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The Transformation of News Editors After the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology

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ABSTRACT
This research explores the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technology in newsroom environments and its impact on the behavioral changes of journalists, particularly at the news editor level. The adoption of generative AI in mass media continues to grow in line with the rapid advancement of digital technology globally. The application of AI in journalistic work—such as news gathering, writing, editing, and distribution—has had significant effects on media professionals. This research aims to examine in depth news editors' perspectives on the use of AI in the newsroom and the behavioral transformations that result from it. The study adopts an interpretive paradigm, with a qualitative approach and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as its research strategy. It uses concepts from technological determinism, diffusion of innovations theory, and journalistic ethics as analytical tools to better understand the phenomena experienced by the research participants. The findings reveal three key aspects of transformation among news editors following the integration of AI in newsroom practices: changes in work routines, the meaning attributed to AI in journalism, and the evolving competencies of news editors. AI technology is viewed as a supporting tool rather than a replacement for news editors. While technical functions such as writing SEO-based articles, checking language structure, and conducting issue research can be performed by AI, editorial decisions and final editing remain the responsibility of human editors. In conclusion, the study highlights news editors' responses and interpretations of AI use, with their transformation marked by increased work efficiency.

Keywords: Journalist; Artificial Intelligence; News Editor; Mass Media; Journalistic Code of Ethics

INTRODUCTION

The challenge for journalists to continue working amidst increasingly sophisticated technological developments is never-ending. Digitalization has given rise to new media and new forms of work, one of which is through convergence schemes that have disrupted traditional media. Convergence, according to theorist Henri Jenkins, is a continuous unification process that occurs between various parts of the media, such as technology, industry, content, and audiences (Iskandar, 2018). Convergence can be interpreted not only as news being displayed on various combined platforms—such as television, online media, and newspapers—but also as the unification of various media into a single holding company. In Indonesia, several media companies have united their business units under one large umbrella, such as the MNC Group which includes iNews TV, Okezone, and Sindonews.com; the Media Group which includes Metro TV, the newspaper and online Media Indonesia, and Lampungpost.co; and the Bisnis Indonesia Group which includes the print media Bisnis Indonesia and online platforms such as Bisnis.com, Hypeabis.id, and Bisnis TV.

A review of six case studies related to media convergence in Austria, Germany, and Spain reveals that none of these cases demonstrates complete success in cross-media convergence. The convergence that occurs through various adaptations tailored to business models and environments is far from the ideal form of convergence. In reality, convergence is not only focused on content and industry issues but also impacts journalists, driving changes in the way they work (Zotto & Lugmayr, 2016). This situation is compounded by massive technological developments, as journalists are expected to multitask—or become multi-skilled—to create a variety of content across various platforms (Yoedtadi et al., 2024). Broussard et al. (2019) stated that technological developments in the newsroom in recent years have been very rapid, particularly related to the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for more effective news automation (Møller et al., 2025). Previously, the use of AI in journalism barely touched core tasks and was more focused on functions such as algorithmic news recommendation and basic automatic writing systems. However, the emergence of generative AI has brought major changes, enabling key tasks in the journalistic field such as creating news and providing complex data analysis (Munoriyarwa & de-Lima-Santos, 2025). This can be seen from the breakthroughs made by media companies, such as the introduction of TV news presenters processed by deepfake AI, collaborations between AI and real radio broadcasters, and the creation of news narratives in a short time complete with images or graphics according to newsroom needs.

This naturally raises uncertainty and fear among journalists who feel threatened by the current capabilities of AI (Nguyen & Hekman, 2024). They may be laid off by their companies because advanced technologies can assist journalistic work, reducing the need for large human resources. The online media outlet Press Gazette reported that this is also related to shrinking advertising budgets due to the presence of AI tools that allow advertisers to do much of the work themselves. Based on data compiled by Press Gazette editor Charlotte Tobitt, there were 3,875 layoffs in the journalism industry in the United States and the United Kingdom in 2024. The latest data show a continuation of this trend, with 900 layoffs in January 2025 and 210 layoffs in February 2025 affecting workers from various types of mass media, including newspapers, television, radio, and digital media. Meanwhile, data from the Press Council (2024) show that more than 1,200 media workers in Indonesia have been laid off over the past two years.

Journalists' concerns are not only about human resource efficiency but also about the accuracy of news disseminated to the public. Dewi & Hastjarjo (2024) revealed that more than 60% of respondents in a survey conducted by Journalism AI London School of Economics of more than 100 news organizations from 46 countries were concerned about the implications of AI for accuracy, fairness, and transparency, which are core journalistic values. On the one hand, AI poses a potential threat to journalistic integrity; on the other hand, AI presents opportunities for journalists to work more effectively and efficiently (Benson, Okolo, & Oke, 2025). Currently, many forms of AI are being utilized in mass media newsrooms. Detik Network, for example, has 12 products that utilize AI, including Detiktravel Escapes Uncovered, developed during the ChatGPT 3 era in collaboration with internal business teams and later attracting the participation of international airlines (Indonesian Cyber Media Association, 2024). The Kompas Group (KG Media) uses AI to improve the quality and efficiency of content production, not to replace human roles. IDN uses AI to align editorial work with changing

audience behavior. According to IDN's research, Gen Z frequently verifies information from social media platforms, which has led to the transformation of content into short formats through a product called "Intisnya Sih". Furthermore, Katadata and Suara.com utilize AI for content innovation, processing data into images or graphics to make information easier for audiences to understand (Masduki, Prastya, Yusuf, & Ningsih, 2024).

AI can also be used for fact-checking, news personalization for readers or subscribers, content recommendations, audience analysis, and interview transcription. At the Paris Peace Forum, 17 media organizations and journalists agreed to publish a guide on the use of AI technology in journalistic and mass media practices, entitled the Paris Charter on AI and Journalism (Dewi & Hastjarjo, 2024). One of the affirmations in this agreement is that AI technology must uphold the public's right to quality and reliable information. Furthermore, the guide addresses guarantees related to democracy, privacy, intellectual property rights, and justice (Sudibyo, 2024). Another study identified eight areas of AI application in the media industry: content creation, content management, message optimization, operational automation, content recommendations and search for audiences, building relationships with audiences, enhancing the audience experience with audio content, and providing audience feedback (Yu & Huang, 2021).

These facts illustrate that AI technology has become a pillar of modern journalism, whether interpreted positively or negatively. Its presence cannot be ignored. Research by Dewi & Hastjarjo (2024) explains journalists' understanding of the use of AI. First, AI can increase work efficiency, allowing journalists to more quickly search for data, edit, type, and monitor news trends. Second, despite this convenience, journalists still need training. Third, AI is considered unable to fully uphold the Journalistic Code of Ethics and press regulations, but it will not violate ethics as long as control remains in human hands. On the other hand, the presence of AI is believed to be unable to compete with humans in key journalistic aspects such as creativity, in-depth analysis, and editorial perspective, and is currently only capable of creating articles from structured data such as financial reports (Serdouk & Bessam, 2023). Investigative reporting or news writing with literary and narrative approaches cannot yet be fully carried out by AI, which still relies on structured events (Sujono, 2025). The debate surrounding journalists' adoption of AI has become a hot topic from both regulatory and ethical perspectives. Therefore, the authors consider it important to conduct a study on AI adoption among journalists, particularly news editors who act as gatekeepers before news is published.

This study aims to explore in depth news editors' perspectives on the use of artificial intelligence in newsroom environments and to examine the behavioral transformations they experience as a result of AI adoption. Specifically, this research seeks to understand how news editors respond to and interpret the presence of AI in their daily work routines, how their professional roles and competencies evolve, and how they navigate ethical dilemmas arising from the integration of AI into journalistic practices. The benefits of this research are twofold (Shi, Wei, Zheng, Cheng, & Wang, 2025). Theoretically, this study contributes to the academic literature on journalism and technology by applying concepts from technological determinism, diffusion of innovations theory, and journalistic ethics to analyze the phenomenon of AI adoption in newsrooms. It enriches understanding of how media professionals adapt to disruptive technologies and how their professional identities are reshaped in the process (Kronblad & Jensen, 2023). Practically, the findings of this research are expected to provide

valuable insights for media managers, journalists, and policymakers in formulating guidelines and training programs for the ethical and effective use of AI in journalism. Additionally, this study can serve as a reference for media organizations in developing standard operating procedures that ensure AI is used as a supportive tool while maintaining the integrity and quality of journalistic work.

METHOD

Qualitative, interpretive, phenomenological

This research uses the Interpretive Social Science (ISS) paradigm. The ISS paradigm focuses on individuals' subjective understanding of existing reality. ISS research views reality as being formed by social agreements and interactions. In other words, this paradigm defines social reality as consisting of people constructing meaning and creating interpretations through their daily social interactions (ibid.). The interpretive paradigm in social science emphasizes a deep understanding of the meanings individuals assign to their social interactions and experiences (Croucher & Mills, 2023). In this research, the interpretive paradigm is used to understand how journalists, as individuals, create meaning from their experiences with technological innovations in journalistic practice.

A qualitative approach is used in this study as a research method that emphasizes the depth and richness of context, focusing on an in-depth understanding of meaning, experience, and social interactions in a particular setting, and stressing the description, exploration, and interpretation of social phenomena (Lim, 2024). Qualitative research is crucial in understanding complex phenomena and has the unique ability to capture individual experiences that generate meaning (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024). The application of qualitative methods in this study was carried out to capture social phenomena involving the experiences and perspectives of journalists as individuals.

This research focuses on a phenomenological strategy to examine how individuals experience the phenomenon of technology’s entry into journalism practice and how they interpret it. This strategy was chosen because phenomenology is a qualitative approach that focuses on individuals’ lived experiences and seeks to uncover the essence of phenomena by exploring how these phenomena are experienced from a first-person perspective (Lim, 2024). Phenomenology focuses on how lived experiences emerge in an individual's reality that is inseparable from certain objects. In addition, this research also applies Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to deepen the analysis. IPA is often used in studies that focus on people's experiences and reflections on their work, technological transformation, and digital disruption (Firdaus, Aksar, & Gomez, 2025). Interpretive analysis and approaches are highly suitable for understanding the lived experiences of individuals affected by, or involved in, transformation and disruption in journalism (Firdaus, Aksar, & Gomez, 2025).

Objects and subjects of research

The research object covers changes in journalist behavior and the use of AI in journalism practice. Meanwhile, the subjects of this research are limited to journalists who serve as news editors in national mass media that have used AI in the newsroom (Noain Sánchez, 2022). The selection of research subjects is also limited based on the level of

journalist competence according to the Press Council regulations, namely Middle Journalists. Based on Press Council Regulation No. 01 / Regulation-DP / X / 2018 concerning Journalist Competency Standards, the Middle Journalist group is expected to have competencies such as identifying coverage coordination, holding meetings with Young Journalists, attending editorial meetings and planning meetings with Main Journalists, writing news and features , editing news and images or audiovisuals, planning investigative coverage, to updating news coverage.

Data collection, analysis, and validity techniques

Data collection in this study used in-depth interviews, a qualitative technique involving structured conversations with informants to understand their perspectives, experiences, and interpretations of a phenomenon. The interview process followed a three-stage structure: life history, which explored the informants' backgrounds; experience details, which delved into specific experiences related to the use of artificial intelligence in newsroom practices; and reflection on meaning, which encouraged informants to interpret and reflect on the significance of those experiences. This approach was implemented to help researchers gain a comprehensive understanding of informants' backgrounds, interpret their experiences more accurately, and obtain deeper insights into their perspectives.

The data analysis in this study employed coding techniques, which serve as a bridge between raw data collection and more in-depth interpretation. Coding is a systematic process of identifying patterns, concepts, and meanings within text-based data, such as interview transcripts. Before coding, the researchers conducted verbatim transcriptions of the interview recordings to ensure data authenticity. The analysis proceeded through three stages of coding. First, open coding involved repeatedly reading the transcripts and labeling important sections, ideas, or phrases. Second, axial coding identified relationships among the open codes, examining patterns of cause and effect, context, and process. Third, selective coding involved reviewing all data and previous findings holistically to identify major themes or core concepts that encompassed the entire dataset and connected all categories relevant to the study.

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied four key components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established by building rapport with informants through a pre-interview process, ensuring they felt comfortable and willing to share detailed and open information. This stage also involved integrating multiple perspectives to gain comprehensive insights and minimize personal bias. Transferability refers to the extent to which the research findings can be applied to other contexts or situations. To enhance transferability, the study provided rich and detailed descriptions of the research context, allowing readers to assess the applicability of the findings to similar settings. Dependability concerns the consistency and stability of findings over time. This was addressed by thoroughly documenting the research approach, data collection techniques, and analysis procedures, enabling other researchers to replicate the study if desired. Confirmability relates to the objectivity and impartiality of the findings, ensuring they are shaped by informants' experiences rather than researcher bias. This was achieved through member checking, where informants reviewed and validated the accuracy of the findings, and through reflexive journaling, which recorded the researchers' thoughts, biases, and reflections throughout the research process to promote transparency and reduce subjectivity.

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Research Limitations

This study is limited in terms of the scope of the research subjects, which focused on mass media journalists domiciled or based in the Special Region of Jakarta. Another limitation is that the research subjects were limited to the Middle Journalist level and news editor status , thus not providing a comprehensive picture of all levels of journalism. This study also has limitations in terms of the gender of the research subjects, as all were male, thus not providing a perspective from the perspective of women as research subjects.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A News Editor's Perspective on Responding to and Understanding AI

The informants had varying degrees of familiarity with artificial intelligence (AI) in their work as news editors at their respective local media outlets. Informants 1 and 2 first began using AI in their work two years ago, while Informant 3 only started using AI within the past year. All three viewed AI as a tool to assist them in their roles as news editors.

Informant 1 stated that AI was first used around 2023, or 15 years after he began working as a journalist in 2008. The first AI tool he used was ChatGPT, created by OpenAI. In the initial stage, he used AI for research and to gather information related to the design of the main news or headlines selected for the newspaper's front page. According to Informant 1, AI is an alternative to the internet search engine Google.com. The use of AI for research is considered advantageous because it can remember previous communication records, making it more seamless to use. Informant 1 used AI based on personal initiative because there was no encouragement or technical guidance from his workplace regarding AI use in news editing tasks. Nevertheless, he frequently improves his competencies related to AI and journalistic practices through forums organized by WAN-IFRA or the World News Publishers Association—the world's largest international press organization representing 3,000 news publishing companies and technology entrepreneurs, as well as 40 member publisher associations representing 18,000 publications in 120 countries. Over time, Informant 1 also explored AI tools other than ChatGPT, such as Gemini, Perplexity, Grok, and NotebookLM by Google. He uses free or unpaid AI services. In using AI, Informant 1 emphasizes the importance of including reference sources from prompting results by uploading reference documents for AI processing. He takes this step to limit the risk of "hallucinations" or AI output generated from sources of questionable credibility.

Informant 2 has been using AI in his work as a news editor since late 2023, while he has pursued a journalism career since early 2018. His interaction with AI began when he was assigned to create search engine optimization (SEO) articles. The AI tool Informant 2 uses most often is ChatGPT, compared to Perplexity or Gemini. According to him, AI is used to write SEO articles, create titles, and find supplementary data for news stories. Informant 2 also believes that the use of AI in the newsroom can be helpful because it simplifies the creation of SEO articles and speeds up work completion. In practice, he often exchanges ideas with colleagues, including about writing effective prompts.

Informant 3's interaction with AI in his work as a news editor began after he moved to a new office. He had been working as a journalist for 10 years. In mid-2024, Informant 3 moved from an economic and business media outlet to one that focused on technology issues. This move provided an entry point for him to become acquainted with the use of AI in news editing practices. Informant 3 stated that his current office already has a prepared workflow for AI use. Some of the AI tools used are ChatGPT, Gemini, Google AI Studio, Perplexity, and Claude. He uses these AI tools mainly for research purposes to assist his work as a news editor. In addition, AI is also used to create breaking news, check for writing errors, and review language structure based on subjek–predikat–objek–keterangan (SPOK).

The three informants showed several similarities and differences in their responses to the use of AI in their work as news editors. Two informants reported feeling guilty in the early stages of using AI because they were previously accustomed to manual work patterns or producing news without artificial intelligence tools. Meanwhile, the other informant expressed caution in the initial stages of using AI in his work.

> "I also feel a sense of guilt when using AI, because perhaps the writing should be the result of my own thoughts." (Informant 2, 2025)

> "At first, I felt more guilty because I'd been producing (news) entirely human. Now that I'm using this (AI), my work doesn't feel completely human." (Informant 3, 2025)

> "Be careful, because I don't use AI to produce articles, but rather issue research, so it still has to be re-verified." (Informant 1, 2025).

In line with developments, informants responded positively to the use of AI in their work as *news editors.* This positive response was reflected in the informants' statements that they felt assisted by AI in carrying out their work. This feeling of assistance motivated the informants to improve their cognitive aspects in terms of AI use. This motivation generated enthusiasm to try various AI *tools* and develop skills in AI *prompting*. All three informants had tried using at least three types of AI to assist their work as *news editors.* Two of the three informants tried various types of AI on their own initiative, and one informant was motivated by the policies of the media company where they worked. One informant also actively compared the most suitable use of AI for news research purposes and improved cognitive aspects in terms of AI *prompting* through *workshops and online* materials such as *websites* and YouTube. Another informant was motivated to improve their AI skills by discussing with colleagues. Another informant was motivated to explore the use of AI in their work as *news editors* because he was encouraged by an internal project at his company.

> "... In the team environment, we often exchange ideas on how to use AI properly for writing articles, so it's like asking *prompts*, you know, to our coworkers…" (Informant 2, 2025)

> "In my workplace, we have a work pattern where each team member must submit *a sprint* every semester. This forces me to *explore* more, including the use of ChatGPT..." (Informant 3, 2025)

On the other hand, three informants expressed concerns regarding the use of AI in their work as *news editors.* These concerns were sparked by experiences using AI that did not meet expectations, the risk of violating journalistic ethics, and the risk of increasing automation in the media industry, which would erode the need for workers. One informant said he had experienced several errors in output when using AI, such as incorrect figures, incorrect *hyperlinks*, and citing incorrect research sources. Another informant expressed concerns about the issue of plagiarism in the use of AI for news production. Meanwhile, two other informants believed there were no violations of journalistic ethics in their adoption of AI because the AI was only used to research news issues to be written or edited. The research results from the AI were then manually re-verified.

> "...I'm afraid of getting into plagiarism issues, because that *would affect* the news. So far, there's never been a *full* AI version. At most, it's stuck at a 50-50 ratio." (Informant 2, 2025)

> "...With ChatGPT and Gemini, it's been summarized and for me it's been very helpful and there's nothing wrong with it, no ethics are being violated, it just shortens my research process." (Informant 3, 2025)

Transformation of News Editor Behavior After AI Use

The definition of transformation according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) is a change in appearance, such as shape, nature, function, and so on. Referring to the context of this research, the three informants admitted to changes after using AI in news editing work, such as in terms of time efficiency and ease of understanding an issue being worked on. Meanwhile, regarding changes in attitude, Informants 2 and 3 conveyed, who were initially afraid and hesitant when using AI, but due to technological developments and the offer of convenience to shorten time, now both of them are accustomed to being assisted by AI. Meanwhile, Informant 1 was more cautious when first and until now using AI. This caution apparently remains the main focus of the three informants when working with AI.

Informant 1 described a change in understanding of an issue or problem. He stated that using AI as a research aid has accelerated understanding of an issue. He noted that time savings are still achieved, although not significantly, as he continues to learn how to use AI. The use of AI, which he has adopted over the past two years, has consistently helped him delve deeper into what he already has in mind. He prefers to continue searching for data manually, having his own concepts but incorporating them into AI to gain a different perspective.

> "Perhaps it's more about depth. There might be some time *in between*, but it's not significant. After all, we're gathering data and needing time to learn together with AI. But at least it gives us a more structured understanding of this issue, how it started, what the controversy is, so it's easier to understand." (Informant 1, 2025)

Regarding other conveniences offered by AI, such as fact-checking and typographical error checking, he did not use them. Informant 1 preferred to continue working manually as part of the verification discipline of journalists, but did not deny that AI could do this. Regarding the use of AI among colleagues, Informant 1 admitted to only providing *encouragement*. However, he often discusses this in editorial meetings and is aware that several colleagues are already using it. Informant 1 also added a list of AI capabilities, based on his participation in webinars, namely the automatic distribution of reporting tasks using parameters such as distance. For example, in a large media *outlet* with a large editorial staff, for example, if there is an incident in a certain location, with the help of AI, assignments can be immediately sent to the journalists closest to the scene. Then, it can mark the selection of news categories, whether or not *editing has been carried out* . Many other things can be utilized beyond content production.

> "The main thing is to give AI a try first. Try to be friendly, but stick to the guidelines. The Press Council clearly has guidelines that need to be followed. AI is helpful; there are many opportunities here, especially if you want to link it to editorial matters, especially in streamlining technical matters. So, there's no harm in learning and using AI." (Informant 1, 2025)

Informant 2, who has been using AI since late 2023, revealed that his work has become faster because it has dual tasks. It's primarily used for SEO writing, while editing daily news articles only occasionally. However, over the past two years, he's found using AI to significantly improve his time efficiency. Another transformation is that he sometimes uses AI suggestions for the entire news format, but sometimes, if he feels uneasy, he'll rewrite the AI's recommendations. He also advises fellow *news editors* not to use AI for editing, but to try it for article creation instead.

> "Since being assigned to write SEO. In the beginning, I didn't have any SEO writing assignments. It's helped me get through my work faster, as I also have daily editing duties for several news stories and usually complete data as well. So, these past two years have been really helpful." (Informant 2, 2025)

In line with the two informants, Informant 3 also acknowledged that his work method has become more effective and time-efficient. He detailed the order of his work, saying it was streamlined. While he usually had to first check the context of the writing, the sentence structure, and then check for spelling errors, after using AI, he only needed to check the news' logic. Another noticeable change was related to *prompt creation*. Initially, Informant 3 was still confused about writing the right *prompt, but now he can and even has his own prompt* for checking for spelling errors and language structure. Another noticeable change is that news production and targets have increased because it is easier to create news using AI. Furthermore, he also mentioned that previously, to conduct research, he needed to log into Google repeatedly, read numerous journals, and read numerous reports. Now, he only needs to log into ChatGPT and write *a prompt* to get the needed material, including including source *links*.

> "...AI is only for research, to shorten the process. Usually, you have to Google, read research, and report manually. With ChatGPT and Gemini, it's summarized, and I find it very helpful. There's nothing wrong with it, no ethics are compromised, it just shortens my research process." (Informant 3, 2025)

Another aspect of transformation is communication with colleagues or the team. All three informants agreed that they didn't feel any changes. Discussions continue to take place directly, from suggesting ideas and writing *angles* to asking more critical questions about submitted news material. One informant even mentioned that the ongoing direct communication with the team also frequently discusses how to use AI properly, not just related to news issues. The emphasis remains on AI as a research aid, not a replacement for journalists who still need to communicate with fellow editors or journalists in the field.

> "The use of AI for editing hasn't really changed the team's work patterns, because the AI is only for writing assistance. Outside of that, we try to avoid AI as much as possible. Within the team, we often exchange ideas on how to use AI properly for writing articles, such as asking prompts to our coworkers. Or asking how to get the AI to provide answers that match our expectations or instructions, because sometimes the AI's answers are still vague and inappropriate. So this becomes a discussion among coworkers as well." (Informant 2, 2025).

> "Nothing, but ultimately, 80% of my work is paid or subscription content, so there's still human interaction, like between journalists/reporters and sources. AI is just an assistant. When reporters submit articles, the discussion continues." (Informant 3, 2025)

Ethical Perceptions and Dilemmas of the Journalism Profession

Based on the informants' statements, the researchers concluded that ethical issues surrounding the use of AI in newsrooms remain a matter of debate. This is due to the adaptation process that occurs both initially and after becoming accustomed to using AI in the newsroom. This finding is further supported by the opinions of informants who stated that the use of AI is a legitimate tool for *news editors*, but with the caveat that the entire process must uphold the journalistic code of ethics established by the Press Council.

All three informants agreed that articles or writings created entirely by AI are not journalistic products, as they lack editing, coverage, verification, and oversight, which are key principles of journalistic practice. They emphasized that AI must be used proportionally and responsibly and must not eliminate existing journalistic work processes. Therefore, all three informants consider AI a tool for their work, ensuring its use in the newsroom is transparent and prudent, while adhering to established journalistic ethics. According to all three informants, ethical boundaries and principles must be maintained to maintain the dignity of the journalism profession.

> “In the end, it is no longer journalism, because it no longer involves the role of journalists” (Informant 1, 2025).

> "If the reporter's submission *is full* AI, I think it's unethical. If the writing *is full* , it's just unethical" (Informant 2, 2025).

> “I don't copy anyone's news and use AI only for research, no ethics are violated” (Informant 3, 2025).

Informants' rejection of AI-generated journalistic products is entirely related to quality. They agree that the use of AI impacts the credibility and accuracy of the data or information presented. They emphasize the importance of detailed and thorough verification and re-editing of any AI-assisted journalistic product. This is because they believe that journalists must still perform correction and filtering functions, particularly in the context of editing.

> "At least in the final stage there is a touch from *the editor*, that has to be there..." (Informant 1, 2025).

> "Even though they provide lengthy answers, the data isn't necessarily all accurate. I'm afraid that if we follow them all the way through, there's plagiarism, because AI doesn't cite sources." (Informant 2, 2025).

> “There must still be a human touch, considering the development of AI as inevitable.” (Informant 3, 2025).

The three informants also agreed that AI is *a tool* capable of assisting their work, while also acknowledging concerns about the role of journalists being replaced by AI in the future. Nevertheless, the informants remained optimistic. This is because AI capabilities are not yet considered capable of replacing the role of humans and the profession of journalism. The informants also rejected full automation in news production, as they believed AI could not replace the intuition, nuance, and ethical standards possessed by professional journalists. In this context, journalists are seen as remaining the main actors in the production process, due to their crucial role in seeking, processing, and maintaining the accuracy of the information presented in the form of news to the audience.

> "Be careful, because I don't use AI to produce articles (in their entirety), but for issue research, so it still has to be re-verified." (Informant 1, 2025).

> "Because AI can't cover the field, it can't see the nuances or feelings of humans." (Informant 2, 2025).

> “I feel that (threatened), but I still feel safe because there are things that AI can't do, such as reporting and field research itself…” (Informant 3, 2025).

Nevertheless, the informant advised journalists to equip themselves with technological literacy, as the development of AI is considered inevitable. Journalists need to adapt to maintain control over their work processes, including within the newsroom. Therefore, the informant

emphasized that AI should be used as a tool and not a threat, provided journalists possess technological literacy skills and uphold the principles of the journalistic code of ethics.

> "Organizationally, if you want to be more organized, yes (literacy is needed)." (Informant 1, 2025).

> "In the end, there is still a role for humans to supervise, it cannot be 100% handed over to AI." (Informant 3, 2025).

Another similar sentiment echoed by informants is the shift in understanding of journalists' work in the digital era. Many still choose not to use AI. However, media companies are also pursuing time efficiency and work effectiveness, so AI adoption is likely to accelerate. While AI offers conveniences that aid journalists' work, informants emphasized the importance of understanding the function and scope of AI use to prevent overuse. Media companies also have a crucial role to play in determining whether AI is permissible for news writing and in what contexts it can be used. Regulations issued by the Press Council, the institution responsible for safeguarding press freedom, have stated that the use of AI must be in accordance with the Press Law and the Journalistic Code of Ethics. According to informants, this policy is necessary to ensure that AI utilization remains in line with the principles of the journalistic code of ethics and the journalistic profession. Informants also hope that media companies will have formal guidelines and regulations for the use of AI in newsrooms to avoid intentional or unintentional ethical violations and to protect the integrity of the journalistic profession.

> "In fact, I feel that there should have been (regulations) from the start. Before actually proclaiming that we are using AI..." (Informant 1, 2025).

> "Actually, there should be a mutual agreement in media management, whether it is permissible or not to use AI." (Informant 3, 2025).

The three informants shared a similar view regarding the use of AI in newsrooms. They viewed AI as a tool to assist with work, but not as a complete replacement for journalists. For all three informants, human intervention remains essential in the journalistic production process, particularly for verification, final editing, and assessment of the context and nuances of information that AI cannot provide. Furthermore, all three informants believed that a human touch is essential in newsrooms to maintain the quality and integrity of journalistic products.

Furthermore, informants shared the same view that AI should be used while maintaining ethical values. Although AI supports the efficiency of journalists' work, informants agreed that AI carries the risk of errors, such as misinformation, plagiarism, or a loss of journalistic values, if used unsupervised in the newsroom. Therefore, informants emphasized the importance of literacy and clear guidelines for the use of AI technology to prevent harm to the journalism profession. Informants also argued that journalists must adapt to technology in

the future, provided that the technology is used responsibly and in accordance with journalistic values.

> "... AI-produced content still can't beat the writing of a skilled journalist. They haven't mastered the language and *the sense of journalism*. Okay, maybe someday AI will be able to, and it will get smarter, but ultimately, it's no longer journalism. Because it doesn't involve the role of the journalist anymore. It's no longer journalistic work." (Informant 1, 2025)

> " Many media are still in a gray zone, whether they allow it or not, they don't allow it or they don't. In the end, they steal it and use it. The editors, for example, are careless, resulting in incidents of inappropriate use of AI or *publishing errors* ." (Informant 3, 2025)

The transformation experienced by news editors after using AI technology is not merely a technical change but also touches on the epistemological, ethical, and practical realms of journalistic work. Findings indicate that AI is adopted as a tool, not as a replacement for news editors. While technical functions such as SEO article writing, checking language structure, and issue research can be performed by AI, editorial decisions and final editing remain in human hands. This phenomenon can be understood through the lens of technological determinism, which states that the emergence of technology has an inevitable impact, ultimately requiring journalists to adapt to the use of AI. The transformation of news editors' work due to AI adoption more closely reflects a soft determinism approach. Although technology drives efficiency and influences work structures, news editors maintain personal and professional agency: they consciously adapt, selecting certain AI functions deemed appropriate and rejecting full automation to maintain journalistic integrity.

Based on the research findings, three main aspects of news editor transformation following the use of AI are changes in work practices, the meaning of AI in journalism, and news editor competencies. Changes in work practices occur in terms of productivity and efficiency. AI helps make the news research process more comprehensive and accelerates the writing of fast-paced news, such as SEO articles and breaking news. Informants experience these benefits but still maintain manual verification stages. These findings indicate that the use of AI by news editors is not carried out through full automation but rather through the augmentation of journalistic work.

News editors' understanding of AI use has evolved since their initial interactions. At first, they felt guilty and doubted the legitimacy of using AI. With increasing experience and understanding, they were able to resolve their ethical dilemmas, accepting AI as a tool as long as it is used responsibly and with caution. The transformation of news editors' understanding of AI usage is also closely linked to digital literacy, formal regulations (Standard Operating Procedures or SOPs) within their companies, and the guidelines of the Journalistic Code of Ethics. This phenomenon can be interpreted as an internalization of professional values that are adaptive to AI technology.

The next transformation occurs in the competency aspect of news editors. Informants not only improve their prompting skills and explore AI tools but also actively engage in

discussions with colleagues. This demonstrates that AI technology fosters a new culture of collaboration and learning in the newsroom. As journalists, news editors' adoption of AI is also interpreted as a learning process in response to its increasingly sophisticated and rapidly evolving developments. Despite the adoption of advanced technology, human-to-human communication remains unchanged and still occurs face-to-face. The transformation in news editor competency, following the careful, cautious, and responsible use of AI, also positively affects the quality and quantity of news presented to audiences.

However, this transformation is not without dilemmas. News editors express concerns about the risks of misinformation (AI hallucinations), plagiarism, and unclear ethical boundaries if AI is used without regulation. In this context, it is crucial for media companies to develop clear SOPs. With such guidelines, field journalists and news editors understand their limits and responsibilities, so that AI can be used openly, accountably, and in accordance with journalistic principles. Without adequate regulation, AI risks being used clandestinely and excessively. Furthermore, they emphasize the importance of regulations and ethical guidelines from institutions such as the Press Council. These findings show that, in the journalistic work ecosystem, technology should not be allowed to operate autonomously without a normative framework. The experiences of news editors demonstrate that the meaning of AI use is shaped by values, work context, and direct interactions. Technology is understood not as an absolute determinant but as a tool that is continuously reinterpreted by its users.

CONCLUSION

First, this study broadly aims to explain the responses and understandings of news editors toward the use of AI. News editors expressed a variety of responses following the use of AI, ranging from feelings of guilt, concerns about the future of the profession, ethical dilemmas, and doubts about AI output and its legality, to enthusiasm for exploring the potential of AI's future use. News editors in this study understood AI technology as a functional work tool, not a professional replacement. They responded adaptively and reflectively to the presence of AI, implementing ethical boundaries and maintaining manual verification. News editors placed AI in a subordinate position, with editorial control remaining in human hands.

Second, news editors are undergoing a transformation following the use of AI. This change in behavior is evident in the increasing use of AI in research activities, news structuring, and even headline recommendations and translation of news from foreign languages. The use of AI also affects the competence and professional capabilities of news editors when it is used productively and not excessively.

Third, news editors experience dynamic perspectives on ethical dilemmas and expectations for the journalism profession. The impact on journalistic ethics and objectivity is reflected in concerns about the risk of information bias and efficiency pressures that may jeopardize the verification process. All of this has led to heightened awareness of the importance of professional boundaries and responsibilities. The experiences of informants show that the use of AI is only productive if accompanied by digital literacy, ethical awareness, and institutional support in the form of clear regulations. The lack of operational guidelines risks creating practices that could compromise the integrity of the profession.

The increasingly widespread adoption of AI in journalism does not mean eliminating the role of humans. Instead, news editors are focusing on strengthening aspects of journalistic

work that cannot be replicated by machines, such as field reporting, writing with a humanistic style, contextual analysis, and the exploration of original ideas. Furthermore, new technologies such as AI will be a useful tool if used in line with the principles of journalistic ethics.

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