



JOURNALISTS' PERCEPTION OF THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AI IN NEWS REPORTAGE IN IMO STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study was focused on Journalists' perception of the usage of Artificial Intelligence in News reportage in Imo state. The objectives of this study are to; examine the level of awareness of AI among journalists in Imo state, evaluate the extent to which AI tools are currently being used in newsrooms within Imo state and evaluate the perception of Imo state journalists towards the use of artificial intelligence in news reportage. The study was anchored on Technological Determinism and Media Metamorphosis. The survey research design was adopted for this study and questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The study used a population size of 200. For manageability, the entire population was studied. The study adopted multistage sampling technique. Findings of this study revealed that there is a high level of awareness of Artificial Intelligence AI by journalists in Imo State. Further findings revealed that respondents have positive perception towards the use of AI in news reporting. This study concluded that the usage of AI by journalists in news reporting is influence by their level of awareness. This study recommends that journalists should be trained on how to effectively use AI generated information in order to maintain the ethical standards of the profession.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Communication, Journalism, Reportage, Technology

Introduction

Artificial intelligence does a lot to aid human activity. It is indeed a revolution. The extent it will go and the level of changes it will bring about is unimaginable. It is an attempt to make a computer, a robot or other piece of technology 'think' and process data in the same way or with greater speed and efficiency than humans do. The prediction of a global village by Marshall McLuhan is now a living reality and with it came computers with its attendant sophistication.

Artificial intelligence according to Ding et al, 2021 in Sharadga et al 2022, is defined as the development of computer devices and systems and developed programming techniques, which have three main features: intelligent recognition, intelligent communication, and intelligent simulation. In the same vein, (Muhlhoff, 2020; Etumnu & Azubuike, 2024) sees artificial intelligence as smart systems and software based on simulating the mental faculties of humans using computational programs to be able to learn, plan, perform logical deduction operations, inference to process big data, model thought and behavior, make decisions based on understanding spoken language, and accomplish evolving Businesses. Artificial intelligence therefore is an attempt to configure machines to act like the human brains, think, learn and make decisions when it tries to solve problems or execute a task (Reflections on the Holy See's Message on the 2024 World Communication Week, 2024).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a transformative force in the field of journalism, revolutionizing how news is gathered, produced, and disseminated (Barnard, 2018; Picard, 2019). With its capacity for automation, data analysis, and content generation, AI presents both opportunities and challenges for journalists worldwide (Diakopoulos, 2019). In recent years, news media has been greatly disrupted by the potential of technologically driven approaches in the creation, production

and distribution of news products and services. This can be seen in novel new products and services such as data journalism, immersive and drone journalism and automation (Felipe & Ceron, 2022).

For mainstream media, something quite fundamental is changing how traditional media are going about news collection, writing, editing, storage, retrieval, and dissemination in the news industry. On the mission for data, information execution and need for speed in a datafied society are creating considerable opportunities that are inciting a re-examination of digital work tools that will enhance journalism's fundamental purpose and goal, as well as shape and ethics of the news industry. Unfortunately, like other African countries, many Nigerian journalists have not fully grasped the concept of what artificial intelligence (AI) is, to adopt it for newsroom activities (Okocha & Ola-Akuma, 2022).

Historically, newspapers were the primary source of news for the general public. People relied on printed newspapers to stay informed about local, national, and international events. However, the advent of television in the mid-20th century, led to the medium gaining prominence as a more accessible and visually engaging medium. The introduction of cable television networks further diversified news sources and provided viewers with 24-hour news coverage; marking a significant shift in audience news consumption—from relying solely on newspapers to having access to real-time updates through televised broadcasts.

The emergence of the internet in the late 20th century brought about yet another transformative change in journalism. With its ability to connect people globally and provide instant access to information, the internet became a game-changer for journalists and consumers alike. News organizations quickly recognized this potential and established their online presence through websites (Owe et al., 2023).

Initially, these websites served as an additional platform for publishing articles that complemented their print editions. However, as technology advanced with increased internet speeds and improved user interfaces, online platforms became more interactive and multimedia-rich. This allowed news organizations to experiment with new storytelling formats such as videos, podcasts, infographics, and interactive graphics.

There are two types of artificial intelligence: general AI and narrow AI (Broussard, 2018). Computer scientist and data journalist Meredith Broussard describes general AI as the “Hollywood kind of AI,” like sentient robots or machines with consciousness. On the other hand, Narrow AI is what journalists are using right now. “Machine learning” is narrow AI, where the machine learns how to identify patterns and find what journalists (or the programmers) are looking for after analyzing hundreds of thousands of data points. Machine learning utilizes algorithms, which are “recipes” for a computer — the steps the algorithm takes to create a certain outcome (Harley, 2019).

Imo State, situated in south-eastern Nigeria, boasts a vibrant media landscape comprising newspapers, radio stations, and online platforms that play a vital role in informing and engaging the local populace (Oso & Kur, 2019). However, amidst this rich media ecosystem, the integration of AI into news production processes remains relatively unexplored.

Understanding journalists' attitudes towards AI in news reportage in Imo State is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it provides insights into the adoption and acceptance of AI technologies within the Nigerian media landscape, which can inform discussions around future technological investments and innovations (Newman et al., 2020). Secondly, it sheds light on the potential opportunities and challenges AI poses for journalists working in regional contexts, where resource constraints and infrastructural limitations may influence technology adoption rates. Lastly, it contributes to broader discussions about the role of technology in shaping the future of journalism in Nigeria and beyond.

By delving into journalists' perceptions of AI in news reportage in Imo State, this research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between technology, media, and society (Fernández-Quijada & López, 2018). Through qualitative interviews and analysis, this study seeks to uncover the underlying attitudes, beliefs, and concerns that shape journalists' interactions with AI tools and their implications for the practice of journalism in Imo State. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the evolving relationship between technology and journalism in the Nigerian context, with implications for both theory and practice.

Scope of Study

Every aspect of news production from story discovery to its production and subsequent distribution, can be affected by machine learning. Though one cannot negate the fact that AI can be used as a potential tool to help the journalist to have a better reach while making it easier for him to distribute his news report to his perceived target audience, understanding its impact on the journalism professional particularly in Imo State, Nigeria, is important for assessing both potential benefits and challenges. This research work seeks to explore the perception of journalists in Imo state towards the utilization of AI in news reportage.

Statement of the problem

The emergence of artificial intelligence has significantly impacted various industries, including journalism particularly in the aspect of news reportage. AI technologies, such as natural language processing, automated content generation, and sentiment analysis, have the potential to revolutionize the way news is gathered, analyzed, and disseminated. This has brought about an evolution of journalism leading to a transformation in news production, consumption and dissemination.

In many newsrooms locally and globally, AI has been integrated to assist with tasks ranging from automated reporting and data analysis to social media monitoring and fact-checking. However, the extent to which these advancements are embraced and utilized varies significantly across different countries, regions and states. Here in Imo state, the adoption, penetration and perception of AI by journalists looks underexplored.

This is because there is a lack of comprehensive data on how journalists in the state perceive AI, the extent to which they are familiar with and use these tools as well as the benefits and or challenges they encounter in associating with AI integration in news reportage. Thus creating a gap in knowledge which makes the assessment of how equipped journalists are to effectively utilize AI tools in their work place, difficult.

Without comprehensive data on the current usage of AI by journalists in Imo state, it becomes challenging to identify best practices, its effect on ethical standards (this is crucial for developing guidelines and frameworks to ensure ethical reporting), areas needing improvement, and opportunities for further integration of AI technologies in Imo state.

Addressing these issues is essential for developing effective strategies to integrate AI into journalism in a way that enhances the profession while maintaining high standards of ethical reporting. This study therefore aims to fill this knowledge gap by systematically exploring the perceptions, experiences and attitudes of journalists in Imo state towards AI usage in news reportage. It is the researchers' prayer that the findings of this work would provide valuable insights for media organizations, policy makers and other stakeholders to understand the evolving world of journalism in the digital age.

Objective of study

The main objective of this study is to examine journalists' perception of the use of artificial intelligence, in news reportage in Imo state. However, the objectives of this study are to;

1. Examine the level of awareness of AI among journalists in Imo state.
2. Evaluate the extent to which AI tools are currently being used in newsrooms within Imo state.
3. Evaluate the perception of Imo state journalists towards the use of artificial intelligence in news reportage.

Conceptual Review

AI and Journalism

The emergence of artificial intelligence has significantly impacted various industries, including journalism particularly in the aspect of news reportage. AI technologies, such as natural language processing, automated content generation, and sentiment analysis, have the potential to revolutionize the way news is gathered, analyzed, and disseminated.

With AI software, news stories are automatically produced through computer programmes that interpret, organise, and present data in human -readable ways. This process involves an algorithm that scans large amounts of provided data, selects from an assortment of pre-programmed article structures, orders key points, and inserts details such as names, places, amounts, rankings, statistics and other figures, Guanah et al (2020).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) encompasses a range of technologies that enable machines to simulate human intelligence, including natural language processing (NLP), machine learning (ML), and deep learning (DL). In journalism, AI is used to automate various tasks, such as data analysis, content creation, and audience engagement.

According to Canhoto and Ogden (2019), AI in journalism can be categorized into three main areas: Automated Journalism: AI-powered systems generate news articles by analyzing structured data, such as sports scores, financial reports, and election results.

Augmented Journalism: AI tools assist journalists in tasks such as data analysis, fact-checking, and content personalization, enhancing their productivity and efficiency.

Audience Engagement: AI algorithms analyze audience behavior and preferences to deliver personalized content, recommendations, and notifications.

Automated News Writing

AI-driven automated news writing, or "robot journalism," refers to the use of algorithms to generate news stories. Pioneering work by companies like Narrative Science and Automated Insights has demonstrated that AI can produce readable and coherent news articles from structured data. For example, The Associated Press (AP) employs an automated system to generate quarterly earnings reports, significantly increasing its coverage capacity (Graefe, 2016).

In Nigeria, automated news writing has the potential to transform the media landscape by addressing the shortage of skilled journalists and expanding coverage of under-reported areas. Platforms like News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) could leverage AI to produce routine reports on governmental and economic activities, thus allowing human journalists to focus on in-depth investigative stories. This approach could enhance the overall quality and quantity of news content available to Nigerian audiences (Alabi, 2021).

Research by Clerwall (2014) indicates that readers often cannot distinguish between news articles written by humans and those generated by algorithms. This finding suggests that automated journalism can meet, and sometimes exceed, human writing quality, particularly in domains requiring straightforward reporting, such as financial news and sports updates.

Content Personalization

AI also plays a crucial role in personalizing content for readers. Machine learning algorithms analyze user behavior and preferences to deliver tailored news content, enhancing user engagement and satisfaction.

According to Diakopoulos (2019), personalization algorithms consider factors such as browsing history, geographical location, and social media activity to curate individualized news feeds.

In Nigeria, content personalization is particularly relevant given the diverse linguistic and cultural landscape. AI can help tailor news content to various linguistic groups, enhancing accessibility and relevance. For instance, AI algorithms can translate news content into major Nigerian languages like Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa, thereby broadening the reach and impact of news organizations (Nkanu & Okon, 2010).

However, this also raises concerns about filter bubbles and echo chambers, where users are exposed primarily to content that reinforces their existing beliefs (Pariser, 2011). The challenge for Nigerian news organizations is to balance personalization with the need to provide diverse and comprehensive news coverage.

Data Analysis and Investigative Journalism

AI's capability to process and analyze vast amounts of data has transformed investigative journalism. Data mining and natural language processing (NLP) tools help journalists uncover patterns, trends, and anomalies that might be overlooked in manual analyses. For instance, ProPublica's use of machine learning to analyze public records has led to significant investigative reports on topics such as healthcare and criminal justice (Hamilton, 2018).

In Nigeria, where corruption and governance issues are prevalent, AI tools can be instrumental in uncovering hidden patterns and connections in large datasets. Nigerian journalists have begun using AI to sift through public records and social media data to expose corruption and hold public officials accountable (Ojebode & Ojebuyi, 2020).

Furthermore, AI can assist in verifying information and combating misinformation, which is a significant problem in Nigeria's media landscape. Fact-checking algorithms can cross-reference claims against reliable databases, improving the accuracy of news reports. The increasing sophistication of AI tools in detecting deepfakes and manipulated content also enhances the integrity of news production (Zhang & Kreps, 2020).

Journalists' Perception of AI in Journalism

Research on journalists' perception of AI in journalism is limited but growing. A study conducted by Diakopoulos and Koliska (2017) surveyed journalists and found that while they recognized the potential benefits of AI in terms of efficiency and productivity, they also had concerns regarding job displacement, editorial independence, and the quality of news content.

Similarly, a study by Carlson (2020) explored journalists' attitudes toward AI in journalism and found that while they acknowledged its potential to enhance efficiency and productivity, they were also concerned about its impact on journalistic practices, ethics, and the quality of news content.

Benefits of AI in Journalism

The integration of AI technology into newsrooms offers several benefits for journalists and news organizations:

- **Efficiency and Productivity:** AI-powered tools automate time-consuming tasks, such as data analysis, content generation, and audience engagement, allowing journalists to focus on more complex reporting and analysis (Carlson, 2020).

- **Personalization:** AI algorithms analyze audience data to deliver personalized content recommendations, increasing reader engagement and loyalty (Liberatore & Serrecchia, 2018). Data-driven Insights: AI systems analyze large datasets to identify trends, patterns, and insights, helping journalists uncover newsworthy stories and angles (Graefe et al., 2018).
- **Multimedia Content Creation:** AI-powered tools generate multimedia content, including videos, infographics, and interactive graphics, enhancing the visual appeal and storytelling capabilities of news articles (Carlson, 2020).

Ethical Considerations and Challenges

The integration of AI in journalism brings several ethical challenges. One major concern is the transparency of AI algorithms. News consumers have the right to know when content is generated or influenced by AI, which calls for clear disclosure practices by news organizations (Diakopoulos, 2019). Additionally, biases embedded in AI algorithms can perpetuate and amplify existing prejudices, leading to skewed news coverage (O’Neil, 2016).

In Nigeria, where ethnic and religious tensions are sensitive, biased AI algorithms could exacerbate conflicts. For example, if an AI system is trained on data that reflects historical biases, it might inadvertently prioritize news that reinforces negative stereotypes about certain groups. Nigerian news organizations must therefore ensure that AI systems are trained on diverse and representative datasets to mitigate these risks (Olokoyo, 2021).

There is also the issue of accountability. When AI-generated content contains errors or biases, it is unclear who should be held responsible: the developers, the news organization, or the AI system itself. Establishing ethical guidelines and regulatory frameworks is crucial to address these concerns and ensure that AI in journalism upholds journalistic standards and ethics.

Case Studies and Industry Examples

Several prominent news organizations have integrated AI into their operations with notable success. The Washington Post's Heliograf bot, for example, has been used to cover live events and generate local news stories, freeing up human reporters for more complex tasks (Lynn, 2017). Similarly, Reuters uses an AI tool called Lynx Insight to assist journalists in identifying trends and generating insights from data (Reuters, 2018).

In Nigeria, digital media platforms like Stears Business have begun experimenting with AI to enhance their news production processes. Stears uses AI to analyze financial data and produce detailed reports on the Nigerian economy, providing valuable insights for business leaders and policymakers (Steers Business, 2021). These case studies demonstrate the potential of AI to enhance journalistic productivity and innovation. They also highlight the need for continuous adaptation and learning within newsrooms to effectively leverage AI technologies.

Empirical Review

A study carried out by Adjin-Tettey et al. (2024) which was titled “the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Contemporary Journalism Practice in Two African Countries” investigated the intricate relationship between journalism and AI. The findings of this study revealed that most newsrooms in the two countries have not formally incorporated AI tools into newsroom practices. However, journalists use AI tools at their discretion in a non-complex manner, such as transcription, research, generating story ideas, and fact-checking. This study concluded that fact-checking and mindfulness regarding ethical usage might increase ethical AI usage in newsrooms.

Udoh et al. (2022) carried out a study which aimed to examine the extent of awareness of Artificial Intelligence for News Production among Journalists in Ebonyi state Nigeria. The study found among others that all the journalists registered under the aegis of the Nigerian union of journalists (NUJ) in Ebonyi state are aware of the use of artificial intelligence for news production. The study made recommended that journalists should be trained on how to effectively use AI generated information in order to maintain the ethical standards of the profession.

Shams et al. (2023) titled their study “AI journalism: A new era of news reporting through Artificial Intelligence AI”. The goal of this study is to see how readers perceive and evaluate news written by AI compared to those created by human journalists, as the focus is on the overall credibility, quality and reliability of AI-generated content.

The findings of this study revealed that there is a moderate usage of AI by journalists. Further findings revealed that the original article written by a human journalist gave readers a better sense of credibility. Regarding the images, the participants felt that the images were realistic and suited the content. The study concluded that AI-generated articles and human generated articles performed almost equally well in terms of text and images. This study recommended that journalists should be encouraged to continue to utilize their journalism skill and not rely on AI generated information.

Henestrosa et al. (2023) investigated the effects of AI authorship and evaluative information on the perception of a science journalism article. The findings of this study revealed that there are no differences in perceived credibility and trustworthiness between AI-written and human-written texts. However, presenting information in an evaluative way decreased the perception of credibility and trustworthiness. This study concluded that credibility of both stories and photo in news reporting is appreciated more when these information are generated by the journalists themselves.

In another study by Mukasa (2023) sort to examine the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in transforming print journalism in Uganda. The study found that while AI adoption stands at a modest 25 per cent in newsrooms, there is a central understanding of AI's purpose among journalists.

However, the adoption of AI technologies remains limited, primarily driven by individual journalists rather than a unified organizational approach. This study concluded that despite regular interaction with AI tools among the respondents, the impact on journalistic quality is varied, underlining the need for increased awareness, training, and institutional support for effective AI utilization in the news industry.

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on three theories- Media Morphosis, Technological Determinism and the Social Information Processing Theory.

The concept of **mediamorphosis** was first introduced by Roger Fidel in 1990 through his writings about the future era of newspapers. In 1997, Fidel in his book, **Mediamorphosis: Understanding New Media**, introduced the mediamorphosis theory which he described as changes that occur in media production, distribution and consumption.

These changes according to him reflect changes in the broader structure of modern society which uses new electronic technologies that change how we think about media and information. He identified six principles of new media forms 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 (Anastasia et.al 2023).

In defining the mediamorphosis concept, Fidler said “mediamorphosis is a unified way of thinking about the technological evolution of communication media. By studying the communications system as a whole, we will see that new media do not arise spontaneously and independently-they emerge gradually from the metamorphosis,” (McCann 2007).

Fidler derived his mediamorphosis principles from the concept of co-evolution, convergence and complexity; maintaining that mediamorphosis is a unified way of thinking about the technological evolution of communication media. The thrust of Fidler's position is that as new media forms evolve, and develop, overtime they influence to varying degrees, the development of other existing media such that the emergent media displace the existing ones, the existing ones converge with them to enhance their operations. The essence of mediamorphosis is the idea that the media are complex adaptive systems. In other words, the media, as other systems, respond to external pressures with a spontaneous process of self-reorganization (Guanah et al 2020).

Fidel further revealed that there are three major morphoses in human communication vis spoken language, written language and digital language. He noted that while the spoken language led to the formation of social groups, problem solving skills, and the development of broadcast forms of communication such as storytelling and ritual performances; the written language led to the development of physical documents, mechanical printing and the mass media.

He, however, maintained that a new technology, will at first, create excitement and confusion, thus, penetration (and or integration) will not occur much. Though, in the next state, he will find the 'flux', and there is penetration among users. In other words, new technology will bring innovation that will produce new standards (Anastasia et al 2023).

This theory is chosen because it talks about the changes that take place in the ways through which information is transmitted at present, and how the introduction of AI into journalism practice will further affect information dissemination.

On the other hand, the concept of technological determinism, denotes the approach promoting the thesis that the use of educational technology is influenced both by the user and his surroundings, but also, above all, by the technology itself. It is the belief that technology is the principle initiator of the society's transformation (Hauer, 2017).

Technological determinism seeks to explain social and historical phenomena in terms of one principal or determining factor. The term was coined by American sociologist and economist, Thorstein Veblen, as a doctrine of historical or causal primacy (Chandler, 1995).

According to the supporters of technological determinism, any social changes are controlled by the technology, technological development, communications technology and media (Hauer, 2017). Furthermore, technological determinants believe that particularly developments, communications technologies or media, or most broadly, technology in general, are the sole or prime antecedent causes of changes in society and technology is seen as the fundamental condition underlying the pattern of social organization. Technology determinist scholars interpret technology in general and communications technologies in particular as the basis of society in the past, present and even in the future, this according to them is because technologies such as writing or print or television or the computer changed society (Chandler, 1995).

Closely related or an offshoot of technological determinism (according to some media scholars), is the media determinism theory propounded by Marchall McLuhan who saw changes in the dominant medium of communication as the main determinant of major changes in society, culture and the individual. He noted that the primary medium people use to interact with one another contributes to how society ends up being structured (Williams, 2010).

One of the best examples of technological determinism in media theory is McLuhan's 'the medium is the message' theory and the ideas of his mentor, Harold Innis. These two saw the media as the essence of civilization. The association of different media with particular mental consequences by McLuhan and others can be seen as being related to technological determinism; this determinism variety, is what is referred to as media determinism, (Wikipedia).

In furtherance to this, some media scholars submit that the concept of media determinism, implies that the medium is 'an important component in the mass communication process, is the technical or physical means to transfer the messages; is not a 'neutral container' of messages; plays an influential role in the understanding of messages and influences the structure of a society and people's experiences (Mogamisi, 2023).

Media determinism as a theory of change, is seen as a cause-and-effect relationship. This theory therefore is relevant to this work as it suggests that technological advancements shape human behaviour, social structures and cultural values which when applied by journalists especially as it concerns the use of AI in news reportage, influence journalistic practices, newsroom dynamics, and broader media landscapes.

Applying technological determinism to analyze journalists' perception of AI in news reportage provides a structured approach to understanding the profound impact of technology on journalistic practices and the media landscape. By focusing on how AI technologies drive changes in newsroom and influence journalists' roles, researchers can gain valuable insights into the adoption, adaptation, and long-term effects in AI in journalism.

Conversely, the social information processing theory which is a framework developed by Joseph Walther in 1992 to explain how individuals form impressions and make decisions in computer-mediated-communication contexts. It suggests that people use unique strategies to develop relationships and interpret social information in online interactions which may differ from face-to-face communication.

Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT) offers a robust framework for examining journalists' perceptions of AI in news reportage. This theory provides insights into how individuals form impressions and relationships through computer-mediated communication, emphasizing the role of social and contextual cues in processing information.

Studies like those by Cohen et al. (2023) have shown that familiarity with technology can reduce resistance and enhance the adoption of AI tools in journalism.

Social Context: The culture of the newsroom, peer influence, and organizational policies around AI usage will also shape journalists' perceptions and acceptance of AI. Research by Petre (2021) highlights how organizational support and a collaborative culture can mitigate apprehensions and encourage the effective use of AI in newsrooms.

Using Social Information Processing Theory to analyze journalists' perceptions of AI in news reportage provides a structured approach to understanding the interplay between human cognition, social context, and technology. By focusing on how journalists interpret and integrate AI into their workflows, researchers can uncover valuable insights into the adoption and impact of AI in journalism.

Methodology

The research design used for this study is the survey research method. According to Patol (2021), Survey is excellent vehicle for measuring attitudes and orientations in a large population. The area of this study will be Imo State. According to the Odionyenma et al. (2023), the registered journalists in Imo State, Nigeria comprises of 200 members. The sample size studied is the entire population of journalists registered under NUJ which is 200. Damico (2016) observes that when a population is small and well defined, the entire population is often studied. This principle is selected because it provides a true measure of the population.

Data Presentation

200 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 199 was correctly filled and a copy of the questionnaire was inappropriately filled.

Table 1: Respondents response to their level of awareness of AI among journalists in Imo state.

Items	Frequency	Percent
Very High	50	25
High	119	59
Moderate	30	16
Low	0	0
Total	199	100

Source: Field survey (2024)

Analysis of table 1 above revealed that there is a high level of awareness of AI among journalists in Imo State at an average of 59%.

Table 2: Respondents response to the extent to which AI tools are currently being used in newsrooms within Imo state.

N = 199

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
The use of artificial intelligence makes the job so easy and enjoyable	102	97	0	0	3.5	Accepted
Artificial Intelligence AI enables journalists to transcribe news stories internationally and locally.	103	91	5	0	3.4	Accepted
Journalists are now having less burden of dealing with time as AI generates these stories faster.	99	100	0	0	3.4	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.4	Accepted

Source: Field survey (2024)

Variables: SA= Strongly Agree 3.3-4.0, A= Agree 2.5-3.2, D =Disagree 1.8-2.4, SD= Strongly Disagree 1-1.7.

Decision Rule: the mean value for decision is 2.5. Therefore, if the calculated mean is between 1-2.4 the researcher will reject the item posed but if the calculated mean is between 2.5-4.0 the researcher will accept the item.

Analysis of the table above revealed that at a grand mean of 3.4 there is a high level of Artificial Intelligence (AI) usage in newsrooms among journalists in Imo State. This implies that artificial intelligence makes the job so easy and enjoyable as well help journalists beat time challenges.

Table 3: Respondents response to the perception of Imo state journalists towards the use of artificial intelligence in news reportage.**N = 199**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
I think Artificial Intelligence has helped improve journalists writing skill and efficiency.	101	98	0	0	3.5	Accepted
Artificial Intelligence creates room for speed in news gathering and reporting of events outside journalists' locality.	93	105	1	0	3.4	Accepted
Inasmuch as information generated from AI cannot be fully trusted, it is still a helpful platform for information gathering.	103	96	0	0	3.4	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.4	Accepted

Source: Field survey (2024)

Variables: SA= Strongly Agree 3.3-4.0, A= Agree 2.5-3.2, D = Disagree 1.8-2.4, SD= Strongly Disagree 1-1.7.

Decision Rule: the mean value for decision is 2.5. Therefore, if the calculated mean is between 1-2.4 the researcher will reject the item posed but if the calculated mean is between 2.5-4.0 the researcher will accept the item.

The analysis of data above revealed that on a grand mean of 3.4 respondents have a positive perception of the usage of AI in newsroom for news reporting. This implies that journalists in Imo state agree that Artificial Intelligence creates room for speed in news gathering and reporting of events outside journalists' locality.

Discussion

Analysis of data revealed that there is a high level of awareness of Artificial Intelligence AI among journalists in Imo State. This findings connotes with that of Udoh et al. (2022) The study found among others that all the journalists registered under the aegis of the Nigerian union of journalists (NUJ) in Ebonyi state are aware of the use of artificial intelligence for news production.

The study made recommended that journalists should be trained on how to effectively use AI generated information in order to maintain the ethical standards of the profession. Similar study by Mukasa (2023) found that while AI adoption stands at a modest 25 per cent in newsrooms, there is a central understanding of AI's purpose among journalists.

However, the adoption of AI technologies remains limited, primarily driven by individual journalists rather than a unified organizational approach. This study concluded that despite regular interaction with AI tools among the respondents, the impact on journalistic quality is varied, underlining the need for increased awareness, training, and institutional support for effective AI utilization in the news industry.

Data of analysis revealed that there is a high level of Artificial Intelligence (AI) usage in newsrooms among journalists in Imo State. This implies that artificial intelligence makes the job so easy and enjoyable and as well help journalists beat time challenges. This findings tallies with that of Shams et al. (2023) which found that there is a moderate usage of AI by journalists.

Further findings revealed that the original article written by a human journalist gave readers a better sense of credibility. The study concluded that AI-generated articles and human generated articles performed almost equally well in terms of text and images. This study recommended that journalists should be encouraged to continue to utilize their journalism skill and not rely on AI generated information. This findings further buttress the relevance of mediamorphosis theory which tries to explain the changes in the transmission of information in the various media platforms especially with the introduction of AI in journalism practice.

Analysis of data revealed that respondents have a positive perception of the usage of AI in newsroom for news reporting. This implies that journalists in Imo state agree that Artificial Intelligence creates room for speed in news gathering and reporting of events outside journalists' locality.

Henestrosa, et al (2023) arrived at similar result in their findings which revealed that there is no differences in perceived credibility and trustworthiness between AI-written and human-written texts. However, presenting information in an evaluative way decreased the perception of credibility and trustworthiness. This study concluded that credibility of both stories and photo in news reporting is appreciated more when these information are generated by the journalists themselves.

It is also to this effect that the relevance of media determinism theory of change, is seen. This theory suggests that technological advancements shape human behaviour, social structures and cultural values which when applied by journalists especially as it concerns the use of AI in news reportage, influence journalistic practices, newsroom dynamics, and broader media landscapes.

Conclusion

From the analysis and discussion one can draw a conclusion that as time goes by there is an increase in the awareness of AI in journalism Practice. It is as a result of journalists' high level of awareness that has resulted to the current usage of artificial intelligence in the newsroom for news reporting.

The perception of journalists towards the use of AI in news reporting have been positively influenced as a result of their high level of awareness and usage of this Artificial Intelligence AI over time. It is on the premise that the researchers put forward the following recommendations;

1. This study recommends that there is need for increased awareness, training, and institutional support for effective AI utilization in the news industry.
2. This study recommends that journalists should continue to improve their journalism skill as human generated information makes for more credibility.
3. This study recommends that journalists should be trained on how to effectively use AI generated information in order to maintain the ethical standards of the profession.

Limitation to the Study

This research design for this study was only limited to survey (quantitative) design and does not involve the mixed method or triangulation method among others. Therefore, there is need to carry out further studies in these areas as well as practicing ethical use of Artificial Intelligence AI in journalism etc.

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