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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE MEDIA SPACE: BETWEEN TECHNOLOGICAL EFFICIENCY AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Abstract. *This study analyzes the ethical challenges associated with the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in modern journalism. The primary objective is to identify key ethical concerns (accuracy, transparency, accountability, privacy), evaluate their impact on media practices, and propose recommendations for integrating AI without compromising journalistic standards. The research employs a combination of theoretical and empirical approaches. A review of academic literature by Ukrainian and international scholars was conducted using analysis, synthesis, and comparative research methods. The empirical component is based on a case study approach, examining high-profile AI-related incidents in journalism from 2023, including automated news generation, fake «AI authors», and fabricated interviews. The selected cases (CNET, Sports Illustrated, Die Aktuelle, Microsoft Travel) provide insights into the real consequences of ethical violations.*

The findings indicate that AI-driven journalism poses significant ethical risks, such as inaccuracy and algorithmic bias, lack of transparency in AI-generated content, dilution of accountability between editorial teams and AI systems, and privacy concerns related to data processing. Case analysis reveals that insufficient oversight of AI in media leads to scandals, loss of public trust, and legal consequences. Despite AI's potential to enhance journalistic efficiency, it cannot replace journalists, as serious ethical risks arise in the absence of human oversight. To ensure the ethical use of AI in journalism, media organizations must implement clear transparency policies, enforce human fact-checking of AI-generated content, conduct ethical audits to monitor algorithmic bias, and protect personal data to prevent privacy violations.

The scientific novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of AI's impact on journalistic ethics and the development of practical recommendations for the media industry on the responsible adoption of emerging technologies.

Key words: *ethics, artificial intelligence, journalism, algorithmic bias, automated journalism, media.*

Анотація. *Дослідження зосереджується на аналізі етичних викликах, що виникають при використанні штучного інтелекту (ШІ) у сучасній журналістиці. Основною метою статті є визначення ключових етичних проблем (точність, прозорість, відповідальність, приватність), аналіз їхнього впливу на медіапрактику та розробка рекомендацій щодо інтеграції ШІ без шкоди для журналістських стандартів. Дослідження ґрунтується на поєднанні теоретичного та емпіричного підходів. Виконано огляд наукових праць українських і міжнародних авторів, застосовано методи аналізу, синтезу та порівняльно-зіставний метод. Емпірична частина реалізована через метод кейс-стаді, що містить аналіз резонансних випадків 2023 року, пов'язаних із ШІ в журналістиці (автоматизоване створення новин, фейкові «ШІ-автори», підроблені інтерв'ю). Вибрані кейси (CNET, Sports Illustrated, Die Aktuelle, Microsoft Travel) дозволяють оцінити реальні наслідки порушення етичних норм. Встановлено, що використання ШІ у журналістиці супроводжується значними етичними ризиками, зокрема: неточність та алгоритмічна упередженість, непрозорість щодо ролі ШІ у створенні контенту, розмивання відповідальності між редакцією та алгоритмом, ризики порушення приватності через обробку персональних даних. Аналіз кейсів показав, що відсутність належного контролю за ШІ у медіа призводить до скандалів, втрати суспільної довіри та правових наслідків. Попри потенціал ШІ у підвищенні ефективності журналістики, він не може замінити журналіста – без людського контролю виникають серйозні етичні загрози. Для забезпечення етичного використання ШІ у журналістиці необхідно: запровадити політику прозорості щодо використання алгоритмів, впровадити людську перевірку AI-генерованого контенту, контролювати алгоритмічну упередженість шляхом етичних аудитів, захищати персональні дані та уникати порушень приватності. Наукова новизна дослідження полягає у комплексному аналізі впливу ШІ на журналістську етику та формулюванні практичних рекомендацій для медіаіндустрії щодо відповідального використання новітніх технологій.*

Ключові слова: *етика, штучний інтелект, журналістика, алгоритмічна упередженість, автоматизована журналістика, медіа.*

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1. Introduction. Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being integrated into the media and journalism industry worldwide. Leading news agencies and publications are experimenting with automated news generation, text and image creation, and algorithmic data collection and verification. This study's relevance stems from the growing challenges journalism faces due to the rapid advancement of AI. While AI enhances efficiency and speed, it also raises concerns about content quality, accuracy, ethics, and social responsibility.

Recent cases have shown that automated systems can violate professional standards by publishing inaccurate information, engaging in plagiarism, or misleading audiences. This trend threatens public trust in the media and necessitates a reassessment of journalistic ethics in the era of AI integration.

The **objective** of this study is to identify the key ethical challenges associated with AI in journalism and analyze strategies to address them. To achieve this, the study sets forth the following tasks:

• Conduct a literature review of Ukrainian and international research on AI's ethical implications in journalism.

• Identify the primary ethical risks, including bias, accuracy, transparency, and accountability, arising from AI implementation in journalistic activities.

• Analyze real-world media cases and ethical scandals involving AI in journalism, examining their causes and consequences.

• Summarize the findings and propose recommendations for maintaining ethical standards in journalistic work involving AI.

This article integrates theoretical analysis of relevant academic studies with practical case study examinations, providing a comprehensive assessment of the issue's significance. The relevance of this research lies in the urgent need to establish clear ethical guidelines for journalists in the digital age. It is crucial to ensure that emerging technologies serve as tools for enhancing media quality rather than introducing additional risks and threats to the profession.

Theoretical Framework. The ethical implications of artificial intelligence (AI) in journalism have been receiving increasing attention from researchers worldwide. Throughout the 2020s, numerous studies have explored both the advantages and risks of integrating AI-driven algorithms into news production. International scholars highlight transparency, accountability, bias, and diversity as the most frequently discussed ethical challenges in AI-powered journalism (Porlezza, 2021, p. 5). Specifically, the «black box» problem of AI algorithms complicates the transparency of news creation, potentially undermining public trust. The lack of clear explanations regarding AI-generated content raises concerns about accountability: who is responsible for errors made by AI? Additionally, scholars emphasize the issue of algorithmic bias, wherein AI systems risk perpetuating and amplifying existing stereotypes and imbalances in media content [5]. As a result, researchers advocate for greater transparency in AI algorithms and the development of mechanisms to regulate their impact on journalism.

Academic literature has outlined several specific ethical risks associated with AI-driven journalism. According to a study by Al-Zoubi (2024), the primary ethical challenges journalists face when implementing AI include data bias, privacy violations, and a lack of appropriate legal regulations [3, p. 401]. Data bias refers to the potential for AI models to produce systematically skewed results due to biased training datasets – for example, underrepresenting minority perspectives or reinforcing existing societal prejudices. Privacy concerns arise when AI-driven systems collect and process large volumes of personal data, requiring journalists to safeguard both their sources and audiences from unauthorized data usage [3, p. 401]. Furthermore, the absence of clear legal frameworks and international regulations on AI's role in media [3, p. 401] creates a legal vacuum, making it difficult to hold entities accountable for ethical violations. This underscores the urgent need for new legal standards and professional guidelines governing AI-driven journalism.

An emerging concern in academic discourse is the preservation of journalistic autonomy in the age of AI. Several scholars warn that overreliance on automation could lead to diminished editorial oversight and weakened critical thinking within newsrooms [4, p. 16]. Cools and Diakopoulos (2024) note that journalists fear a decline in editorial judgment, the introduction of AI-driven inaccuracies and biases, and an overall erosion of journalistic independence with the adoption of generative AI [4, p. 16]. At the same time, industry professionals acknowledge potential benefits, such as increased efficiency in routine tasks, content personalization, and more time for creative assignments. Consequently, AI functions as a «double-edged sword» – it has the capacity to both enhance and undermine journalism, depending on how it is implemented.

Ukrainian scholars are also actively contributing to research on AI's impact on media practices. In a study by Nadtochii and Prudius (2024), the first instances of AI

implementation in Ukrainian media were analyzed, highlighting several accuracy and ethical challenges [2, p. 134]. The authors emphasize that AI can already produce texts and images indistinguishable from human-created content, posing risks such as manipulation, audience deception, plagiarism, and copyright violations [2, p. 136]. In other words, traditional journalistic values –truthfulness, fact-checking, and integrity – require additional safeguards when AI-generated or AI-processed content is involved.

Interest in AI ethics is also growing in Ukraine's legal landscape. For instance, Baranov (2023) conducted a detailed analysis of the term «artificial intelligence» and its legal definitions within the context of information law [1, p. 33–34]. This highlights the importance of establishing a legal understanding of AI as a prerequisite for defining its ethical applications in journalism.

Overall, this theoretical review demonstrates that AI-powered journalism raises several critical ethical questions:

• Ensuring accuracy and truthfulness in AI-generated content.

• Preventing bias and discrimination.

• Providing transparent disclosure of AI's role in media production.

• Safeguarding data privacy.

• Clarifying accountability for AI-related errors.

In response to these challenges, researchers have proposed recommendations for responsible AI integration in journalism:

• Developing internal editorial policies to guide AI implementation.

• Establishing AI oversight teams to monitor and regulate AI-generated content.

• Enhancing AI literacy among journalists to ensure informed decision-making [4].

Self-regulation initiatives are also emerging within the journalism industry. Notably, in 2023, Associated Press became the first major news agency to publish editorial guidelines on generative AI use [5]. These guidelines reaffirm that journalists remain central figures in news creation, while AI serves only as an auxiliary tool. Furthermore, any AI-generated content should be treated as unverified information requiring thorough human fact-checking before publication [5].

Thus, both the academic community and media organizations recognize the need to establish clear ethical boundaries for AI, ensuring that journalism retains credibility and quality in the digital age.

2. Materials and methods. This study employs a combination of theoretical and empirical methods to examine ethical challenges in AI-driven journalism.

At the theoretical stage, methods of analysis and synthesis were used to review academic literature on the topic. Additionally, a comparative approach was applied to juxtapose the perspectives of Ukrainian and international scholars on the ethical implications of AI in journalism. The study also involved a systematic examination of key ethical principles and risks based on contemporary sources, including literature reviews, empirical studies, and analytical reports.

At the empirical stage, the case study method was employed to analyze specific media cases that gained public attention due to AI-related ethical concerns. Several high-profile cases from 2020 to 2024 were selected, covering various aspects of journalistic practices, such as automated news writing, AI-generated content, and AI-driven authorship, across both international and national media ecosystems. The selection criteria for case studies included the explicit presence of ethical dilemmas and extensive discourse within the professional community regarding the incidents.

For each case, a qualitative content analysis of publications and statements from key stakeholders was conducted to determine the nature of the ethical conflict and the community's response. The collected data was then interpreted through the lens of predefined ethical principles. A comparative analysis was applied to identify common patterns and variations in the manifestation of ethical challenges. Specifically, comparisons were made regarding the causes of AI-related errors, editorial responses to incidents, and their impact on media reputation and audience trust. This approach facilitated the identification of recurring ethical concerns and the most vulnerable areas in AI-driven journalism.

Finally, the generalization method was used to formulate conclusions and practical recommendations. The study's logical structure ensures the validity of its findings: theoretical claims are substantiated by real-life examples, while case study analysis is grounded in well-defined ethical criteria. Consequently, the derivation of conclusions followed a structured transition from abstract concepts (ethical norms and principles) to concrete cases (real-world media incidents) and back to generalized insights, illustrating the broader implications of these cases for both the theory and practice of journalism.

3. Results and discussion. The analyzed cases encompass a range of ethical challenges, from unintentional AI errors to deliberate manipulation. However, a common factor in all these cases is that the root cause of controversy lies in the lack

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of human oversight and deviation from traditional journalistic values. The CNET case demonstrates that the pursuit of automation without proper fact-checking undermines accuracy – AI cannot guarantee factual correctness, making the journalist's role as an editor and fact-checker indispensable. The incidents involving Sports Illustrated and Die Aktuelle highlight that transparency and truthfulness must never be sacrificed for sensationalism or cost-cutting – the audience quickly detects deception, and reputational damage far outweighs any short-term gain.

Additionally, these cases revealed a psychological dimension: when audiences discover that content was AI-generated without their knowledge, they feel misled and betrayed. This underscores the public demand for ethical responsibility and transparency regarding AI use in journalism.

The analysis also exposed blind spots in AI-driven journalism. AI can exhibit biases and make errors that human journalists would naturally avoid due to common sense and professional standards. For example, a journalist would not recommend a charity food bank as a tourist attraction, but an AI algorithm did. Similarly, if AI training data contains biases (e.g., underrepresenting women's or minority achievements), the generated content will reflect these imbalances. The risk of algorithmic bias is a serious concern: studies indicate that large language models frequently produce biased or inaccurate responses (GIJN, 2024). This can affect topic selection, narrative framing, and media representation. Therefore, journalists must recognize these risks and critically evaluate AI-generated outputs.

Another key ethical issue is privacy and responsible data use. Although the examined cases did not involve direct data breaches, research emphasizes that training AI on vast datasets may conflict with privacy rights [3, p. 401]. For example, if journalists use facial recognition algorithms to identify individuals at public events, it raises the question: Does this violate ethical norms regarding individuals unaware that their images are being used? Such discussions are already taking place in global media circles. Therefore, newsrooms must establish clear privacy policies defining which data can be used and how when integrating AI technologies.

A notable positive outcome of these controversies is that they have prompted professional action. Following the CNET and Sports Illustrated scandals, several major media outlets publicly disclosed their AI strategies: some paused AI experiments, while others outlined ethical AI integration frameworks [7]. For instance, Associated Press introduced internal guidelines and updated its AP Stylebook to include terminology and ethical standards for AI use [5]. Similarly, leading European news organizations are discussing the creation of codes of conduct for AI-generated journalism [5]. Self-regulation and accountability are emerging as key industry responses to AI-related ethical challenges.

For Ukrainian journalism, AI ethics is still a relatively new but growing concern. Investigative journalism projects such as Bihus. Info, Texty.org.ua, and Slidstvo. Info are already experimenting with AI for data analysis, infographic generation, and anomaly detection [2, p. 134–135]. While these initiatives have not yet sparked ethical scandals, they share similar risks with international cases. Therefore, preventative measures should be implemented now:

• Clearly informing audiences when AI-generated content is used.

• Training journalists on AI capabilities, biases, and ethical concerns.

• Defining clear boundaries between AI assistance and editorial responsibility.

4. Conclusions. The integration of artificial intelligence into journalism is now an inevitable reality in the modern media landscape. This study identifies several key ethical challenges posed by AI in journalism and their implications for the industry's future.

1. Core Ethical Challenges in AI-Driven Journalism: ensuring accuracy and credibility (AI-generated misinformation risks when lacking human oversight); overcoming algorithmic bias (ensuring impartial reporting and preventing discriminatory or stereotypical distortions); transparency and honesty (clearly disclosing AI's role in content creation); maintaining responsibility and accountability (establishing who is responsible for AI-generated content); complying with privacy and copyright regulations. These challenges parallel traditional journalistic ethics but take on new dimensions due to AI's unique technological characteristics.

2. Ethical Violations Have Severe Consequences. Ignoring AI ethics results in serious reputational, legal, and financial damage. Unverified AI-generated content (as seen in CNET's case) led to a wave of corrections and credibility loss. The use of fake AI «authors» (Sports Illustrated) and fabricated interviews (Die Aktuelle) resulted in public backlash, legal action, and audience distrust. Short-term gains

from unethical AI usage are outweighed by long-term harm to media organizations.

3. AI as a Responsible Journalistic Tool. Despite its risks, AI can be a valuable asset when used ethically and responsibly:

• Industry best practices emphasize that AI should be seen as an assistive tool, not a replacement for human journalists [5].

• Human oversight is essential in data collection, fact-checking, and editorial decisions.

• AI should be integrated where it enhances newsroom efficiency – such as automating repetitive tasks, processing large datasets, and generating draft content.

• Final editorial responsibility must always rest with human journalists [5].

4. Practical Recommendations for Ethical AI Use:

Develop internal AI policies defining when AI-generated content is acceptable and requiring mandatory verification.

Ensure transparency by clearly informing audiences when AI is involved in content production (e.g., disclaimers, editorial notes).

Train journalists in AI literacy to recognize algorithmic biases and critically assess AI-generated material.

Implement quality control measures, including AI risk audits and assigning editors to review AI-assisted content.

Promote professional discussions on AI ethics, encouraging industry-wide collaboration on best practices.

These measures will help minimize risks while ensuring that AI strengthens rather than weakens journalistic integrity.

Scientific Novelty & Future Research. The scientific novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of AI ethics at the intersection of theory and practice, incorporating recent high-profile cases that illustrate emerging trends. The findings extend media social responsibility theory into the AI-driven digital age [3, p. 401]. The case studies analyzed here expand our understanding of how classical journalistic ethics (truthfulness, impartiality, and audience respect) must be adapted to AI-generated content.

Future Research Directions:

• audience perception of AI-generated news content,

• comparative studies on AI ethics across different countries, particularly in Ukraine's wartime and post-war media environment, where information accuracy is critical,

• evaluation of AI governance policies in newsrooms,

• monitoring the evolution of ethical challenges as AI models become more advanced.

As AI technology continues to evolve, journalism must continuously adapt its ethical framework, ensuring it remains aligned with its core mission – serving truth and the public interest.

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Mykola Losinskyi: processing of empirical material and source base, analysis of practical aspects of journalistic activity, contribution to the formulation of research conclusions, preparation and substantive editing of the relevant parts of the manuscript, verification of factual data and sources, and approval of the final version.

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