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The Future of AI in the Media

Dr. Afrah Mulla Ali[1]

[1]Professor in the University of Kuwait, Translator and Interpreter of Spanish Arabic and Vice Versa Editor in Kuna (Kuwait Agency News); afrah1999@hotmail.com.

ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2385-5747

Address for Correspondence:

Dr. Afrah Mulla Ali, Professor in the university of Kuwait translator and interpreter of Spanish Arabic and Vice Versa editor in Kuna (Kuwait Agency News). (afrah1999@hotmail.com).

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Abstract This integrative literature review considers the question of whether, and to what degree, the use of artificial intelligence by digital media companies impacts on their perceived reliability, honesty, and trustworthiness. The study includes some aspects of social media and the issue of the creation of "Fake News" and "Deepfakes" – which could not be created without artificial intelligence. There is also a brief examination of Fear of Missing Out, which has links to artificial intelligence, social media, and mainstream media. The study concludes that, if digital media platforms wish to maintain their integrity and trustworthiness, they need to take some action – two possibilities are suggested, although these are neither exhaustive nor exclusive.

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Reviewers

Dr. Olaleye Yetunde, University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom. ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0007-4617-6625. Email: y.olaleye@westminster.ac.uk, yettynike@gmail.com

PhD Candidate Talal Mulla Ali, Brunel University of London, United Kingdom. ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6356-380X. Email: tallyny@gmail.com

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1. Introduction

In this study, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the media is considered, examining the ethical aspects of its use, and what is currently being done to address some of the issues which arise, as well as the future possibilities. AI has become as ubiquitous and pervasive as social media [1], and is increasingly present in electronic devices without the user necessarily being aware of the fact [2]. It is undoubtedly a useful tool, and, because even the mainstream media is increasingly digital in nature [3], the use of AI in the media needs examination. Most media applications involve the use of AI at some point in the process of content creation, audience analysis, editing, production, and post-production [4]. Media tasks for which AI is ideally suited include the automation of closed captioning, lip-syncing, and translated sub-titles [5]. It is also a useful tool in audience analysis, including behaviour and forecasting trends [6].

However, there are ethical aspects which arise when generative AI such as GitHub (Copilot) [7], or ChatGPT [8] are used. Apart from the potential inaccuracies or errors [9], the use of AI is behind the creation of "fake news" [10], "Deepfakes" [11], [12], and similar "news" stories. If this were to be presented by an apparently reputable media outlet as factual this would clearly be an unethical use of AI [13]. Although there are many acceptable and useful applications for AI in the mainstream media [14], there are three aspects that immediately come to the fore – the public perception or understanding of AI [15], how it is used in the media [16], and how deepfakes can be detected and prevented [11].

1.1 Aim, Objectives, and Research Question

The aim of this study is to produce an overview of the existing situation regarding the use of AI in the media, including some aspects of social media, and to consider the possibilities for the future. This overview and future forecast include an examination of the ethical issues which arise from the use of AI in the media (including the problems of "Fake News" and "Deepfakes") and the public perception of AI use in the Media. The objectives which must be met to achieve this aim are:

i. Explore the literature related to the current use of AI in the mainstream media.
ii. Examine the ethical aspects of that use, including the "Fake News" and "Deepfake" aspects.
iii. Discover how these ethical issues are perceived by the public.
iv. Investigate how the future integrity of the media can be maintained whilst still using AI.

This will then provide an answer to the question:

To what extent will the future use of AI in the media impact on the public perception of the reliability and trustworthiness of mainstream media?

The conclusions of this study may provide a guide to the ways in which media producers should act to demonstrate their commitment to providing factual, reliable information whilst still utilizing the latest technology.

2. Methodology

This study utilizes secondary, qualitative data, gathered from the relevant recent literature. The methodology used for this study is the integrative literature review (ILR) [17]. Unlike a full systematic review, which follows a strict protocol [18], the ILR can give an overview of the current and past literature, from which it is possible to generate an idea of the future [19]. The literature selected for the ILR is therefore not necessarily fully comprehensive, covering all aspects of the situation. However, it has sufficient depth to ensure that areas of interest outlined in the aim and objectives are covered and that the reader is able to see the rationale for the study and the justification of the conclusions drawn from the data.

2.1 Selection of Articles

The articles for the ILR met the following inclusion criteria:

- Published after 2015 (for the principal articles (see Table 1) – however, mushrooming [20] brought a few older articles.
- Published in a peer reviewed journal or conference proceedings.
- Published in the English language.
- Relevant to the study areas:

- AI use in mainstream and social media.
- Fake News.
- Deepfakes.
- Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).
- Full text availability.

The field of AI changes rapidly, which is why it was considered that articles published more than ten years ago were unlikely to be as relevant as newer literature.

Peer reviewed articles were selected to reduce the chance of any individual bias in the chosen articles, and English language articles were essential since this research is written in English, so the sources are accessible to the reader.

The articles selected after meeting the inclusion criteria were the quality assessed using the JBI critical appraisal tool [21], and re-checked using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Qualitative Research Checklist [22]. Checking this way ensured that the articles reviewed had used valid and appropriate methods and methodologies, and were of appropriate quality for this study.

2.1 Data Extraction and Analysis

The secondary qualitative data in this study comes from the literature reviewed, where different views are presented about each of the areas being investigated. In a full systematic review, it would be necessary to use Thematic Analysis (TA) [23], or Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) [24]. However, for a small-scale ILR such as this, the most appropriate method was considered to be document analysis [25]. Some academics regard the analysis of qualitative data as less valid and reliable than quantitative data [26], but provided a rigorous and meticulous approach is taken trustworthiness can be maintained [27], [28].

The document analysis followed a structured process to ensure methodological rigour. In the first stage, each source was summarized for its arguments, key findings, and methodology. These summaries were then aligned with the study objectives and coded into thematic categories:

(1) AI applications in mainstream and social media

(2) ethical considerations including bias, transparency, and accountability

(3) misinformation and deepfake dynamics

(4) psychological and social impacts such as FoMO

Coding was carried out manually, using the CASP appraisal tools and the JBI framework to verify thematic consistency. Different viewpoints from the literature were retained to highlight ongoing debates and ensure the review reflects the complexity of the topic rather than presenting only one side.

3. Literature Review

AI developed from Machine Learning, and although it has developed rapidly in recent years with the advances in technology, it has a history dating back to the middle of the twentieth century [29]. Nevertheless, despite some reports, it has not yet reached a level of efficiency of the human mind [30]. However, AI is increasingly used in devices and applications [2], and by media – both mainstream media and social media [31]. In this context, one of the major uses is customer analysis for marketing purposes [32]. Some other media applications for AI were given in the introduction, but the prevalence of social media and its use to spread news stories, such as the events of the "Arab spring" [33], has led many to believe that it will replace mainstream media.

However, the issue of trustworthiness and reliability of digital media has been highlighted in recent years by the rise in "Fake News" and "Deepfakes" [12], discussed below. This has emphasized the need to ensure that media adheres to ethical standards [3], [13]. Ethical journalism, taught to budding journalists [34], is only one facet of the issue, however. Another aspect of this is issue of ethical standards arises when generative AI is used – there is a known and acknowledged racial and gender bias in AI algorithms [35], [36]. Part of this bias has been linked to the *"gender divide in digital skills"* [37] – the predominance of white males within the major players in AI development. Thus, however honest and ethical the original reporting may be, it may be modified or manipulated by an AI application during production or editing, meaning that the AI itself needs to meet ethical standards [38].

The ethical integration of AI has been increasingly examined as generative models become part of newsroom workflows. Gallegos et al. (2025) [24] found that explicit labeling of AI-generated messages, as a transparency mechanism, had no effect on reducing their persuasive impact. This raises questions about the effectiveness of disclosure strategies. Similarly, Huschens et al. (2023) [33] reported that both human-written and AI-generated content were rated by audiences as comparable in terms of trustworthiness and credibility, suggesting that perceptions may be shaped more by contextual trust in the platform than by authorship alone. Furthermore, large-scale survey findings from the Reuters Institute Digital News Report indicate significant public discomfort with AI-produced news, with 63% of respondents in the UK and 52% in the US expressing unease (Newman et al., 2024) [49]. These findings highlight important gaps in understanding how technical safeguards, audience expectations, and editorial practices interact to influence perceptions of trustworthiness.

The detection of AI-generated content and deep fakes remains both a technical and ethical challenge. Kim and Vargas (2024) [37] note that new generative models can learn and adapt in real time, allowing them to outsmart even the most advanced tools used to identify fake news content. This highlights the importance of early-stage content checks, such as those promoted by the Content Authenticity Initiative (2025), which verify the source of data and ensure it has not been altered before being shared all.

3.1 AI and Media

Mainstream media, reporting the news or other events, makes use of AI in the production of programmes and content [14]. This is, generally, not an issue, ethically or otherwise. Indeed, traditional media can enhance digital media, and *vice versa* [4]. The global nature of digital media can lead to it being used for *"falsehood, distortion and propaganda"* [39], and this has implications for society as a whole [40]. Another aspect where the use of AI in the media both advantages and drawbacks has is freedom of expression [41], the advantage that the use of generative AI, such as ChatGPT [8], has is its capacity to reword articles into more acceptable words. The main drawback is discussed in the next section – Fake News.

3.1.1 Fake News

With the latest technology and AI it is virtually impossible for a digital media user to detect a "Deepfake", and although there are algorithms to detect them [42]. Part of the issue that the AI algorithms for detecting or preventing "Deepfakes" are the same as those used to create them [11]. However, there is a fine line between fake news and false representation, such as the portrayal of refugees [43]. In this, the media portrayal is not fake or (usually) untrue, but is often a distortion of the truth for political purposes [39], but the addition of AI would exacerbate this further, probably to the point of falsehood.

3.1.2 Social Media

Social media is so widely used, at all levels of society [44], that it is virtually ubiquitous. It also makes extensive use of AI [45], principally for targeting specific advertisements to meet the interests of a particular user [32], [46]. There is a perception that traditional media is slowly being displaced by digital and social media [47], although currently there is room for both. The use of AI in social media for marketing and customer analysis goes largely unnoticed by users [48], and although this is a legitimate and ethical use, content which is AI generated may not always be presented as such, which may lead to the cross-over with "Fake News" and "Deepfake" content. Because social media is not limited by borders [49], age [50], or educational status [51], "news" stories of this type may become embedded in popular belief.

Marketing via social media has also developed, using user-generated content [52], "influencer" marketing [53], [54]. Although it could be argued that, in its simplest form this is just peer recommendation of a product or service, influencer marketing, particularly in the tourism sector, is usually promoting a particular lifestyle [55]. This, combined with the high levels of connectivity in modern society [56], is a major contributor to a phenomenon which has become widespread in the twenty-first century – Fear of Missing Out (FoMO).

3.1.3 FoMO

FoMO is not actually a modern phenomenon [57], although, as noted above, it has become more prevalent in recent years [58], with the rise of social media [59]. Although it does appear to be more common among the younger users of social media, it is not a generational issue [60], [61]. The connection to AI use is that AI has been used to promote FoMO

(which is perhaps unethical) [62], and also to fight against FoMO [63]. It is a serious issue, perpetuated by both social media and also, to an extent, by advertising on mainstream media [64]. Although FoMO does have a high incidence among adolescents [65], it is also present in students and the workplace [66], [67].

Even though FoMO existed before social media, the rise of algorithmic personalization has made it much stronger. Patel and Nguyen (2024) [56] note that the increase in FoMO among younger people is linked to AI recommendation systems designed to boost engagement by promoting socially comparative content. However, tests conducted between 2023 and 2024 showed that FoMO can be reduced by adjusting these algorithms—such as adding reminder prompts or diversifying the content—without lowering engagement levels. This shows that AI has the potential to both increase and reduce FoMO, depending on how it is used.

3.2 AI and Media Credibility

The use of generative AI such as ChatGPT [8] has raised questions about the credibility of news reports in the mainstream media, where, as Nasreen Bakara [68] notes, *"questions are growing about the accuracy of the content, the validity of the sources, and the extent to which these tools affect the credibility of media content"*. The company behind much of the AI development, including ChatGPT is OpenAI, cited as being *"a technology company that specializes in developing artificial intelligence technologies"* [69].

Part of the problem with the earlier version of ChatGPT was the lack of accreditation of sources for the news stories it provided when searched. This has been partly addressed since the relaunch, but accuracy of content still appears to be an issue [68].

The thematic synthesis shows two main storylines in the literature. The first comes from technical studies, which focus on the efficiency and detection potential of AI tools. The second comes from social science research, which examines the societal and ethical implications of these technologies. Across both areas, public trust emerged as a shared concern, as neither ethical codes nor technological sophistication alone can fully safeguard credibility.

4. Discussion

Table 1, below, shows the fifteen journal articles that were the leading papers relating to the areas of importance: the use of AI in media, "Fake News"/" Deepfakes", public understanding of AI, and FoMO, as well as the history of AI. These areas of importance are discussed with reference to these guiding articles, and other articles found by snowballing (citation chaining) [20], below the table

Table 1: Principal literature reviewed

№	Author(s)	Year	Title
[5]	Naji	2024	Employing artificial intelligence techniques to make films
[6]	Owsley and Greenwood	2024	Awareness and perception of artificial intelligence operationalized integration in news media industry and society
[10]	Karnouskos	2020	Artificial Intelligence in Digital Media: The Era of Deepfakes
[11]	Giansiracusa	2021	How Algorithms Create and Prevent Fake News: Exploring the Impacts of social media, Deepfakes, GPT-3, and more
[14]	Munoriyarwa, Chiumbu and Motsaathebe	2023	Artificial Intelligence Practices in Everyday News Production: The Case of South Africa's Mainstream Newsrooms
[15]	Nader *et al.*	2024	Public understanding of artificial intelligence through entertainment media
[16]	Ouchchy, Coin, and Dubljević	2020	AI in the headlines: the portrayal of the ethical issues of artificial intelligence in the media
[29]	Council of Europe	2024	The History of Artificial Intelligence
[42]	Yang, Li, and Lyu	2019	Exposing Deep Fakes Using Inconsistent Head Poses

№	Author(s)	Year	Title
[57]	Milyavskaya *et al.*	2018	Fear of missing out: prevalence, dynamics, and consequences of experiencing FOMO
[58]	Modzelewski	2020	FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) – An Educational and Behavioral Problem in Times of New Communication Forms
[60]	Parmar	2022	Understanding the Fear of Missing Out
[61]	Barry and Wong	2020	Fear of missing out (FoMO): A generational phenomenon or an individual difference?
[66]	Alt	2017	Students' social media engagement and fear of missing out (FoMO) in a diverse classroom
[67]	Al-Furaih and Al-Awidi	2021	Fear of missing out (FoMO) among undergraduate students in relation to attention distraction and learning disengagement in lectures

From the literature reviewed it is clear that media, both mainstream media and social media are already making strong use of AI applications. Whilst most of that use is legitimate and positive because it is controlled, and applied by companies with ethical standards, there is also an element which has a negative aspect. AI in digital media has been used to promote FoMO, develop "Fake News", and create "Deepfakes". Although these uses of AI in digital media are unethical, mostly they are not actually illegal. This makes it hard to impose any control on these uses without international agreement and such use also undermines the credibility and reliability of all digital media – if ordinary users cannot detect the fakes, then they cannot believe any news story, as they all become equally "true".

In recent research conducted by the Columbia University's graduate school of journalism and reported by Al Jazeera:

"The findings suggest that publishers still face significant challenges with generative AI tools' tendency to invent or distort information, whether or not they allow OpenAI access to their content" [68].

This clearly indicates that there is still a problem with integrating this type of generative AI into mainstream media, despite attempts to address the issue.

Nevertheless, it is not the lack of accreditation of the source which is problematic for journalists and media platforms. The issue which is of the greatest concern is the *"tendency to invent or distort information"* [68], which must be an issue connected to algorithmic bias [70]. Since this is an acknowledged issue with AI, it must be an area where future research should be concentrated.

However, even when this in-built bias has been overcome, there will need to be a concentration on the generative AI applications "unlearning" their existing training or knowledge and using the new, unbiassed, algorithms for any future news stories which they generate.

5. Conclusion

This study adds value to the discussion on the use of AI in media by combining psychological, technical, and ethical perspectives into a single framework. A review of previous studies shows that these areas have often been examined separately, overlooking how they are connected. By bringing together evidence on ethical guidelines, user behavior, misinformation risks, and public trust, the study offers a clearer understanding of how AI affects the credibility of media. It presents two main recommendations: clearly labelling AI-generated content and creating an international framework that addresses ethical considerations. These recommendations are based on the study's findings and align with new industry practices, such as the Content Authenticity Initiative. Overall, the study contributes to academic knowledge while also providing practical guidance for media organizations adopting AI.

The research question which this study set out to was related to the impact that the use of AI would have on the media industry in the future.

Although there is no simple answer to this, as it depends, in part, on future developments of AI and technology, it is apparent that, unless media companies take action now, they will increasingly be viewed as unreliable and untrustworthy, or will create partisan support among users – some will believe everything on one media channel and

nothing on another, whilst others will "follow" another channel. There are at least two steps which could be taken that may be effective.

The first of these would be to create and agree on an international code of ethics for the use of AI in digital media. This would ensure that legitimate digital media platforms could display a logo indicating that they were signatories to the code, and content on their platform would be considered to be legitimate and transparent. The second step which the media companies could take to improve the levels of public trust in the content they publish would be to clearly indicate any content that was created by an AI application, or where the content was created with AI assistance. This would also ensure that users were not only aware of the possibility of content, particularly images, may not be genuine, but also that the media company was being honest and open by disclosing this fact.

Nevertheless, this only addresses part of the credibility issue if generative AI is to be used by mainstream media in the production of news stories. In the longer term there is a need for additional research into the issue, because it is not simply a case of providing the source of a news story or image – it is also essential that the information and image are not misleading.

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Author Biography

My name is Dr. Afrah Mulla Ali, and I am from Kuwait. I began my academic journey at the University of Salamanca in Spain, where I obtained my bachelor's degree in 2006 in Spanish Language and Literature. I continued at the same university, in 2008 I earned my master's degree with distinction in Advanced Translation Studies: Perspectives and Methods. In 2011, I completed my PhD in Translation and Intercultural Communication at the University of Salamanca with highest honors, presenting a dissertation entitled "The Splendour of the World of Kuwaiti Stories and Their Translation into Spanish from an Ideological and Cultural Perspective."

I also hold a Diploma in Spanish-Arabic/Arabic-Spanish Translation from the University of Toledo, Spain (Academy of Translators), and have been awarded the Gold Medal of the European Charter for Excellence in Languages.

In recognition of my achievements, I was appointed Ambassador of the University of Salamanca and its official representative in Kuwait. I am also the first Kuwaiti and Arab woman to receive the distinguished titles of Ambassador of the Spanish Language, Culture, and Literature in the Arab World—an honor that I carry with great pride and responsibility.

Currently, I serve as a Professor, lecturer, and supervisor of Spanish at the University of Kuwait, as well as a translator, interpreter, and editor at the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), specializing in Spanish-Arabic translation.