ways that are aligned with societal values and human rights.

AI's influence on education is rapidly expanding, with tools such as personalized learning platforms, virtual tutors and AI-driven assessments providing students with tailored educational experiences. These innovations can enhance learning outcomes by adapting to individual students' needs and helping them overcome learning obstacles. However, the integration of AI in education also raises concerns about the digital divide, as access to AI-powered tools may be limited for underserved communities. Ensuring equitable access to these technologies will be crucial for maximizing their benefits and preventing further educational inequalities.

Traditional role of editors as gatekeepers in the news industry and how it is being reshaped by the integration of AI technologies

Traditionally, editors have served as critical gatekeepers in the news industry, wielding significant power in determining which stories reach the public, how they are framed and what information is deemed newsworthy (Diakopoulos, 2022). Their role encompassed multiple crucial functions, including fact-checking, maintaining journalistic standards, ensuring ethical reporting and curating content that meets the highest standards of journalistic integrity (Powers, 2021). Editors acted as human filters, drawing from their professional experience, institutional knowledge and nuanced understanding of social and political contexts to make complex editorial decisions that shaped public discourse.

The emergence of artificial intelligence technologies is fundamentally transforming traditional gatekeeping role, introducing both unprecedented opportunities and significant challenges (Lewis & Westlund, 2022). AI-powered tools can now rapidly analyse vast amounts of data, identify emerging news trends, detect potential story leads and even generate initial drafts of news content (Marconi & Siegman, 2020). Machine learning algorithms can process information from multiple sources simultaneously, providing editors with comprehensive insights and helping them make more informed decisions about story selection, fact-verification and content prioritization (van der Krogt & Donders, 2023). This technological integration is shifting the editor's role from a sole decision-maker to a more collaborative position where human judgment is augmented by sophisticated technological capabilities.

However, the integration of AI in newsrooms is not without critical challenges and ethical considerations (Clerwall, 2021). While AI can process information at

remarkable speed and identify patterns humans might miss, it lacks the nuanced understanding of context, cultural sensitivities and complex human narratives that experienced editors bring. Concerns persist about potential algorithmic biases, the risk of misinformation propagation and the potential erosion of journalistic creativity and critical thinking (Flew, 2021). Editors must now navigate a delicate balance between leveraging AI's analytical capabilities and maintaining the core journalistic values of accuracy, fairness and human-centered storytelling.

Furthermore, the future of editorial work appears to be a symbiotic relationship between human expertise and artificial intelligence (Powers, 2021). Forward-thinking news organisations are developing hybrid models where AI serves as a powerful assistant to human editors, handling routine tasks like initial fact-checking, trend analysis and content categorization, while human journalists focus on deeper investigative work, narrative construction and ethical decision-making (Lewis & Westlund, 2022). This collaborative approach promises to enhance editorial efficiency, expand the scope of news coverage and potentially democratize access to information while preserving the fundamental human elements of journalism that machine learning cannot replicate.

Audience perceptions of the credibility and transparency of AI-integrated news editing systems

In the rapidly evolving landscape of digital journalism, audience perceptions of AI-integrated news editing systems have become a critical area of investigation. Traditional trust in journalistic institutions is being challenged by the introduction of AI technologies that are increasingly involved in content creation and curation (Nielsen & Graves, 2022). Readers are grappling with complex questions about the reliability, objectivity and ethical implications of AI-driven news production, creating a nuanced and often skeptical relationship with emerging technological approaches to journalism.

Empirical research suggests that audience credibility perceptions are deeply influenced by transparency about AI involvement in news processes. A study by Thurman et al. (2021) revealed that news consumers demonstrate heightened sensitivity to algorithmic content generation, with many expressing concerns about potential bias and the loss of human editorial judgment. The transparency paradox emerges prominently: while audiences desire complete disclosure about AI's role, they simultaneously struggle to comprehend the complex technological mechanisms underlying AI-driven news editing systems. This cognitive

dissonance creates a challenging communication landscape for media organizations attempting to build and maintain audience trust.

The demographic variations in AI-mediated news perceptions present another fascinating dimension of research. Younger digital-native audiences tend to display more openness and technological comfort with AI integration, viewing algorithmic news curation as an expected evolution of contemporary journalism (Diakopoulos, 2019). Conversely, older demographics often exhibit greater skepticism, associating AI technologies with potential misinformation risks and a departure from traditional journalistic values. These generational differences underscore the complex social and psychological dynamics surrounding technological innovation in media ecosystems.

However, rebuilding audience trust in AI-integrated news systems requires a multifaceted approach prioritizing transparency, ethical guidelines and continuous engagement. Media organizations must develop robust communication strategies that demystify AI technologies, demonstrate their complementary relationship with human journalists and consistently emphasise the collaborative nature of algorithmic and human editorial processes (Lewis & Westlund, 2022). The future of credible journalism lies not in technological replacement, but in creating harmonious integration that preserves core journalistic principles while leveraging technological capabilities to enhance information quality and accessibility.

Challenges of using AI tools in news editing

The integration of artificial intelligence tools in news editing represents a complex technological frontier fraught with multifaceted challenges that extend far beyond simple technological implementation. News organizations are encountering profound ethical, professional and operational dilemmas as they navigate the delicate balance between technological innovation and journalistic integrity (Diakopoulos, 2019). The fundamental tension emerges from AI's computational capabilities conflicting with the nuanced, context-driven nature of journalistic storytelling, which has traditionally relied on human judgment, emotional intelligence and deep contextual understanding.

Ethical challenges stand at the forefront of AI implementation in news editing, with significant concerns surrounding algorithmic bias, potential misinformation propagation and the erosion of journalistic autonomy (Lewis & Westlund, 2022). Machine learning algorithms, while sophisticated, inherently reflect the biases present in their training data, risking the perpetuation of existing social prejudices

and potentially creating echo chambers that undermine the fundamental journalistic principle of presenting diverse perspectives. Moreover, the lack of transparency in AI decision-making processes raises critical questions about accountability and the potential for unintended editorial manipulation that could compromise the core values of fair and balanced reporting.

Technical limitations present another substantial barrier to effective AI integration in news editing. Current AI technologies struggle with nuanced tasks that require deep contextual understanding, such as detecting subtle linguistic nuances, interpreting complex cultural references and making ethical judgments about story framing and sensitivity (Thurman et al., 2021). The computational models often lack the sophisticated emotional intelligence and cultural awareness that human editors bring to their work, leading to potential misinterpretations or tone-deaf content generation that could damage a news organization's credibility and reputation.

Professional resistance and workforce adaptation represent perhaps the most human dimension of these challenges. Many veteran journalists and editors view AI technologies with skepticism, fearing potential job displacement and viewing these tools as a threat to their professional expertise (Nielsen & Graves, 2022). The successful implementation of AI in newsrooms requires not just technological investment, but a comprehensive approach to organizational change management, including robust training programmes, transparent communication about AI's role as a collaborative tool rather than a replacement and strategies that emphasize the complementary relationship between human creativity and machine efficiency.

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive survey design, which is suitable for gathering the views and opinions of respondents, as well as utilizing available resources within the area of study. The design allowed for the collection of data that reflects the perceptions of the participants in Lokoja, Kogi State, regarding AI and news editing.

The population of the study consisted of 178 registered members of the NUJ in Lokoja as at May 2020. Using the Taro Yamani formula, the sample size for the study was determined to be 123 respondents, representing a portion of the entire population of NUJ members in Lokoja.

A multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample. The first stage involved stratified sampling, categorizing NUJ members by their roles or areas of reporting (e.g., print, broadcast, online media). In the second stage, purposive

sampling was used to select specific groups relevant to the study, such as senior editors and reporters with access to digital platforms. The third stage involved proportional sampling, ensuring that the sample size was appropriately distributed across the selected groups.

Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire, divided into two sections: Section A for demographic data and Section B for the subject matter. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale for responses. Data analysis was done using frequencies, means and standard deviations to answer the research questions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Traditional role of editors as gatekeepers in the news industry being reshaped by the integration of AI technologies.

	VARIABLES	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	DECISION
1	AI technologies have significantly altered the decision-making role of editors in newsrooms.	40	50	10	15	8	3.78	1.94	Accepted
2	AI systems have made editors more reliant on automated processes rather than their own judgment.	45	40	15	15	8	3.80	1.95	Accepted
3	Editors' ability to control news content and narrative has decreased with the integration of AI in newsrooms.	35	55	13	10	10	3.77	1.93	Accepted
4	AI-driven news editing allows for more diverse perspectives to be included in news stories.	30	60	10	15	8	3.72	1.92	Accepted

Table 1 represents respondents' opinions on how the traditional role of editors as gatekeepers in the news industry is being reshaped by the integration of AI technologies. The item "AI technologies have significantly altered the decision-making role of editors in newsrooms" achieved a mean score of 3.78, indicating strong agreement among respondents that AI has transformed editorial decision-making processes. Similarly, the statement "AI systems have made editors more reliant on automated processes rather than their own judgment" received a mean score of 3.80, suggesting a widespread belief that editors are becoming more dependent on automation in their roles, potentially reducing their autonomy in editorial decisions.

However, the item "Editors' ability to control news content and narrative has decreased with the integration of AI in newsrooms" garnered a mean score of 3.77, indicating that respondents feel editors' control over news narratives has diminished with the increasing reliance on AI systems. Finally, the statement "AI-driven news editing allows for more diverse perspectives to be included in news stories" achieved a mean score of 3.72, demonstrating that most respondents believed AI contributes positively to the inclusion of diverse viewpoints in news content.

The findings highlight that respondents acknowledged the significant influence of AI in reshaping the editorial landscape, with many agreeing that AI has both increased automation and reduced human control in newsrooms. While concerns about the diminished role of editors are evident, respondents also see value in AI's potential to introduce more diverse perspectives into news stories, underscoring the complex and multifaceted impact of AI on journalism.

Table 2: Audience perceptions of the credibility and transparency of AI-integrated news editing systems.

	VARIABLES	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	DECISION
1	AI-driven news editing reduces the transparency of how news stories are selected and presented.	50	40	15	10	8	3.93	1.98	Accepted
2	I trust news stories that have been edited using AI more than those edited by human editors.	45	50	12	10	6	3.96	1.99	Accepted
3	The use of AI in news editing raises concerns about bias and manipulation in news reporting.	40	55	13	10	5	3.93	1.98	Accepted
4	AI systems in newsrooms provide clearer insights into how editorial decisions are made compared to traditional editing methods.	35	60	10	12	6	3.86	1.96	Accepted

Table 2 above represents respondents' opinions on the credibility and transparency of AI-integrated news editing systems. The item "AI-driven news editing reduces the transparency of how news stories are selected and presented" achieved a mean score of 3.93, indicating strong agreement among respondents that AI reduces transparency in news selection and presentation. This suggests

concerns about the clarity and visibility of editorial processes when AI systems are used. Similarly, the statement "I trust news stories that have been edited using AI more than those edited by human editors" received a mean score of 3.96, suggesting that respondents generally trust AI-edited news stories slightly more than those edited by humans, reflecting a positive perception of AI's role in news editing.

Furthermore, the item "The use of AI in news editing raises concerns about bias and manipulation in news reporting" garnered a mean score of 3.93, demonstrating significant agreement among respondents regarding the potential risks of bias and manipulation in AI-driven news content. Finally, the statement "AI systems in newsrooms provide clearer insights into how editorial decisions are made compared to traditional editing methods" achieved a mean score of 3.86, indicating that respondents felt AI offers a better understanding of editorial decisions than traditional human-driven methods, suggesting a growing belief in the transparency provided by AI systems.

The findings highlight that while respondents expressed some concerns about the transparency and potential biases of AI in news editing, they also acknowledged the value of AI in improving the trustworthiness and clarity of editorial decisions. Overall, respondents appeared to perceive AI as both a tool that raises important ethical concerns and a system that contributes to greater transparency and trust in news editing processes.

Table 3: Challenges are associated with using AI tools in news editing.

	VARIABLES	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	DECISION
1	AI tools often produce content that lacks the nuance and context that human editors provide.	25	35	20	10	10	3.55	1.88	Accepted
2	The integration of AI into newsrooms requires extensive training and upskilling of journalists.	30	25	25	15	5	3.60	1.89	Accepted
3	Over-reliance on AI tools in news editing can lead to a reduction in job opportunities for human editors.	40	30	15	10	5	3.90	1.97	Accepted
4	AI-based news editing systems sometimes struggle to understand complex human emotions and subtleties in stories.	35	40	10	10	5	3.88	1.96	Accepted

Table 3 above represents respondents' views on the challenges associated with using AI tools in news editing. The item "AI tools often produce content that lacks the nuance and context that human editors provide" achieved a mean score of 3.55, indicating agreement among respondents that AI tools often fail to capture the nuanced details and context that human editors bring to news stories. This suggests that AI systems are perceived as less effective than human editors in managing the subtleties of news reporting. The statement "the integration of AI into newsrooms requires extensive training and upskilling of journalists" received a mean score of 3.60, showing that respondents believed significant effort is required to equip journalists with the skills needed to work effectively with AI tools. This emphasises the need for proper training and upskilling programmes in newsrooms to ensure journalists can adapt to AI technologies. The item "Over-reliance on AI tools in news editing can lead to a reduction in job opportunities for human editors" garnered a mean score of 3.90, reflecting a strong concern among respondents about the potential impact of AI on job security in the news industry. Respondents seemed to believe that excessive dependence on AI could diminish the demand for human editors, highlighting fears about job displacement due to automation. Finally, the statement "AI-based news editing systems sometimes struggle to understand complex human emotions and subtleties in stories" achieved a mean score of 3.88, indicating agreement that AI tools face challenges in comprehending the emotional and complex aspects of news stories. This suggests that while AI may be useful for basic editing tasks, it may not be able to handle the emotional and intricate elements of journalism effectively.

Table 4: Strategies can be developed to balance human expertise and AI automation in news editing while maintaining journalistic integrity.

	VARIABLES	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	DECISION
1	Editors should be responsible for verifying AI-edited content to ensure its accuracy and integrity.	55	45	12	8	3	4.15	2.04	Accepted
2	Human editors should oversee the final output of AI-driven news editing systems to maintain journalistic standards.	60	40	10	7	6	4.13	2.03	Accepted
3	Clear guidelines and ethical frameworks should be established for the use of AI in newsrooms to balance automation and human oversight.	50	50	11	9	3	4.10	2.00	Accepted
4	Regular audits of AI systems in newsrooms can help ensure that they are used ethically and transparently.	45	55	10	8	5	4.03	1.99	Accepted

Table 4 above presents respondents' opinions on strategies that can be developed to balance human expertise and AI automation in news editing while maintaining journalistic integrity. The statement "Editors should be responsible for verifying AI-edited content to ensure its accuracy and integrity" achieved a mean score of 4.15, indicating strong support among respondents for the idea that human editors should continue to play a key role in verifying the accuracy and integrity of content produced by AI. This suggests a consensus on the importance of human oversight in maintaining high editorial standards. The item "Human editors should oversee the final output of AI-driven news editing systems to maintain journalistic standards" received a mean score of 4.13, reflecting a strong agreement among respondents that human involvement is crucial in overseeing AI-generated content to uphold journalistic quality. Respondents seemed to believe that AI should not be relied upon exclusively and that human editors must be the final arbiters of news content to preserve journalistic integrity. Additionally, the statement "Clear guidelines and ethical frameworks should be established for the use of AI in newsrooms to balance automation and human oversight" garnered a mean score of 4.10, indicating widespread agreement on the need for clear rules and ethical standards for AI usage in newsrooms. Respondents emphasised the importance of

having structured guidelines to ensure that AI systems are used responsibly, balancing the benefits of automation with the necessity of human judgment. Finally, the item "Regular audits of AI systems in newsrooms can help ensure that they are used ethically and transparently" received a mean score of 4.03, signaling strong support for regular audits to ensure that AI tools are being used ethically and transparently. This suggests that respondents value the idea of periodic checks to maintain accountability and transparency in the use of AI in journalism. Overall, the findings suggest that respondents favoured a balanced approach to integrating AI in newsrooms, emphasising the need for human oversight, clear ethical guidelines and regular audits to ensure AI tools are used in a manner that upholds journalistic integrity and standards.

Discussion of Findings

From the research question focusing on how the traditional role of editors as gatekeepers is being reshaped by the integration of AI technologies, it was found that AI has significantly altered the decision-making process in newsrooms. Editors reported becoming more reliant on automated tools and systems, with AI assisting in tasks such as selecting stories based on pre-set algorithms and audience engagement metrics. These AI systems, which process vast amounts of data quickly, now play a key role in story prioritization, often determining what is published and when based on patterns and trends identified in the data. This shift towards automation has raised concerns among editors about losing control over the editorial process and diminishing the value of human judgment in decision-making. This aligns with the findings of Lockett (2019), who noted that while AI offers potential for improving content diversity, it often results in a "black box" approach where the selection criteria are unclear to both editors and audiences, raising concerns about credibility and bias.

In addressing the second research question regarding audience perceptions of the credibility and transparency of AI-integrated news editing systems, the findings reveal mixed reactions to AI's influence on news production. The majority of respondents indicated that AI-driven news editing could reduce transparency in how stories are selected and presented, with many expressing concerns about the lack of clarity in the editorial process. This aligns with the view expressed by Tandoc et al. (2020), who argued that AI systems, particularly those operating in the background, often obscure the decision-making process, making it difficult for audiences to understand how news stories are curated. The reduction in transparency was perceived as a potential risk to the credibility of news, as audiences may be less likely to trust news that appears to be shaped by automated systems without clear human oversight.

Furthermore, the third research question regarding the challenges associated with using AI tools in news editing, the findings highlight several key concerns raised by respondents. A major challenge identified was that AI tools often produce content that lacks the nuance and context that human editors provide. Respondents expressed that AI systems, while capable of processing large amounts of data quickly, struggle to capture the subtleties and deeper meanings embedded in complex stories. This concern is supported by the findings of Binns (2018), who highlighted that AI lacks the ability to fully comprehend the human condition, such as emotions, cultural context and the intricacies of language, which are crucial for high-quality journalism. As a result, news content produced by AI might miss critical layers of context, potentially leading to oversimplification or misrepresentation of complex issues.

On the fourth research question regarding strategies to balance human expertise and AI automation in news editing while maintaining journalistic integrity, findings of this study emphasize several key strategies that respondents believed can help achieve this balance. A prominent strategy identified is that editors should be responsible for verifying AI-edited content to ensure its accuracy and integrity. Respondents strongly supported the idea that human editors should retain oversight over AI-generated content, ensuring that it adheres to journalistic standards and ethical guidelines. This aligns with the perspective of Knight (2019), who argues that human judgment is essential for ensuring the quality and credibility of news, even when AI tools are used in the editing process. Editors' experience and intuition allow them to catch errors, misrepresentations, or biased framing that AI might overlook.

Conclusion

The integration of AI technologies into newsrooms has significantly reshaped the traditional role of editors as gatekeepers. Editors are now relying more heavily on automated systems to assist in decision-making, particularly in the selection and prioritization of news stories. AI's ability to analyze large datasets and predict audience engagement has led to more data-driven editorial choices. However, this shift has raised concerns about the diminishing role of human judgment in editorial decision-making, as well as the potential loss of control over the editorial process. The reliance on AI, while enhancing efficiency, has also brought forward challenges related to the transparency and credibility of the news produced, as highlighted by the "black box" phenomenon where editorial processes become unclear to both editors and audiences.

The audience's perception of AI-integrated news editing systems is mixed, particularly in terms of credibility and transparency. Many respondents expressed concerns about the opacity of AI-driven editorial processes, which can reduce trust in the news produced. The lack of visibility into how AI systems make editorial decisions leads to skepticism about the accuracy and fairness of AI-edited content. This concern is compounded by the fear that AI might contribute to bias in news selection, as audiences may not fully understand the algorithms that shape the stories they encounter. The findings support existing literature that suggests AI's role in newsrooms needs to be clearly communicated to the public in order to maintain trust and credibility in journalism.

However, several challenges were identified in using AI tools for news editing. The inability of AI to fully grasp context, nuance and the subtleties of human experience limits its effectiveness in producing high-quality journalism. AI systems may struggle to interpret cultural context, emotions and complex language, which are essential in nuanced news reporting. The study underscores the need for strategies to balance the efficiency of AI with the depth and understanding that human editors bring to the editorial process. The strategies recommended by respondents, such as human oversight of AI-generated content and the establishment of ethical frameworks, are crucial in ensuring that journalistic integrity is maintained while benefiting from AI's capabilities. The combination of human expertise and AI automation presents a potential path forward, but it requires careful management to preserve the standards of journalism.

Recommendations

i. Editors should maintain a strong role in overseeing AI-generated content to ensure that it adheres to journalistic standards and ethical guidelines. Human judgment is essential to detect potential errors, biases, or misrepresentations that AI tools might overlook.
ii. Journalists and editors should be trained on how to effectively integrate AI tools into their workflows. This includes upskilling in understanding AI's capabilities and limitations, as well as how to use AI tools ethically and responsibly within newsrooms.
iii. Newsrooms should create clear ethical frameworks and guidelines for using AI in news editing. These guidelines should focus on balancing automation with human oversight, ensuring that AI systems do not compromise journalistic integrity or ethical standards.

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