

**THE INFLUENCE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) ON JOURNALISM  
PRACTICE: A CASE OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY'S STANDARD  
NEWSPAPER**

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## ABSTRACT

The evolution of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming journalism practices worldwide, reshaping how news is gathered, produced, and distributed.

While there is existing research on AI adoption in the media systems, there has been limited study on its influence within African newsrooms, particularly in Uganda. This study explores the influence of Artificial Intelligence on journalism practice, focusing on The Standard, Uganda Christian University's newspaper, as a case study.

Guided by Technological Determinism Theory, the study explores how AI is currently used in journalism practice, its influence on journalists' roles, routines, and performance, and the challenges and opportunities it presents.

The study is based on a qualitative research approach, applying purposive sampling with eight journalists working at the Standard Newspaper.

The data collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis show that journalists actively use AI tools such as transcription softwares, grammar and editing applications, data analysis tools, and research assistants to enhance the working speed, storytelling, efficiency, and accuracy. AI has automated the work tasks enabling journalists to focus more on the human creativity, analysis and engagement.

However the study also presents significant challenges namely; misinformation, plagiarism, over reliance on AI assistance, and extinction of the traditional practices and human editorial control.

The study concludes that AI has both positive and negative influence on Journalism practice at the Standard but also on journalism as a whole.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Journalism Practice, Newsroom Automation, Media Ethics, The Standard Newspaper.

## DECLARATION

I Hossana Ainamaani, declare that this is my original work, with no element of plagiarism and has not been submitted to any other institution for any award.

Signature:  .....

Date: June 1, 2026.

## APPROVAL

This dissertation on the topic “The Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Journalism Practice: A Case of Uganda Christian University’s Standard Newspaper” was written and submitted with the approval of my research supervisor Mr. John Semakula.

Supervisor’s Signature:



.....

Date: June 1, 2026.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research paper to my research supervisor who made my research journey much easier enjoyable and doable, and of course my parents for their support, patience and encouragement all through.

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Once again, I thank my supervisor for his guidance and support, I thank my colleagues, as well as my family and friends for their efforts, love and encouragement.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

Artificial Intelligence - AI

Uganda Christian University - UCU

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

In the rapidly evolving landscape of media, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as one of the most transformative forces reshaping journalism practice. The integration of AI in the newsroom has brought forth a paradigm shift in how stories are sourced, produced, and distributed, fundamentally redefining traditional journalistic processes (Moran & Shaikh, 2022; Lopezosa et al., 2023).

AI technologies ranging from automated writing systems to data analysis tools, have introduced efficiency, personalization, and innovation into journalism. However, they have also raised questions concerning editorial independence, job displacement and the role of human judgment in storytelling (Noain-Sánchez, 2022).

The theory of Artificial Intelligence traces its roots to the mid-20th century, following the conceptualization of machine learning by Alan Turing with his “Turing Test” in the 1950s, asking the vital question “Can machines think?” (Yu & Huang, 2021). Over the last few decades, the use of artificial intelligence has made a definitive shift from theoretical applications to practical applications across various industries globally and journalism has not remained immune from this revolution. Indeed, some of the most progressive countries in the West and creative nations in Asia including China and Japan, have spearheaded the use of AI-based systems in their journalism processes from content creation to verification and analysis as well as distribution, creating a pressing need for policy action and oversight to address the concerns of responsibility, bias, and professionalism in the process. (Kothari & Cruikshank, 2022).

While other regions have witnessed fast advancements in this regard, the use of AI in African media houses is only in its infancy due to various factors like lack of financing, inadequate technology infrastructure, inadequate expertise, among others. While AI-powered tools have revolutionized news gathering, dissemination, and consumer analytics in advanced economies, most African media houses are still using the more conventional approach to journalism due to their inability to adopt the revolutionary technological tools.

In Uganda, AI technology is rapidly changing education, business, and digital communication in general, however, no studies have focused on how AI technology is affecting the media industry. Whereas citizen journalists are using platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and TikTok to produce and spread content via AI, accredited journalists need to embrace the use of AI technology while maintaining traditional journalistic principles, thereby ensuring that innovations serve to empower the citizens' right to accurate information.

AI is already being used in newsrooms worldwide in such forms as automatic transcription, news-writing algorithms, data mining, and recommendations engines (Kothari & Cruikshank, 2022). Yet there is no strong evidence of AI use in Ugandan newsrooms because of lack of institutional support and STEM-based AI training (Kothari & Cruikshank, 2022).

The current study will examine the impact that artificial intelligence makes on journalistic practices, ethics, and workflow at newsrooms in Uganda, focusing on The Standard as an exemplary case of a media organization under transformation through the application of AI technologies. The research will argue that AI-driven software can significantly increase efficiency of news gathering and analysis along with audience interaction but pose ethical challenges in terms of accuracy, source credibility, and authorship issues. Therefore, new editorial policies and professional training should be developed. The research will center its attention on The Standard as a case of a media organization that finds its way in the age of digitalization and AI. As artificial intelligence reshapes newsrooms worldwide, it offers clear advantages streamlining workflows, customizing content for specific audiences, and processing vast datasets more efficiently yet it also creates significant threats to journalistic standards, such as algorithmic bias that can distort coverage, the possibility of job reductions among reporters and editors, and an overreliance on automated systems that may weaken essential editorial judgment. (Noain-Sánchez, 2022).

However, despite certain advancements, there is very minimal empirical evidence regarding how AI technologies are changing practices in Ugandan journalism (Africa Freedom of Information Center 2024). More importantly, there are many instances where journalists use AI technology without training or set guidelines as to its proper

use (Uganda Christian University 2023), thereby posing significant concerns about how the adoption of such technologies may affect professional journalism practices and the credibility of reports.

As a result, the purpose of this study will be to explore the current effects of AI technology on journalism practices, particularly how journalists from The Standard have adopted and adapted to AI technology.

### **1.1 Purpose of the Study**

This study aims to evaluate how artificial intelligence is shaping journalistic practices focusing on The Standard, Uganda Christian University.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

1. To explore the current level and nature of AI adoption in journalism practice.
2. To assess the influence of AI on journalistic roles, workflows, and output quality.
3. To identify challenges and opportunities presented by AI integration in journalism.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. How is AI currently being used in journalism practice at The Standard?
2. What influence has AI had on the roles, routines, and performance of journalists?
3. What challenges and opportunities does AI present to journalism practice?

### **1.4 Justification of the Study**

In view of the role played by AI technology in the media industry, it is important to carry out this research because the media landscape continues to evolve rapidly today due to Artificial Intelligence's influence on journalism worldwide. In addition, it can be noted that the application of AI is now also implemented in newsrooms in order to facilitate the process through automation and customization of the content based on the preferences of the target audience. (Carlson, 2023; Noain-Sánchez, 2022) However, a number of questions arise regarding the ethicality of using AI and its implications for accountability and journalistic ethics. (Diakopoulos, 2019) On the other hand, certain questions are asked concerning ethical aspects, accountability, and journalistic ethics. (Diakopoulos, 2019) At the same time, it raises a series of issues related to ethical considerations, accountability, and upholding of journalistic standards. (Diakopoulos, 2019) It would be useful to know how artificial intelligence affects the practice of journalism in order to prepare future journalists capable of facing such challenges in an ethical manner. There are relatively few studies dealing

with the influence of AI on newsrooms in the Ugandan case. This research project analyzes the way in which The Standard news organization's reporters, editors, and others in the newsroom have implemented artificial intelligence in their work in news creation and delivery to audiences. The project will seek to provide a comprehensive understanding of the pros and cons of integrating AI technology to help media education professionals, newsroom managers, and policy makers create policies for using AI in ways that will make media production and distribution more efficient and innovative without compromising accuracy, avoiding bias, and mitigating job losses in the process.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study benefits multiple stakeholders in the journalism ecosystem.

- i. To journalists, this research provides concrete examples of how the use of AI can transform the efficiency of the newsrooms and the quality of journalism, enabling reporters to gain better insight into the way intelligent technologies can make the work easier and improve the content produced while also emphasizing some dangers associated with AI such as potential biases and automation traps that should be avoided by journalists using AI to ensure they maintain credibility and integrity in their reporting.
- ii. The research implies that the training of journalists should include elements of AI literacy, data analysis, and ethical evaluation to enable collaboration with AI technologies and to allow future journalists to work effectively within automated newsrooms; since AI technologies are becoming more widely used in newsrooms, it would be necessary to provide reporters with appropriate education to develop a critical perspective on the use of algorithms and acquire skills for working with AI.
- iii. Policy makers and regulators can use these insights to develop ethical and professional standards regarding the use of AI in the media industry. The results from this study can be used to guide policymakers in the formulation of regulatory policies that will protect the freedom of the press and encourage responsible use of AI in journalism, such as mandatory disclosure of AI-generated articles, strong provisions on data privacy and confidentiality, and banning the manipulation or production of misinformation through the

use of artificial intelligence. Through their insight on how AI influences editorial judgments, labor issues, and dissemination of public information, regulators can achieve this balance. iv. This study also places itself in the wider debate regarding automation and the credibility of media, which has implications on the health of the democratic society. It argues that when applied responsibly, AI contributes to enhancing public trust and expands accessibility to accurate information. Specifically, responsible use of AI increases transparency in information processing and distribution and helps rebuild citizen confidence on institutions, and thus makes news more accessible. As technology complements human decisions and actions, it enhances democratic participation in the process.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

### **1.6.1 Geographical Scope**

The study focuses on The Standard, Uganda Christian University's official newspaper, as a case study representing AI's impact in a Ugandan newsroom context.

The Standard is a student run University paper, supervised by a Chief Editor working with four graduates. It started in May 2007 under the School of Journalism, Media and communication at UCU and still runs smoothly till date.

### **1.6.2 Time Scope**

The study examines developments from 2023 through 2025, documenting contemporary advances in AI adoption and projecting the likely consequences for journalistic practice.

## **1.7 Theoretical Framework**

Analysis of the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on journalism practice employs theoretical approaches that help understand how technological innovations alter processes that occur in journalism work, the ethical values of journalists and their interaction with audiences. The use of theoretical approaches allows a more comprehensive analysis of the implications of implementing technologies into journalism, and for this reason, the paper uses Technological Determinism as its main theory.

Technological Determinism Theory was introduced by Marshall McLuhan in 1964. From the perspective of the theory under discussion, technology has a determining

effect on the social and cultural environment. Applied to the sphere of journalism, the idea is that innovations such as machine-written news articles, advanced data analytics, and language modeling algorithms operate not only as tools but as drivers of the change process occurring in journalistic work.

The position of Technological Determinism asserts that AI is leading the agenda, structuring newsrooms, and even determining ethical considerations in journalism by creating new definitions of news and organizing the structure of newsrooms differently. The theory explains any modifications in the practice of reporting as an outcome of the advancement in technology rather than as a purely human-driven process and states that technological advances are one of the main sources of social change, affecting both individual actions and institutional and professional practices.

According to Thorstein Veblen (1921), technology has been considered a pivotal force of social change and the agent behind societal transformation and behavioral changes in society. According to Marshall McLuhan (1964), “the medium is the message” because any communication technologies have their specific capabilities, which influence how information is exchanged, organized, and conceptualized in societies. Technology has become more than just a device that assists people in their endeavors; it is also an influential factor that determines and shapes these endeavors.

In the contemporary media landscape, where artificial intelligence is on the ascendancy, there is much evidence in favor of technological determinism. Newsrooms cannot be thought of anymore without automated content creation tools, machine learning technologies, and predictive analysis. Within the deterministic approach, not only are technologies serving journalists but rather transforming their craft through new work processes, different priorities set by editors, changed audience engagement strategies, and redistribution of tasks.

This idea is well-expressed by Carlson (2015), who analyzes the emergence of robotic journalism, which has started to reconfigure boundaries of authorship, labor division, and the very practice of journalism. In other words, AI can greatly affect journalism’s future shape.

The adoption of AI shifts the locus of decision-making authority within media institutions through its influence on the implementation of processes such as news selection, news moderation, and handling audience interactions. The shift reflects Napoli's idea of the increasing institutional impact of algorithms used in media systems that define what information reaches the audience and change the organization of newsroom work. In this respect, a technologically-deterministic approach highlights that the change results from structural features of AI systems rather than from any intentions on the part of editors.

Moreover, scholars including Diakopoulos (2019) and Pavlik (2020) point out that the integration of artificial intelligence in journalism is changing the fundamental journalistic values, including verification, transparency, and credibility. The use of algorithms speeds up news production, defines whether or not a news article is profitable, and changes the criteria of measuring news articles' accuracy and significance. At the same time, algorithms influence audience behavior because of the habit formation associated with receiving personalized news updates and real-time updates provided by AI-based platforms.

However, technological determinism has been subject to criticism for being overly deterministic in regards to the role played by humans in creating technology and using it. As noted by scholars such as Smith and Marx (1994) and Winner (1977), one should not treat technology as a self-contained force but consider the social, cultural, and political environment in which it operates. Although journalists still have to choose when and how to incorporate technology into their practice, set ethical guidelines and act as mediators between society and technological change, moderate (or soft) determinists argue that humans create technology but technology itself imposes certain directions of development (Lewis & Westlund, 2015).

Thus, it is safe to say that the Theory of Technological Determinism offers a valuable way to comprehend the role played by AI tools in contemporary journalism. The theory makes it clear that these technologies do more than simply aid journalists in completing their job; rather, they change the field in many ways and redefine the existing journalistic practices, hierarchy, and interaction between readers and media.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

Artificial intelligence is impacting the field of journalism globally by changing the ways in which information is collected, analyzed, and shared. It should be noted, however, that while much is known about the role and effects of artificial intelligence in journalism practice in Western countries and other parts of the world such as Asia, not much literature is dedicated to the same phenomenon in Africa specifically Uganda (Kothari & Cruikshank, 2022). The present chapter will discuss previous literature regarding perceptions of journalists about artificial intelligence and journalism practice.

It can be concluded that researchers recognize both benefits of artificial intelligence in journalism and potential threats posed by using new technologies in journalistic practices, including ethical issues. In addition, the effect of artificial intelligence on journalists' work depends greatly on different factors including levels of technology, financial and organizational support, etc. This literature review examines existing studies on AI and journalism from a global perspective, narrows to Africa, and finally situates the discussion within the Ugandan context, providing a foundation for the study of *Standard Newspaper* at Uganda Christian University, built around the three core research questions of the study.

### **2.1 Global Perspectives on Artificial Intelligence in Journalism**

In global settings, AI has seen extensive application in media companies that are large and technologically sophisticated. As cited by Carlson (2015), automated journalism using AI is used extensively in repetitive news stories such as sports, financial and weather reporting since structured data makes it easy and quick to produce news. This practice has made it possible for news organizations to improve efficiency and productivity levels, while at the same time minimizing production costs. Machine-learning tools have made AI widely adopted in data journalism as

well. According to Diakopoulos (2019), AI is useful for data analysis in large datasets and identifying significant patterns for journalists.

Worldwide, AI has been adopted in recommendation systems that facilitate personalization and customization of news content for increased engagement of audiences in media organizations such as the BBC (Grieco et al., 2022). However, in spite of all these advantages of AI, its adoption has been slow in many cases due to some limitations.

Despite the advantages described above, there are ethical issues related to the use of AI in news-making processes revealed by international researches. Thus, according to Thurman et al. (2019), numerous news media entities do not provide adequate information regarding the employment of artificial intelligence technologies in their activities. In its turn, Broussard (2018) claims that biased algorithms could lead to reproducing existing biases in training data sets. Consequently, the discussed problems demonstrate that although using AI contributes to increasing efficiency in journalism, it creates certain ethical difficulties.

Speaking about technologically advanced ecosystems like the USA, China, and the UK, it should be noted that various types of AI applications are used for news generation, prediction, fact-checking, and personalization purposes (Caswell, 2020; Zhang & Yang, 2021; Tandoc et al., 2019). For example, the Bloomberg Company uses the Cyborg system which produces thousands of news articles from complex financial reports in real time (Martin, 2023). Besides, China Xinhua News Agency has created AI new anchors who can produce continuous news updates (Xinhua, 2020). However, the use of AI applications in the discussed sphere raises some challenges including job displacement, ethical issues, and editorial oversight decrease risks (PedreroEsteban & Pérez-Escoda, 2021)).

Adoption of AI tools in journalistic practice is still not widespread in Africa and the Global South region. The literature shows that AI is typically adopted by individual journalists unofficially rather than as part of official newsroom strategy (Mabweazara & Mare, 2023). Most common use cases are speech-to-text conversion applications, grammar checkers, translation tools, and idea generators.

Literature suggests that journalists in developing nations such as Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa acknowledge the importance of AI but face difficulties associated with the lack of technical know-how, poor infrastructural conditions, and institutional support (Ogunyemi & Salawu, 2022). In turn, the current practices of AI adoption in journalism focus on supporting routine activities rather than making key editorial decisions.

Scholars from African regions add that the lack of ethical codes raises concerns about uncritical adoption of AI by journalists, which is particularly applicable for educational and small-scale newsrooms whose main aim is training and professional development.

## **2.2 Artificial Intelligence and Journalism in Uganda**

There are few empirical studies that explore the use of AI in Ugandan journalism. The majority of the literature on AI and journalism practice draws upon the findings from Africa in general, thus creating a lacuna in terms of local knowledge on the impact of AI on journalism practices in Uganda.

Journalism practices conducted within university settings, like in the case of the Standard Newspaper published by Uganda Christian University, present an interesting setting due to the combination of journalism practice and academic education. Even though the student journalists might use AI in their journalism practice for editing, transcription, and other functions, there is very little known about how this technology affects their roles, routine, performance, and ethics.

The purpose of this study is to explore these issues in the case of the Standard Newspaper.

## **2.3 Artificial intelligence and Journalism at the Standard**

The introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies in newsroom operations has impacted journalism work practices significantly, and this is evident at The Standard the official student newspaper of Uganda Christian University. At present, the journalists at The Standard make use of AI tools mainly as an aid in their information collection and analysis process to enable them to prepare their stories effectively (Aine, 2024). This use of AI tools by journalists at The Standard is in line with the literature from around the world indicating the utility of such AI technologies for helping journalists filter information, analyze data sets, and even

suggest new stories (Hermida & Young, 2019; Lokot & Diakopoulos, 2016). Also, at The Standard, AI technologies help the journalists develop story ideas, organize content, and suggest better phrasing. Journalists at The Standard have found that with the help of AI technologies, they were able to accomplish their tasks quickly and efficiently, which is similar to the finding from around the world that AI technology is a tool for aiding human journalists in their tasks rather than replacing them completely (Carlson, 2018; Broussard et al., 2019).

The application of AI at The Standard at present supports rather than dominates journalistic decision-making process. Journalists at the newspaper confirmed using AI as means to augment storytelling, increase engagement, and examine visuals and narratives based on trends in data (Aine, 2024). Such practice aligns with global trends in digital journalism where use of AI technologies, including personalization and recommendation tools, plays a part in shaping the strategy of newsrooms focused on increasing interaction with the readers (Lopezosa et al., 2023). However, while seeing benefits in using AI technologies, journalists at The Standard do not consider them to be sufficient for automation of content production. Human intervention into the process includes fact verification, cross-referencing, and ethics assessment related to use of AI technologies, which is consistent with concerns of scholars regarding lack of transparency, bias, and potential risks of such practices (Cohen, 2019; Moran & Shaikh, 2022). The main reason why journalists at The Standard rely on AI technology lies in the recognition that their role consists of controlling the process and making decisions, and AI helps them do that more efficiently (Aine, 2024).

## **2.4 Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Journalism Practice**

The examined literature shows how AI technology has transformed journalistic jobs and practices through automation of laborious activities to help journalists concentrate more on reporting. The use of AI in content discovery, transcription, translation, editing, and data processing simplifies processes and increases efficiency in newsrooms (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Marlow, 2022).

There have been changes in the role of journalists in terms of production of content with AI becoming their editor-in-chief to some extent. As Lewis, Guzman, and Schmidt (2019) state, journalists now collaborate with AI and combine editorial and

technological skills. This helps boost productivity but brings challenges with regards to over-reliance and loss of control of professionals (Broussard, 2018). It is necessary to look at whether AI technologies aid learning and professionalism in students' practice or diminish these qualities.

AI supports routine activities of reporters including proofreading, transcription, and generating headlines. As suggested by Diakopoulos (2019), automation may facilitate workload decrease and allow journalists to devote more attention to analysis. At the same time, the heavy use of automation might result in standardized stories with no deeper meaning.

On the international front, large media corporations such as The Washington Post and The New York Times use AI in data-driven journalism automation, personalized content generation, and improved workflows (Mukasa, 2023).

Additionally, AI-powered recommendation tools implemented in global newsrooms have helped increase the accuracy of audience targeting, leading to increased performance for newsrooms as a whole (Grieco et al., 2022). In other words, AI is making journalism work smarter not only by increasing efficiency but also by expanding the skill set needed for modern-day reporters.

Similar trends can be observed globally, as scholars believe that AI complements journalists' efforts, giving them the opportunity to apply their skills to more complex processes involving creativity and analytical thinking (Patterson, as cited in Martin, 2023)

On a global scale, AI makes it possible to automate news reporting with extensive use of data, generate personalized content, and provide better audience analytics. By using AI algorithms, media corporations can tailor news for every user, increasing the level of engagement and loyalty on their part (Alcaraz Sintes & Casero-Ripollés, 2022). Chatbots, real-time audience data systems, and automated content recommendation are becoming the cornerstone of modern-day newsrooms (Kioko et al., 2022). In smaller and university newsrooms, AI may be adopted selectively in order to assist in routine work, rather than in making editorial decisions. This study seeks to investigate the effect on the routine operations in Standard Newspaper due to the use of AI.

The performance of journalism through AI would become enhanced through increased efficiency, accuracy, and speed. Nevertheless, issues of trust from the public towards AI technology are evident since many studies suggest doubt on the use of AI technology especially in areas of reporting. The performance of journalism must thus be measured not only by output but also ethics.

This study will investigate performance of university journalism in both output and ethics.

## **2.5 Challenges and Opportunities of Artificial Intelligence in Journalism**

There is a two-fold story evident from the literature, in which AI not only presents several advantages in terms of innovation and efficiency in journalism, but it also presents some challenges.

First, AI facilitates the creation of more accurate and timely, data-driven, and personalized pieces of news (AI, 2019; PedreroEsteban & Pérez-Escoda, 2021). Secondly, AI also poses some ethical challenges by potentially displacing employees from their positions, by bias that might be built into AI algorithms, by reducing the control of the editorial staff on the news produced, and by being not transparent (PedreroEsteban & Pérez-Escoda, 2021).

Internationally, AI helps news organizations to perform better in fact-checking, sentiment analysis, and audiences' analytics, thus making the news more relevant and of higher quality (Lupin, 2019; Grieco et al., 2022). AI allows creating new sources of profit through targeted advertisements, automation of digital subscriptions, and greater audience involvement (Kioko, 2022). At last, AI allows news organizations to create new language translations and use chatbots to communicate with their audiences as shown in Chinese and Indian newsrooms (Yang & Lee, 2019; Chatterjee & Banerjee, 2020). The use of freely available AI technology by Uganda's print media owing to financial limitations further restricts the level of quality of AI outputs (Mukasa, 2023).

Major problems associated with using AI technology in journalism involve ethical dilemmas such as those concerning bias, transparency, and accountability. According to Broussard (2018), AI technology may promote any bias already present in its design.

Additionally, poor training, weak infrastructure, and lack of organizational policies pose further obstacles to using AI in Africa (Mabweazara & Mare, 2023).

However, the above problems are chances for improvement and growth.

Using AI technology presents chances for developing journalism. For example, AI technology can be used in fact-checking, enriching the content of stories (Graves, 2018). Also, for student journalists, AI presents an opportunity to gain experience in working with advanced technologies in newsrooms.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

In summary, from the literature review, AI is currently changing the nature of journalism practice globally, but the influence of AI on the practice of journalism in Africa is only emerging and uneven. AI is bringing changes in the field of journalism, involving human-computer interaction. However, there are certain structural barriers to adopting the technology in African newsrooms. AI can offer some advantages in efficiency, investigative journalism, and linguistic diversity; nevertheless, AI has posed various ethical, professional, and political concerns for journalists and editors. Kothari and Cruikshank (2022) highlight the importance of conducting research and implementing AI-based practices in a manner that takes into account the interests of Africa.

The reviewed literature suggests that while AI has increasingly become relevant to the practice of journalism in most of the world, the degree of adoption has varied among regions. While AI has found wider use among global news organizations, the adoption of AI technology is still nascent among African and Ugandan newsrooms. The current study aims to address this gap in knowledge by studying the influence of AI on the practice of journalism in Standard Newspaper.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter explains the approach taken to assess how AI affects journalistic practice at The Standard, UCU, detailing the overall research framework, the study population, the sampling strategy, the instruments employed for gathering data, and the techniques used for analysis.

### **3.1 Research Approach**

The study uses a qualitative research approach to examine how artificial intelligence shapes journalistic practice in actual newsroom settings. This approach permits an in-depth examination of journalists' experiences, perspectives, and the interpersonal and organizational dynamics within newsrooms as they interact with AI tools (Creswell, 2009).

### **3.2 Sampling Technique**

Purposive sampling will be employed in this study as a non-probability sampling approach. It entails intentionally choosing participants who possess particular characteristics and knowledge pertinent to the research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016)

The approach depends on the researcher's professional judgment to select participants who have substantial knowledge and practical experience relevant to the subject matter, ensuring that those chosen can provide deep, informed insights for the study.

In this case, the sample will include journalists (students and graduates) at The Standard, Uganda Christian University (UCU), who have worked there for at least three months. These individuals are expected to provide valuable insights into the use of AI in the newsroom, given their active involvement and professional experience in journalism.

This sampling strategy is appropriate because it focuses on individuals most likely to provide informed and meaningful input for the research. However, it must be recognized that as a non-probability technique, purposive sampling limits the ability to generalize findings to the broader population of journalists.

### **3.3 Study Population**

The study population consists of eight journalists employed at The Standard newspaper, Uganda Christian University (UCU), encompassing personnel from junior to senior staff and representing a range of specializations, including news, feature writing, and investigative reporting, among others.

A sample size of eight journalists is considered adequate because it enables the researcher to encompass diverse perspectives and lived experiences from across various roles and specialties within the newsroom, preserving the original intent and scope of the inquiry.

### **3.4 Data Collection Methods**

Qualitative data collection techniques shall be employed in order to explore the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the practices of journalism within The Standard. A qualitative research design is highly appropriate in helping get a better understanding of the experience and feelings of the respondents when faced with the challenges presented by AI technology.

Face-to-face in-depth semi-structured interviews shall be the main source of data collection in this study.

As Rowley (2012) observes, interviews give researchers an opportunity to get detailed and in-depth information from respondents through direct interaction with them. In addition, Creswell (2014) states that interviews are highly appropriate for gaining insight into the perspective of the respondent and making sense of those answers that may be somewhat vague.

These interviews will be done either face-to-face, via questionnaires in both hard and soft copy form.

The interview guide will be designed according to the research objectives and three key research questions:

- 1: How is AI currently being used in journalism practice at The Standard?
- 2: What impact has AI had on the roles, routines, and performance of journalists?
- 3: What challenges and opportunities does AI present to journalism practice?

Open-ended questions enable participants to express their viewpoints openly while still guiding the conversation toward the study's aims, allowing rich, candid responses without losing sight of the research objectives.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Theme analysis will be used as the strategy for analyzing data collected using the semi-structured interviews. Qualitative research design is ideal in researching complex social problems such as the implementation of AI in the field of journalism. This approach revolves around identifying, examining, and capturing the pattern or themes within the data. Themes are recurring patterns in datasets that are critical in the characterization of a phenomenon in relation to the research problem, according to Braun & Clarke (2017).

Thematic analysis will be used to capture the opinions, experiences, and practice among journalists at the Standard with regards to the implementation of AI in news reporting.

This strategy involves audio recording of the interviews, reading of the questionnaires and notes repeatedly to understand the data collected, identification and coding of themes, and interpretation of the results obtained.

This process will be carried out inductively where themes emerge naturally from the data and not predetermined. There are various steps involved in thematic analysis including: Familiarization with the data by reading of the interview notes and understanding the experience and perceptions of journalists at the Standard regarding AI implementation.

Identification of theme; identification of theme reflecting how AI impacts the roles, processes, and performance of journalists.

Identification of pattern; finding patterns between themes including issues, benefits, and moral dimensions relating to AI. Interpreting the findings in the light of the research questions and objectives so as to gain a more in-depth understanding about the impact of AI on journalism.

The themes and patterns found in the dataset will be analyzed in conjunction with the research questions and objectives set out in the study. The findings will be presented succinctly and supported by direct quotations taken from the

interviewees while the analysis process will be transparent with all steps meticulously documented to maintain the credibility, reliability, and validity of the findings.

### **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

This study adheres to ethical standards designed to safeguard the rights, dignity and privacy of every participant. Participants will receive complete information about the study's aims, scope and any other relevant information so that truly informed consent can be obtained.

The identities and personal details of participants shall be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in reporting to ensure anonymity and protect participants' professional reputations.

Participants' confidentiality will be upheld for the entire study. All information gathered will be stored securely and made available solely to the researcher. Additionally, the researcher will strive for impartiality remaining neutral and avoiding personal bias during data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Transparency must be observed, the researcher shall be transparent about the study's methods, analytical procedures, findings, and limitations to uphold academic integrity and trustworthiness.

### **3.6 Limitations of the study**

The study focuses exclusively on a single newsroom, which limits the ability to apply its findings broadly. Also, the available time prevented a more extensive comparative examination of additional Ugandan newsrooms.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter details the analysis, presentation, and interpretation of data obtained from eight journalists at The Standard UCU, gathered through in-depth interviews and subjected to thematic analysis. Its purpose is to offer a comprehensive account of the analytic procedures, display the emergent themes and findings, and interpret those results in direct relation to the study's objectives and research questions focused on how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is affecting journalism practice at The Standard.

### **4.1 Data Analysis**

The dataset underwent thematic analysis, a systematic process of detecting, organizing, and interpreting the principal themes that surfaced in participants' responses. Transcripts were produced and examined repeatedly to discern recurrent concepts, which were then grouped into pattern-based categories aligned with the study's objectives;

1. To explore the current level and nature of AI adoption in journalism practice.
2. To assess the influence of AI on journalistic roles, workflows, and output quality.
3. To identify challenges and opportunities presented by AI integration in journalism.

### **4.2 Presentation of results**

Research Question 1: How is AI currently being used in journalism practice at The Standard?

All eight journalists confirmed they incorporate AI-driven applications into their reporting workflows, most commonly using grammarly, transcription programs, and data-analysis platforms. These technologies streamline tasks, reduce time spent on routine work, and enhance the accuracy of published content.

Most reporters consider artificial intelligence a valuable and efficient aid, particularly for tasks like conducting background research and analyzing data. They hold that it enhances both productivity and storytelling by speeding up content creation and making narratives more compelling.

However, participants warned against overdependence on AI, pointing out that it can sometimes generate false information and spread misinformation, which makes human review and verification essential.

One of the respondents noted that the organization is developing an AI policy and that in the near future, the newsroom will be among the first in Uganda to adopt such a policy. This policy is to facilitate the professional incorporation of AI into newsroom operations. Among the available AI applications, the Standard intends to select at least nine specific tools for use in the newsroom.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of AI on journalistic roles, routines, and performance of journalists?

The respondents acknowledge that artificial intelligence has transformed newsroom workflows by automating formerly manual duties such as transcribing interviews, organizing datasets, and processing audience metrics, allowing journalists to redirect their effort toward more rigorous investigation, storytelling and creativity. The adoption of AI has broadened the variety and reach of content by customizing narratives to match audience tastes.

On the other hand, AI also has its own challenges, such as, editorial authority can be diminished and reliance on algorithmic systems may grow too strong leading some journalists to worry that greater automation will lessen human supervision and thereby compromise the originality and accuracy of reporting.

Research Question 3: What challenges and opportunities does AI present to journalism practice?

The participants noted that AI brings both promising advantages and notable hurdles for journalism.

Identified opportunities include; Accelerated and streamline news production by handling repetitive tasks like transcribing interviews, organizing datasets, and drafting script, it can also enrich storytelling by combining multimedia elements and data visualizations to make complex or sensitive subjects clearer and more professional.

AI-driven analytics enable newsrooms to more precisely target audiences by examining user behavior and preferences, allowing editorial teams to customize content for greater relevance and engagement. Additionally, respondents highlighted AI's ability to process vast datasets, aid fact-checking, spark creative story ideas, expand the variety of news formats, and support content production.

However, despite these opportunities, there are coexisting significant concerns that must be addressed.

A pressing worry is that artificial intelligence could accelerate the creation and dissemination of false or misleading information while also replicating existing material without correct credit; this dual capability heightens the spread of unverified claims and makes it easier for content to be presented as original when it is not, undermining trust, academic integrity, and the reliability of public discourse.

There is also concern that increasing automation in newsrooms may erode core journalistic practices by diminishing reporters' critical thinking, investigative skills, and ethical judgment. Automated tools can streamline data processing and routine tasks, but if reliance on them grows unchecked, journalists may lose habits of skeptical inquiry, deep source cultivation, and contextual analysis that underpin rigorous reporting. Without regular exercise of investigative techniques such as verifying complex claims, interpreting evidence, and making ethically informed decisions about what and how to publish, practitioners risk producing work that is faster but shallower, more error prone, and less accountable.

Preserving high quality journalism therefore requires balancing technological efficiency with sustained training, editorial oversight, and institutional safeguards that keep human judgment central to news gathering and ethical decision-making. Insufficient technical expertise among reporters was also identified as a significant obstacle to using AI effectively and responsibly, and an excessive dependence on AI tools without robust editorial oversight risks eroding journalistic credibility and professional norms.

Respondents called for comprehensive training and stronger institutional support so that journalists can harness AI's benefits while upholding professional standards.

### **4.3 Interpretation of results**

The findings suggest that artificial intelligence is reshaping journalism at The Standard and across the profession in ways that are both profound and nuanced: reporters have adopted AI-driven tools to boost efficiency, spark creative approaches, and deepen audience interaction, yet they continue to approach these technologies with caution about potential downsides such as misinformation and plagiarism.

The findings highlight AI's double-edged role in journalism as it boosts efficiency and enriches storytelling while also upending established newsroom practices. Therefore,

maintaining human oversight, investing in ongoing skill development, and implementing AI responsibly are essential to fully realize its advantages. These results align with exiting literature that highlights how artificial intelligence in newsrooms presents significant potential benefits alongside notable dangers. Researchers have documented ways AI can enhance reporting, efficiency, and audience reach while also flagging concerns about accuracy, bias, and ethical implications (Hermida & Young, 2019; Lokot & Diakopoulos, 2016).

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In conclusion, journalists at the Standard are increasingly integrating AI into their workflows to enhance research and data processing, gaining advantages such as faster results, automation of routine tasks, and new creative opportunities. However, they continue to express concern about problems like misinformation, plagiarism, algorithmic bias, reduced reliability, and diminished human oversight. The study's findings underscore the importance of providing training and promoting professional, responsible AI use so that technological innovation is balanced with core journalistic ethics and integrity.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the key findings of the study on the influence of Artificial Intelligence on journalism practice at The Standard, UCU. The findings are interpreted in relation to the study objectives, existing literature, and the theoretical framework.

### **5.1 Discussion of findings**

The study's discussion of findings will as well concentrate on the three principal research questions, systematically interpreting the results with respect to each question, comparing outcomes to prior literature, and evaluating how the evidence supports or challenges the initial hypotheses.

#### **5.1.1 How is AI currently being used in Journalism practices at the Standard?**

The findings indicate that journalists at The Standard are incorporating AI into their everyday workflows, with tools such as Grammarly, Turbo Scribe, Perplexity, QuillBot, and Descript, commonly used for editing, transcription, research, paraphrasing, and audio/video work. This has boosted both speed and productivity. This aligns with Hermida and Young (2019), who noted that AI helps reporters handle large datasets and automate repetitive tasks.

Grammarly corrects spelling, punctuation, and grammar in articles and news stories, Perplexity functions as a research search engine, QuillBot aids paraphrasing and text refinement, Descript assists with audio and video editing, and Turbo Scribe provides transcription services.

AI has also expanded journalistic capabilities for example, generating AI-created images can protect identities in sensitive reports making many newsroom tasks quicker and more efficient.

#### **5.1.2 What influence has AI had on the roles, routines, and performance of journalists?**

The study shows that artificial intelligence has fundamentally altered journalistic roles and newsroom workflows at The Standard. Routine tasks like transcription, data organization, and audience analytics are now automated, boosting productivity and enabling faster, more timely reporting. Journalists increasingly work in hybrid

settings where algorithmic tools speed data analysis and support new digital storytelling techniques while human creativity shapes final content. However, the findings also reveal emerging challenges linked to AI integration in journalistic practice. Some journalists report diminished editorial control and growing reliance on opaque algorithms, warning that excessive automation can erode human oversight and threaten originality, ethical judgment, and factual accuracy.

These findings argue that although AI strengthens performance and broadens audience reach through personalized data-driven stories, its benefits must be carefully weighed against the need for robust editorial supervision and adherence to professional journalistic standards.

### **5.1.3 What challenges and opportunities does AI present to journalism practice?**

Findings from the study indicate that journalists perceive Artificial Intelligence as one with both significant opportunities and challenges to contemporary journalism practice.

On the opportunity side, participants highlighted that AI has enhanced efficiency and speed in news production by automating routine and time-consuming tasks such as transcription, data sorting, and script writing. This automation makes the journalists' work easier and faster.

Respondents also noted improvements in storytelling, particularly through the use of multimedia integration and data visualization tools, which enable newsrooms to present complex or sensitive information in a clearer, more engaging, and professional manner. In addition, AI-driven audience analytics were seen as valuable in improving audience targeting, as they analyze user behavior and preferences to help tailor content to specific audiences. Respondents further acknowledged AI's ability to process large datasets, support fact-checking processes, stimulate creativity through story ideas, diversify news formats, and assist in various formats of content creation.

Despite these opportunities, the findings also reveal several challenges associated with the adoption of AI in journalism practice at The Standard and more broadly within the profession. A key concern raised by respondents was the increased risk of misinformation, fake news, and plagiarism, as AI systems can quickly generate and

disseminate unverified or misleading content, and in some cases reproduce existing material without proper attribution. Respondents also expressed apprehension about a potential decline in traditional reporting skills, warning that excessive automation may weaken journalists' critical thinking, investigative capacities, and ethical judgment. Limited technical knowledge among journalists was identified as a significant barrier to the effective and responsible use of AI tools. Additionally, respondents cautioned against overreliance on AI systems without adequate editorial oversight, noting that this could undermine journalistic credibility and professional standards. Overall, the findings emphasize the need for continuous training and strong institutional support to ensure that journalists are able to harness the benefits of AI while upholding core journalistic values and ethics.

## **5.2 Relation to the hypothesis**

The study supports the hypothesis that increased AI adoption in journalism leads to both efficiency gains and ethical challenges that reshape newsroom practices. The findings show that journalists at The Standard have become more productive and faster due to AI use.

However, they also encounter challenges relating to editorial control and reliability, confirming that AI's influence is multidimensional, boosting performance while introducing new ethical and professional dilemmas.

## **5.3 Conclusion**

The discussion highlights that AI has a significant and evolving influence on journalism practice at the Standard. It enhances efficiency, storytelling, and audience interaction, yet it also brings ethical and operational challenges. The journalists' experiences underscore the importance of balanced AI adoption, where innovation is complemented by professional oversight and continuous learning. These insights contribute to the broader debate about how AI is redefining journalism in the digital age.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Conclusions**

This study of The Standard - Uganda Christian University, based on interviews with eight journalists, finds that AI tools are widely used in news workflows particularly for research and transcription. The study shows that AI has improved speed, accuracy, and audience engagement, freeing journalists to concentrate more on creative storytelling. However, there is worry about rising misinformation, excessive dependence on automation and the weakening of classical reporting skills, showing that AI's effects are mixed.

Therefore, continual adaptation, strong ethical safeguards, human oversight, and targeted training and regulation are essential to ensure AI supplements rather than supplants journalistic judgment.

### **6.2 Recommendations**

Develop comprehensive AI policies in newsrooms, that is, media organizations should create structured frameworks guiding how AI tools are used in news production, editing, audience analysis and research.

Provide continuous professional training for journalists through regular workshops and capacity building programs on AI literacy, data ethics and algorithmic transparency should be established to enhance journalists' competence. Encourage balanced human AI collaboration that is, journalists should be encouraged to use AI as a supportive tool, ensuring human verification and editorial oversight remain central in all workflows.

Promote transparency and accountability in AI assisted journalism, newsrooms should attribute the use of AI in content creation or recommendation system to maintain audience trust.

Support further academic and policy research. Universities, media associations and policy makers should fund studies exploring AI's long-term implications for journalism practice, employment and ethics.

### **6.3 Limitations**

The study was limited to eight journalists from the Standard newspaper newsroom which restricts the generalizability of the findings.

Time constraints restricting wider comparative analysis with other Ugandan newsrooms.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for further research**

Conduct comparative research multiple Ugandan and African multiple media organisations.

Investigate more the perspectives of policy makers, editors, journalists and audiences.

Explore the long-term influence of AI integration into journalism practice.

Examine AI's role in shaping media literacy.

Such research will deepen understanding of how AI continues to shape journalism's future, helping to create a responsible, innovative, and trustworthy media ecosystem.

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