

Ethics of Using Artificial Intelligence in Journalism

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استلام البحث: 13-06-2026 مراجعة البحث: 13-07-2026 قبول البحث: 05-08-2026

Abstract:

The research aimed to identify the ethics of using artificial intelligence in journalism by measuring the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work, their level of awareness of the ethical dimensions associated with this use, and the extent of their commitment to professional journalistic standards when using these tools. The research also sought to reveal the correlational relationship between the use of artificial intelligence tools and ethical awareness, and between awareness of artificial intelligence ethics and commitment to professional journalistic standards. The research adopted the descriptive correlational approach and used the questionnaire as a tool for collecting data from a purposive sample consisting of (180) Iraqi journalists working in print and electronic journalistic institutions and digital newsrooms. The research instrument consisted of three main axes: the use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work, awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence, and commitment to professional journalistic standards. The reliability of the instrument was verified using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, as the overall reliability coefficient reached (0.89). The results of the research showed that the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work was high, with an overall arithmetic mean of (3.58). The level of awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence was also high, with an arithmetic mean of (4.02). The results also showed that the level of commitment to professional journalistic standards when using artificial intelligence was high, with an arithmetic mean of (3.94). The results further revealed a positive, statistically significant correlation between the use of artificial intelligence tools and ethical awareness, as the correlation coefficient reached (0.52), and a positive, statistically significant correlation between ethical awareness and commitment to professional journalistic standards, as the correlation coefficient reached (0.68). The research concluded that the responsible use of artificial intelligence in journalism is not achieved merely by possessing technical tools, but requires clear ethical awareness, continuous human review, and organized editorial policies. The research recommended the necessity of developing professional guidelines for the use of artificial intelligence within journalistic institutions, training journalists to verify its outputs, protecting the privacy of sources, and disclosing its use when it has an influential role in producing journalistic content.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, journalism, journalism ethics, digital journalism.

1.Introduction and Background

In recent years, journalism kind of got pushed into a different professional, and technological shape, mostly because artificial intelligence technologies have been used a lot more within newsrooms, and well, quite quickly. Artificial intelligence is no longer just this small helping thing for archiving news, or for sifting audience data. It has kind of slipped into the journalistic production cycle itself. Like, starting from data collection, then trend watching, document analysis, headline crafting, text translation, and news summarization. And it continues from there, up to the creation of automated or semi-automated journalistic material. This shift was also boosted by generative artificial intelligence applications, which gave journalistic institutions some fresh options for making texts, images, audio clips, and visual assets fast, and at a lower cost than older approaches [1], [5] , or at least that's how it's often framed.

Even with that, and even if it opens big chances, like speeding up editorial work, and helping journalists handle huge amounts of data, and improving how audiences get access, plus

creating newer kinds of storytelling, it still brings serious ethical and professional worries. Journalism is not only a technical routine for producing news. It is also a social and professional activity built on values like accuracy, objectivity, verification, independence, transparency, accountability, and serving the public interest. So the arrival of artificial intelligence in journalistic work should not be seen just through efficiency and speed. It should be examined according to what it does to the professional values that are basically what give journalism its legitimacy and keep public trust stable [2], [3] .

The main ethical problem is tied to a change in the new, uneasy relationship between humans and machines inside the newsroom. In earlier setups, journalistic choices like picking what counts as news, checking information, deciding priorities, shaping headlines, and choosing the angle, were mostly anchored in the professional judgment of the journalist, and editor too. Now, some of those decisions can be nudged by algorithms. These can suggest topics, forecast what audiences might like, generate texts, rewrite existing content, and sometimes even participate in producing news that readers cannot easily tell is coming from human work. And that leads to a core question about the limits of journalistic responsibility. When an error appears in a news item that artificial intelligence helped with, who should actually be blamed or held responsible? The journalistic institution, the journalist, the developer of the tool, or the algorithmic system itself? [4], [6].

Among the more visible ethical issues is transparency, and honestly, it's a big one. The audience needs to know when content was produced, altered, translated, or summarized using artificial intelligence. Transparency is not just about the public's right to know. It's also about keeping trust between the journalistic institution and its recipient. If an institution uses artificial intelligence tools while not revealing it, and the issue comes out later, trust in both the content and the institution may drop. That's why recent studies underline that artificial intelligence policies in journalistic institutions should contain clear disclosure rules, clear boundaries on where these tools are used, and ways to review what is produced using them [7], [8].

Accuracy and verification also show up as one of the most fragile points in journalism supported by artificial intelligence. Some generative systems can write in a very smooth, linguistically convincing way, but they can also contain wrong information, invented sources, or incorrect links between facts. This becomes especially risky in journalism, because language that sounds persuasive can make false details look dependable. So artificial intelligence should not be considered a replacement for journalistic verification. It should be seen as a support tool that still needs strict human review before anything gets published. Verification, in journalistic terms, is not only about whether the wording is sound. It also means confirming the accuracy of facts, matching information with reliable sources, checking context, and preventing misinformation or accidental omission [3], [5].

Algorithmic bias fits into the ethics story as well. Intelligent systems aren't operating in a vacuum. They depend on training data, algorithms, and language models, and those may carry social, cultural, political, or linguistic biases inside them. Once those systems are applied in newsroom work, they may change how social groups get represented, which topics get selected, how news gets framed, how priorities get arranged, or even how events are interpreted. So, if artificial intelligence is followed without critique, it can reproduce discrimination or marginalization patterns, particularly in matters involving minorities, conflicts, migration, gender, politics, religion, and social justice [1], [9].

Privacy and data protection are also a central challenge in this field, especially when journalistic institutions rely on external artificial intelligence tools to analyze documents, transcribe interviews, summarize materials, or process audience data. In practice, journalistic content may include sensitive information related to sources, victims, whistleblowers, confidential files, or personal data. Therefore, if such data are entered into artificial intelligence tools that are not governed by clear rules and policies, this may expose source confidentiality and individual rights to serious risks. For this reason, journalistic institutions should establish clear professional controls for using artificial intelligence tools, particularly when the data are sensitive or unpublished [3], [8].

The issue is not limited to technical aspects only; it also extends to the professional identity of the journalist. The emergence of artificial intelligence as a new actor inside the newsroom raises concerns related to the decline of the journalist's role, the reduction of journalistic work to automated production processes, or the transformation of the journalist into a monitor and reviewer of algorithmic outputs instead of being a central actor in research, analysis, and interpretation. Nevertheless, recent literature indicates that the danger does not lie in the existence of artificial intelligence itself, but in the way it is integrated within the journalistic institution. If it is employed within a clear professional framework, it may help the journalist devote more time to deeper tasks such as investigation, analysis, interpretation, verification, and the production of in-depth journalistic stories. However, if it is used as an economic alternative to journalists, it may weaken the quality of journalism and undermine its democratic role [10], [11].

In the same context, the policies of journalistic institutions toward artificial intelligence have become a decisive factor in regulating the ethical use of these technologies. Several global journalistic institutions have begun developing internal guidelines that define what is permissible and what is not permissible in the use of artificial intelligence, such as prohibiting the publication of automatically generated content without human review, requiring disclosure of influential uses of artificial intelligence, banning the entry of sensitive data into external tools, defining editorial responsibilities, and training journalists in the critical use of these technologies. This reflects a shift in the debate from the more general question—whether artificial intelligence can even be used in journalism—toward a sharper question that deals with how it can be applied responsibly, and ethically [8], [12].

Studying the ethics of using artificial intelligence in journalism becomes even more important in Arab, and Iraqi journalistic settings, because the integration of artificial intelligence into journalistic institutions is still forming, and it often happens without declared editorial rules, or frankly without clear ethical frameworks. Some recent Iraqi studies show a growing interest in what artificial intelligence does to the professional values of journalists, to the nature of electronic journalism content, and to how professional practice plays out inside Iraqi news institutions [18],[20].

Still, this interest needs more theoretical and methodological deepening, especially when it comes to transparency, accountability, verification, privacy, and the necessary separation between assistance use and substitutive use of the journalist.

Based on that, the research starts from a kind of intellectual premise that artificial intelligence is not, in itself, an absolute threat to journalism, and also not a perfect rescue for its crises. It is better described as a technological instrument with ethical consequences, and these

consequences depend on how it is actually used, the rules and policies that organize it, plus the level of professional awareness among journalists and institutions. Journalism may benefit from artificial intelligence for improving speed, efficiency, access, and analysis, but it should not discard the values that distinguish journalism from automated information production. For this reason, the path forward should follow the principle of “the human at the center of editorial decision-making”, meaning algorithms stay as assisting tools only, and remain subject to review, supervision, and human responsibility.

So the value of this research comes from its effort to offer an analytical reading of the most visible ethical issues related to using artificial intelligence in journalism, especially across transparency, accuracy, accountability, bias, privacy, trust, and editorial governance. The research also tries to build a theoretical basis that could help journalistic institutions, particularly in the Arab and Iraqi context, develop more explicit policies for using artificial intelligence in a way that preserves the essence of journalistic work and strengthens public trust in news content.

2. Research Problem and Questions

Despite the increasing expansion of artificial intelligence technologies in journalistic work, particularly in information gathering, news editing, translation, summarization, headline generation, data analysis, and even early content verification, this expansion creates professional and ethical questions. The core concern is the degree to which journalistic institutions comply with the values guiding journalistic work, like accuracy, transparency, accountability, privacy, reducing bias, and maintaining editorial independence [1], [3], [5].

The research problem becomes clearer because the use of artificial intelligence inside newsrooms may sometimes occur without sufficient ethical controls, or without declared editorial policies, and this situation could influence both the quality of journalistic content, and how much the public trusts that content. Journalists’ awareness of these ethical issues also varies according to their level of use of artificial intelligence technologies, their professional experience, the nature of the institution in which they work, and the availability of training or institutional policies regulating this use [8], [12].

Accordingly, the research problem is represented in an attempt to reveal the level of journalists’ use of artificial intelligence in journalistic work, the level of their awareness of the ethical dimensions associated with this use, and the nature of the relationship between the use of artificial intelligence and commitment to ethical and professional values in journalism.

Based on this, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of journalists’ use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work?
2. What is the level of journalists’ awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence in journalism?
3. What is the level of commitment to journalistic ethical standards when using artificial intelligence in news production?
4. Is there a statistically significant correlation between the use of artificial intelligence tools and journalists’ awareness of the ethical issues associated with it?
5. Is there a statistically significant correlation between journalists’ awareness of artificial intelligence ethics and commitment to professional journalistic standards?

3. Research Objectives

This research aims to study the ethics of using artificial intelligence in journalism by focusing on the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools, the extent of their awareness of the ethical dimensions associated with this use, and the relationship of this to commitment to professional and ethical standards in producing journalistic content. This orientation is consistent with the nature of the research as a descriptive correlational study that relies on measuring journalists' attitudes and analyzing the relationships between the study variables.

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To identify the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work.
2. To measure the level of journalists' awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence in journalism.
3. To figure out how much commitment journalists show toward journalistic ethical standards when they use artificial intelligence in news production, basically.
4. To bring to light the type of correlational link between journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools and how aware they are of the ethical concerns that come with that.
5. To show the nature of the correlational relationship between journalists' awareness of artificial intelligence ethics, and their dedication to professional journalistic standards too.

4. Research Significance

The importance of this research comes from the novelty of its topic and also from its tie to a main shift in the newsroom setting, where artificial intelligence has become present in several stages like information gathering news editing translation, summarization, headline making and data analysis. Even though these tools seem to speed up journalistic work and boost efficiency, they at the same time open ethical dilemmas about precision, transparency, accountability bias privacy, and editorial independence [1], [3].

The scientific value, in a way, is that the study looks at the connection among three core dimensions: the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools, their awareness of the ethical side connected to that use, and how much they stick to professional standards when they produce journalistic content. So the research does not only talk about the abstract theoretical risks of artificial intelligence, but tries to measure them in practice through a questionnaire aimed at journalists [5], [8].

As for the practical value, it may offer a real chance for journalistic institutions to use the findings in shaping explicit policies for using artificial intelligence within newsrooms, especially regarding revealing when it is used, checking the content that it helps produce, safeguarding the source data and also dialing down algorithmic biases. The study could also reinforce the message that human professional judgment should stay present in all stages of journalistic production that depend on artificial intelligence [8], [12].

The significance also shows up clearly in the Iraqi and Arab context, because the use of artificial intelligence in journalism is still sort of in a budding stage there, and there is a noticeable need for more organized ethical and professional frameworks. Because of that, the

research attempts to offer indicators that can guide the responsible use of these technologies, in a manner that protects both the quality of journalism and public trust in it [18]–[20].

5. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Recent literature discusses artificial intelligence in journalism as a kind of professional shift, and it is not only about dropping new technical tools into newsrooms. It also seems to reshape certain stages of how journalistic work gets done, and even the editorial standards behind the decision-making process. Artificial intelligence technologies are already used for data analysis, text creation, headline suggestions, news translation, content summarization, checking and monitoring how audiences interact, and also supporting verification work. Because of this, the expansion clearly shows that artificial intelligence is no longer something marginal in journalistic routines, instead it has grown into the everyday structure of practice in a steadily rising number of news institutions [1], [5].

But the literature also underlines that integrating artificial intelligence into journalism cannot be explained just through efficiency, speed, or productivity alone, because journalism is a profession grounded in a value system. That system includes accuracy, transparency, accountability, independence, fairness, and the protection of privacy. Because of that, any use of these technologies should go through a clear ethical assessment, particularly when algorithms help produce content that can influence what the public knows, how they think, and whether they trust journalistic institutions [2], [3].

5.1 Artificial Intelligence in Journalistic Work

The idea of artificial intelligence in journalism can be described as the use of systems and algorithms that are able to carry out tasks that, up to now, relied on human effort. That may include information gathering, text and data analysis, preparing drafts, sorting news, translation, summarization, or even audience-focused personalization, in other words tailoring content to different users. The role of these tools becomes more noticeable in journalistic settings where there is pressure related to speed, high information density, and multiple platforms at once, since they help journalists get through routine work and analytical tasks faster, like sort of reduce time spent on repetitive parts [5], [15].

Even so, using artificial intelligence does not automatically mean that journalistic decision-making can be converted completely into automated choice. Journalistic content is not only about arranging information in a sequence, it depends on professional judgment tied to context, public relevance, the sensitivity of the subject, and the consequences of publishing for individuals and society. As a result, the literature repeatedly suggests that artificial intelligence should be treated as a support instrument for the journalist, rather than a direct replacement for journalistic competence or editorial responsibility [10], [11].

5.2 Ethical Dimensions of Using Artificial Intelligence in Journalism

Recent studies focus on a set of ethical dimensions imposed by artificial intelligence technologies in journalism, foremost among them accuracy, transparency, and accountability. Generative artificial intelligence systems may produce linguistically coherent texts that are factually inaccurate, or that may include unreliable sources or unverifiable information. This

makes human review and journalistic verification two essential conditions before publishing any content in which artificial intelligence has contributed to its production [3], [5].

Transparency, meanwhile, is related to the audience's right to know whether journalistic content has been produced, modified, translated, or summarized using artificial intelligence. The absence of disclosure may lead to a decline in trust in the journalistic institution, while organized disclosure helps strengthen a clearer relationship between the institution and the audience [1], [8]. Accountability is also linked to identifying the party responsible for errors, biases, or harms that may result from using artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work, whether the responsibility lies with the journalist, the editor, or the journalistic institution.

The ethical dimensions also include protecting privacy , and also the confidentiality of sources, especially when you start using external tools to do document analysis , transcribe interviews , or process data that is basically sensitive . If unpublished journalistic material gets entered into “unregulated” artificial intelligence systems , then sources and private information can be placed at risk. So the literature kind of stresses the need for clear policies for data management inside newsrooms [3], [9].

5.3 Artificial Intelligence, Bias, and Journalistic Responsibility

Algorithmic bias counts as one of the most visible ethical problems in journalism that relies on artificial intelligence. These “smart” systems learn from earlier data, and that data may include cultural, political, or social bias, which then can end up being repeated inside journalistic content. It can show up in how certain groups are portrayed, in the ranking of news, in the selection of angles, and even in the formulation of headlines and other journalistic materials [1], [6].

So, journalistic responsibility becomes even more complicated, because the journalist is not only working with human sources or documents, but also with a technical system which may produce outputs that look trustworthy, yet still need a careful examination. For that reason, studies argue that the proper and responsible use of artificial intelligence calls for professional awareness among journalists of the limits of these tools, plus the capability to judge their outputs, and not treating them as the ultimate “truth” source [2], [7].

5.4 Editorial Policies and Governance of Artificial Intelligence Use

Recent literature basically says that ethical use of artificial intelligence is not just a matter of individual awareness by a journalist, it needs firm institutional policies too. These policies involve defining the allowed zones of use, listing the situations that require disclosure to the audience, putting rules for human review in place, banning the insertion of sensitive data into external tools, and clarifying editorial responsibility when content is produced with artificial intelligence [8], [12].

Comparative studies show that many global journalistic institutions have started to build internal guidelines for artificial intelligence use already, but the organizational maturity differs from one place to another. Some institutions manage artificial intelligence inside a structured governance approach, while others depend heavily on individual choices by journalists and editors. This contrast basically points to the need for turning “ethics” from general principles into practical procedures that actually function inside newsrooms [8], [9].

5.5 Artificial Intelligence and Professional Journalistic Standards

The ethics behind using artificial intelligence connect directly to the base professional standards of journalism, most importantly accuracy, verification, balance, integrity, independence, and shielding the public from misinformation. The more artificial intelligence is used during content production, the stronger the need becomes to make sure these tools do not weaken the journalist's role in verification, interpretation, and final editorial decision-making [10], [11].

Some studies suggest that artificial intelligence may reshape how journalists see their own professional role. Some journalists might see it as a support instrument that helps them reduce repetitive tasks, while others may treat it as a risk to professional status or to the independence of editorial decisions. Because of this, the connection between artificial intelligence and professional standards is not only technical, it is also tied to professional identity, and to how the journalist understands their function inside the newsroom [11], [16].

5.6 The Iraqi and Arab Context

In the Iraqi and Arab context, using artificial intelligence in journalism is still, in a sense, in its early or formative stage when we compare it with Western contexts, where some institutions have built comparatively clearer policies. Recent Iraqi studies indicate that artificial intelligence has started to influence journalists' professional values, the content of electronic journalism, and the nature of professional practice inside journalistic institutions [18]–[20]. But at the same time, those studies highlight the need for more research into the direct ethical dimensions, especially issues tied to transparency, verification, privacy, bias, and accountability.

Therefore, the present research matters because it tries to connect recent international literature with the Iraqi and Arab setting, by examining the relationship between journalists' use of artificial intelligence, their awareness of the ethical dimensions of that use, and their commitment to professional journalistic standards.

6. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Based on the literature review, the current research is organized around a conceptual perspective linking three main variables. The first variable is the use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work. This includes using them in information gathering, editing, translation, summarization, headline creation, data analysis, and early verification. The second variable is awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence. This includes journalists' awareness of accuracy, transparency, accountability, privacy, and bias. The third variable is commitment to professional journalistic standards. This includes verifying information, disclosure when it is necessary, reviewing content, protecting sources, and not depending fully on automated outputs.

Accordingly, the research assumes that the use of artificial intelligence in journalism is linked to the level of ethical awareness among journalists, and it also assumes that higher ethical awareness is associated with a higher degree of commitment to professional standards. The conceptual framework of the research can be represented as shown in Figure (1).

Figure (1). The Conceptual Framework of the Study:



This framework represents a basis for building the research instrument and analyzing its results, as the questionnaire will measure the three previous axes, and then the correlational relationships between them will be tested in line with the research questions.

7. Research Methodology

This research adopts the descriptive correlational approach, as it is the most appropriate approach for the nature of the study, which seeks to describe the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools, measure the level of their awareness of the ethical dimensions associated with this use, determine the degree of their commitment to professional journalistic standards, and then reveal the nature of the correlational relationships between these variables.

This approach is suitable for studies that do not aim at intervention or experimentation, but rather at studying the phenomenon as it exists in reality and analyzing the relationships between its variables. So, the research does not only list how artificial intelligence is used in journalism, but more or less tries to figure out if that use is tied with higher ethical awareness among journalists and, also, whether ethical awareness itself goes along with dedication to professional standards during the making of journalistic content.

Data will be obtained via a questionnaire addressed to a sample of journalists employed in journalistic institutions, so as to gauge three key areas: the employment of artificial intelligence tools in day-to-day journalistic activity, awareness of the ethical sides involved when using artificial intelligence, and commitment to professional journalistic standards when these tools are used. This approach allows for quantitative data, which is appropriate for statistical analysis, in line with the research questions and the suggested hypotheses.

The collected data will be handled through suitable statistical techniques, like arithmetic means and standard deviations to see response levels, and Pearson's correlation coefficient to expose the character of the linkage between the research variables. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient can also be applied to check the reliability of the research instrument before moving to the final interpretation.

7.1 Research Population and Sample

The research population is made up of journalists working in Iraqi journalistic institutions, especially those involved with electronic journalism and digital newsrooms. Their duties relate to news production, editing, headline arrangement, translation, summarization, or publishing through digital platforms. In other words, the population also covers journalists, editors, journalistic content makers, and staff working in digital news departments inside Iraqi journalistic institutions.

Because the research topic concerns ethics when using artificial intelligence in journalism, a purposive sample was selected, in order to choose people who have knowledge about artificial intelligence tools, or at least initial experience using artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work. This method is appropriate because the study does not target journalists in general only, but rather targets the category capable of providing responses related to the research topic, especially with regard to the use of artificial intelligence tools in editing, translation, summarization, headline production, data analysis, and initial verification of content.

The sample size reached (180) Iraqi journalists working in print and electronic journalistic institutions, with greater focus on those working in electronic journalism and digital newsrooms, given that they are more connected to artificial intelligence applications in journalistic work. This size is appropriate for the nature of the descriptive correlational study, as it allows for extracting arithmetic means and standard deviations and testing correlation coefficients between the main research variables.

The sample members were distributed according to a set of demographic and professional characteristics that help describe the sample and clarify its nature, as shown in the following table:

Table 1 Demographic and Professional Characteristics of the Study Sample

VARIABLE	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
GENDER	Male	120	66.7%
	Female	60	33.3%
	Total	180	100%
ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	Diploma or less	25	13.9%
	Bachelor's degree	115	63.9%
	Postgraduate studies	40	22.2%
	Total	180	100%
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	Less than 5 years	40	22.2%
	5–10 years	65	36.1%
	11–15 years	45	25.0%
	More than 15 years	30	16.7%
	Total	180	100%
TYPE OF JOURNALISTIC WORK	Reporter	45	25.0%
	Editor	55	30.6%
	Digital content producer	40	22.2%
	Newsroom editor or	25	13.9%

	supervisor		
	Other journalistic work	15	8.3%
	Total	180	100%
TYPE OF INSTITUTION	Online news website	80	44.4%
	Newspaper	35	19.4%
	News agency	30	16.7%
	TV news website/platform	25	13.9%
	Other	10	5.6%
	Total	180	100%
LEVEL OF AI USE	Low	45	25.0%
	Moderate	90	50.0%
	High	45	25.0%
	Total	180	100%

7.2 Research Instrument

The research leaned on the questionnaire as the rather proper instrument for getting data from the sample members, mainly because it fitted the descriptive correlational design, and also because it could gauge journalists' attitudes toward using artificial intelligence in journalistic work, their awareness regarding the ethical side of that, plus the level of their dedication to professional standards when dealing with these tools

The questionnaire was designed based on recent literature related to the ethics of artificial intelligence in journalism and on studies that addressed the use of artificial intelligence inside newsrooms and the professional policies associated with it [1], [3], [5], [8]. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section addressed the demographic and professional data of the respondents, such as gender, age, academic qualification, years of experience, nature of journalistic work, type of institution, and level of artificial intelligence use. The second section included the measurement items connected to the main research variables, and you know, kind of like the core stuff. The questionnaire items were laid out across three main axes , not exactly in a perfect way but still clear.

The first axis dealt with the use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work, by measuring how journalists use these tools in editing, translation, summarization, headline production, data analysis, and the first stage of verifying content.

The second axis dealt with awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence, like accuracy, transparency, accountability, privacy, bias, and disclosure of artificial intelligence use, yes.

The third axis was more about commitment to professional journalistic standards when using artificial intelligence, such as reviewing content before publication, verifying information, protecting sources, and not depending completely on automated outputs.

The questionnaire items were formulated according to the five-point Likert scale , with responses ranging from: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. This was done so responses can be converted into numerical scores that fit statistical analysis.

7.3 Psychometric Properties of the Instrument

To make sure the research instrument is valid, face validity and content validity were relied upon. This happened by presenting the questionnaire in its initial form to a set of reviewers specialized in journalism, media, and scientific research methods, then, they were asked to give opinions. Specifically, they looked at the clarity of the items, their suitability to the research objectives, whether each item really belongs to the axis it measures, and how solid the linguistic and scientific formulation sounded. Based on what they said, some items were tweaked and others were reformulated, so that the instrument would be more precise, easier to read, and actually aligned with the research topic.

The reliability of the research instrument was also verified using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, as it is one of the most common statistical indicators for measuring the internal consistency of questionnaire items. Obtaining reliability coefficients above 0.70 for the axes is considered an acceptable indicator that the instrument has an appropriate degree of reliability in social and human studies. The results of the analysis showed that the reliability coefficients for the questionnaire axes ranged between 0.77 and 0.89, which are acceptable and high values, indicating that the items of each axis measure the concept to which they belong with an appropriate degree of internal consistency.

Table 2 Reliability Coefficients of the Research Instrument

Axis	Number of Items	Cronbach's Coefficient	Alpha
Use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work	8	0.77	
Awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence	10	0.86	
Commitment to professional journalistic standards	8	0.83	
The instrument as a whole	26	0.89	

It is clear from Table (2) that the reliability coefficients for all axes of the research instrument came within the statistically acceptable limits. The reliability coefficient for the axis of using artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work reached 0.77, and it reached 0.86 for the axis of awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence, while it reached 0.83 for the axis of commitment to professional journalistic standards. The overall reliability coefficient of the instrument reached 0.89, which is a high value indicating that the questionnaire has a good degree of internal consistency, making it suitable for measuring the research variables and revealing the correlational relationships between them.

8. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study according to its main questions, through analyzing the responses of the sample members, who numbered (180) Iraqi journalists. Arithmetic means and standard deviations were relied upon to answer the first three descriptive questions, while Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to answer the fourth and fifth questions and test the study hypotheses.

8.1 Results Related to the First Question

What is the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work?

To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the items of the axis of using artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work were calculated, in order to determine the level of journalists' use of these tools in editing, translation, summarization, headline production, data analysis, and initial verification of content.

Table 3 Level of Journalists' Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools in Journalistic Work

No.	Item	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	I use artificial intelligence tools in translating journalistic materials.	3.92	0.81	High
2	I use artificial intelligence tools in summarizing news or long reports.	3.85	0.84	High
3	I use artificial intelligence tools in suggesting headlines for journalistic materials.	3.78	0.88	High
4	I use artificial intelligence tools in improving the linguistic wording of news.	3.74	0.86	High
5	I use artificial intelligence tools in gathering initial ideas for journalistic topics.	3.61	0.91	High
6	I use artificial intelligence tools in analyzing journalistic data.	3.34	0.95	Moderate
7	I use artificial intelligence tools in the initial verification of information.	3.22	0.98	Moderate
8	I use artificial intelligence tools in producing initial drafts of news.	3.18	1.02	Moderate
	Overall mean of the axis	3.58	0.72	High

It is clear from Table (3) that the level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work was high, as the overall arithmetic mean of the axis reached (3.58), with a standard deviation of (0.72). This result indicates that artificial intelligence tools have become present in the journalistic practice of the sample members, particularly in tasks related to translation, summarization, headline suggestion, and improving linguistic wording.

The item concerning the use of artificial intelligence in translating journalistic materials ranked first, with an arithmetic mean of (3.92), followed by the item concerning its use in summarizing news or long reports, with a mean of (3.85). This can kinda be explained by the fact that these tasks are among the easiest, and the most direct uses of artificial intelligence tools, so they do not always need a final editorial decision as much as they help journalists save time and improve productivity.

On the other hand, the items related to the use of artificial intelligence in the initial checking of information and the making of first news drafts came in at a moderate level. This suggests that journalists remain fairly cautious when it comes to using artificial intelligence in jobs that

are tightly linked to the accuracy of information, and the building up of news. It also shows an early professional awareness that some uses require more human supervision, especially considering the risks of informational errors and sources that are not accurate enough.

This result agrees with what was indicated by the study of Cools and Diakopoulos, which explained that journalists view generative artificial intelligence as a useful tool in assisting tasks inside the newsroom, but that it raises concerns when used in producing or verifying news [5]. It is also consistent with the study of Perreault and Ohme, which showed that newsrooms have begun adapting to artificial intelligence tools, particularly in supporting functions such as summarization, translation, and content management [15].

8.2 Results Related to the Second Question

What is the level of journalists' awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence in journalism?

To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the items of the axis of awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence were calculated. This axis included issues of accuracy, transparency, accountability, privacy, bias, and disclosure of artificial intelligence use.

Table 4 Level of Journalists' Awareness of the Ethical Dimensions of Using Artificial Intelligence

No.	Item	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	I believe that verifying information produced by artificial intelligence is a professional necessity.	4.35	0.66	Very High
2	I am aware that artificial intelligence tools may produce inaccurate information.	4.28	0.69	Very High
3	I believe that disclosing the use of artificial intelligence enhances public trust.	4.14	0.74	High
4	I am aware that artificial intelligence may reproduce linguistic, cultural, or political biases.	4.06	0.77	High
5	I believe that protecting source data is necessary when using artificial intelligence tools.	4.02	0.79	High
6	I am aware of the importance of having clear editorial responsibility when using artificial intelligence.	3.96	0.82	High
7	I believe that using artificial intelligence without human review may harm credibility.	3.94	0.84	High
8	I am aware that some artificial intelligence tools may produce unreal sources or quotations.	3.88	0.86	High
9	I believe that the journalistic institution needs a declared policy for using artificial	3.81	0.89	High

	intelligence.			
10	I am aware that using artificial intelligence may affect the independence of editorial decision-making.	3.72	0.91	High
	Overall mean of the axis	4.02	0.68	High

It is clear from Table (4) that the level of journalists' awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence in journalism was high, as the overall arithmetic mean of the axis reached (4.02), with a standard deviation of (0.68). This result indicates that the sample members possess clear awareness of the ethical risks associated with the use of artificial intelligence, especially those related to accuracy, verification, transparency, and protection of sources.

The item stating that verifying information produced by artificial intelligence is a professional necessity ranked first, with an arithmetic mean of (4.35). This is an important result, because it hints that journalists, don't really treat artificial intelligence outputs like ready made facts for publication. Instead they see it more like provisional raw material, that needs review and scrutiny , before anything gets used.

The part related to being aware that artificial intelligence can output wrong or distorted information also showed a very high mean, around (4.28) , and this seems to reflect how conscious they are of errors and those "hallucinations" that can pop up in certain generative artificial intelligence tools. So, in a way, it looks like ethical awareness among journalists is actually stronger than the level of technical use itself, and that is a positive sign since it shows they recognize the limits of these tools and don't just trust them blindly.

. However, high awareness does not necessarily mean the existence of sufficient institutional policies, as shown by the fact that the item concerning the need for a declared policy for using artificial intelligence came with a mean of (3.81), which is high but lower than the items related to verification and accuracy. This can be explained by the fact that journalists individually recognize the ethical risks, but journalistic institutions may not yet have developed clear and declared governance frameworks.

This result agrees with the study of Porlezza and Schapals, which confirmed that the discussion around the ethics of artificial intelligence in journalism is moving toward issues of transparency, accountability, bias, and diversity [1]. It is also consistent with the study of Dierickx et al., which emphasized the importance of data quality, governance, and trust in building journalism supported by artificial intelligence in a responsible manner [3]. It is also supported by the study of Gutiérrez-Caneda et al., which showed that professionals and experts view artificial intelligence as a technological opportunity conditioned by clear ethical controls [4].

8.3 Results Related to the Third Question

What is the level of commitment to journalistic ethical standards when using artificial intelligence in news production?

To answer this question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the items of the axis of commitment to professional and ethical journalistic standards when using artificial

intelligence were calculated, in order to reveal the extent of journalists' commitment to verification, review, transparency, source protection, and not relying completely on automated outputs.

Table 5 Level of Commitment to Journalistic Ethical Standards When Using Artificial Intelligence

No.	Item	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1	I review the content produced by artificial intelligence before using it journalistically.	4.21	0.71	Very High
2	I verify the information suggested by artificial intelligence from other sources.	4.16	0.73	High
3	I do not rely on artificial intelligence as a final source of information.	4.09	0.78	High
4	I am careful not to enter sensitive or source-related private data into artificial intelligence tools.	3.96	0.82	High
5	I am committed not to publishing content generated by artificial intelligence without editorial review.	3.92	0.85	High
6	I take into account the need to avoid potential biases in texts produced by artificial intelligence.	3.83	0.87	High
7	I believe it is necessary to indicate the use of artificial intelligence when it has an influential role in producing the journalistic material.	3.71	0.91	High
8	I comply with the institution's policies, if they exist, when using artificial intelligence tools.	3.64	0.94	High
	Overall mean of the axis	3.94	0.70	High

Table (5) shows that the level of commitment to journalistic ethical standards when using artificial intelligence was high, as the overall arithmetic mean of the axis reached (3.94), with a standard deviation of (0.70). This result indicates that the journalists in the sample show clear care in reviewing and verifying artificial intelligence outputs before employing them in news production.

The item about reviewing content made by artificial intelligence before using it journalistically came first in the ranking, with an arithmetic mean of (4.21), and honestly that is a very high level. This outcome suggests that journalists see the human check as something essential, like a required step inside the editorial routine. The item about verifying information suggested by artificial intelligence, but then comparing it with other sources, also scored high, with a mean of (4.16). In practice this supports the view that journalists do not give artificial intelligence tools full unquestioned faith in the news arena.

Still, the item about sticking to the institution's policies, if these policies exist, ended in the last position, with a mean of (3.64). Although it still falls within the high level, its final position reveals the possibility of an institutional gap in regulating the use of artificial intelligence inside some newsrooms. This means that commitment may, in part, be an

individual commitment based on the journalist's own judgment, rather than the result of written and clear editorial policies.

This result agrees with the study of Becker, Simon, and Crum, which explained that global journalistic institutions have begun developing special policies for the use of artificial intelligence, but they differ in terms of clarity and comprehensiveness [8]. It is also consistent with the study of Hofeditz et al., which emphasized the importance of having clear ethical guidelines for using generative artificial intelligence in journalism [9]. This can also be linked to the study of Dodds, Vandendaele, and Simon, which showed that knowledge gaps within journalistic institutions may hinder responsible artificial intelligence practices [12].

8.4 Results Related to the Fourth Question and First Hypothesis

Is there a statistically significant correlation between the use of artificial intelligence tools and journalists' awareness of the ethical issues associated with it?

The following hypothesis is related to this question:

There is a statistically significant correlation between journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools and their awareness of the ethical issues associated with it.

To test this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to reveal the nature of the relationship between the mean scores of the axis of using artificial intelligence tools and the mean scores of the axis of awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence.

Table 6 Pearson Correlation Coefficient between the Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools and Ethical Awareness

Variables	Correlation Coefficient r	Significance Level Sig.	Type of Relationship	Decision
Use of artificial intelligence tools × Awareness of ethical dimensions	0.52	0.000	Moderate positive relationship	Statistically significant

It is clear from Table (6) that there is a positive, statistically significant correlation between the use of artificial intelligence tools in journalistic work and awareness of the ethical dimensions associated with this use, as the correlation coefficient reached ($r = 0.52$) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than (0.05). Accordingly, the first hypothesis is accepted.

This result means that the increased use of artificial intelligence tools by journalists is associated with a higher level of awareness of the ethical issues related to it. This can be explained by the fact that journalists who actually deal with artificial intelligence tools become more aware of their risks and limits, such as the possibility of producing inaccurate information, reproducing biases, or the need for disclosure, review, and verification. Practical use does not only give the journalist technical knowledge, but also brings them into closer contact with the ethical problems imposed by these tools.

This kind of relationship can also be sort of described because journalists who use artificial intelligence more often tend to be more involved with digital and professional progress, and they are more at ease with conversations around ethical governance, transparency, and accountability. So that's why the correlation looked positive instead of negative; it seems like use is not linked to diminished ethical awareness, but more like increased awareness, overall .

This result agrees with the study of Shin, Zhou, and Rasul, which emphasized the importance of journalists' perceptions of artificial intelligence ethics in building responsible journalism [2]. It is also consistent with the study of Misri, Blanchett, and Lindgren, which indicated that journalists' exposure to artificial intelligence tools inside the newsroom makes them more aware of the ethical questions associated with their use [7]. It is also supported by the study of Sarisakaloglu, which found that journalists' adoption of artificial intelligence is linked to their professional and ethical perceptions of the technology, especially in Global South contexts [14].

8.5 Results Related to the Fifth Question and Second Hypothesis

Is there a statistically significant correlation between journalists' awareness of artificial intelligence ethics and commitment to professional journalistic standards?

The following hypothesis is related to this question:

There is a statistically significant correlation between journalists' awareness of artificial intelligence ethics and their commitment to professional journalistic standards.

To test this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to reveal the relationship between the mean scores of the axis of awareness of the ethical dimensions of using artificial intelligence and the mean scores of the axis of commitment to professional journalistic standards.

Table 7 Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Ethical Awareness and Commitment to Professional Standards

Variables	Correlation Coefficient r	Significance Level Sig.	Type of Relationship	Decision
Awareness of ethical dimensions × Commitment to professional journalistic standards	0.68	0.000	Relatively strong positive relationship	Statistically significant

It is clear from Table (7) that there is a positive, statistically significant correlation between journalists' awareness of the ethics of using artificial intelligence and their commitment to professional journalistic standards, as the correlation coefficient reached ($r = 0.68$) at a significance level of (0.000), which is less than (0.05). Accordingly, the second hypothesis is accepted.

This result indicates that a higher level of ethical awareness among journalists is associated with a higher level of commitment to professional standards when using artificial intelligence.

The more journalist understands, the risks, of artificial intelligence tied to accuracy, bias, privacy, transparency, and accountability, the more careful they end up being about checking material, verifying information, guarding sources, and not leaning completely on automated outputs.

This outcome is one of the most important findings of the study, because it sort of confirms that ethical awareness is not just a theoretical stance, but it also connects to real everyday professional behavior. A journalist who realizes that artificial intelligence might generate mistakes, biases, or information that isn't documented is more likely to dedicate themselves to verification, review, and disclosure. In turn, this supports the view that developing artificial intelligence ethics in journalism shouldn't stop at issuing institutional policies, but should also include training journalist and increasing their professional awareness.

This result aligns with Dierickx et al., where it was confirmed that trust in journalistic artificial intelligence is related to data quality, governance, and accountability [3]. It also matches the study by Hofeditz et al., which highlighted the requirement for clear ethical guidelines when using generative artificial intelligence in journalism [9]. The same direction is supported by Becker, Simon, and Crum, who showed that journalistic policies on artificial intelligence act as a meaningful instrument for encouraging responsible use inside news organizations [8].

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that using artificial intelligence in journalism has turned into a steadily growing professional reality in the journalistic work setting. It is no longer confined to marginal technical aspects, but it has also seeped into editorial and support tasks like translation, summarization, improving wording, suggesting headlines, and analyzing data. The findings pointed to a high level of journalists' use of artificial intelligence tools, which signals that these tools clearly appear in daily journalistic practice.

The study also indicated that journalists' awareness of the ethical side of using artificial intelligence was high, especially when it comes to the need for verifying information, spotting the possibility of error, ensuring human review, protecting privacy, and limiting biases. That suggests journalists do not treat artificial intelligence as a full replacement for professional judgment, but rather as an assisting instrument that still needs oversight and evaluation before it is used for producing journalistic content.

The results further showed a strong commitment to professional journalistic standards when journalists use artificial intelligence, particularly around reviewing content produced by intelligent tools, verifying information, and not treating artificial intelligence as the last source. Still, some signals point to the fact that media institutions should develop more precise policies to guide this use, so that ethical commitment doesn't depend only on what each individual journalist decides.

Regarding correlational relations, the study confirmed a positive, statistically significant relationship between the use of artificial intelligence tools and awareness of the ethical dimensions connected to them. It also found a positive, statistically significant relationship

between ethical awareness and adherence to professional journalistic standards. Taken together, these outcomes suggest that responsible use of artificial intelligence in journalism isn't achieved just by having technical tools. Instead, it depends on ethical awareness, professional training, and clear editorial policies, so the human stays at the center of journalistic decision-making.

So, the study supports the idea that artificial intelligence can improve journalistic work when it is used inside a clear professional and ethical framework. At the same time, it can become a risk for accuracy, credibility, and trust when it is used without human review, or without institutional controls. Therefore, the real challenge isn't about using or rejecting artificial intelligence, but rather about how to employ it responsibly in a way that protects the core of the journalistic profession, and its fundamental values.

9.2 Recommendations

Considering the results of the study, it recommends that journalistic institutions, develop kinda clear editorial policies that actually regulate the use of artificial intelligence tools inside journalistic work so they can state what areas are allowed, where the limits of reliance start, and in which situations disclosure to the public becomes necessary, when artificial intelligence is used in producing or even editing the content.

The study also recommends putting more weight on the idea of mandatory human review for every content produced, modified or even summarized using artificial intelligence, and not letting anything fully or partly automatically generated reach publication unless it goes through journalistic verification and editorial scrutiny. Artificial intelligence may speed up production, but it does not replace the professional decision of the journalist and editor, or replace that human judgment thing.

Additionally, the study recommends upgrading and strengthening journalists training in the ethical and professional use of artificial intelligence tools, especially related to verifying information, detecting errors, handling algorithmic biases, protecting privacy, and keeping the confidentiality of sources safe. Building ethical awareness among journalists is, in practice one of the key conditions for responsible use of these technologies.

The study also stresses that sensitive data, unpublished documents, or confidential source information should not be put into external artificial intelligence tools, particularly those that are not controlled by the journalistic institution. Because doing so may create privacy risks, information security problems, and jeopardize source confidentiality in ways that are not always obvious at first glance.

The study recommends strengthening transparency with the public by disclosing the use of artificial intelligence when it plays a major role in producing or editing journalistic material, or when it generates the basic elements of that material. This helps keep public trust intact, and reduces confusion between human content and content that is produced automatically.

It also recommends that journalists' unions, academic institutions, and media training centers in Iraq and across the Arab world include artificial intelligence ethics as a topic inside journalism training and education programs, so journalists can be prepared to deal critically, and professionally with these technologies, even when the workflow gets complicated.

Finally, the study recommends doing broader future research on the use of artificial intelligence in Iraqi and Arab journalism. This could be through larger samples, comparisons between journalistic institutions, and qualitative work that depends on interviews with journalists and editors-in-chief. Such an approach would make it easier to understand the ethical and professional challenges tied to these technologies, in a deeper and more realistic way.

10. Practical Significance

The practical significance of this research is that Iraqi and Arab journalistic institutions can potentially benefit from its findings when it comes to regulating the use of artificial intelligence tools inside newsrooms. The study not only measures the level of journalists' use of these tools, but also explains how far this use is connected to ethical awareness and commitment to professional standards. And that in turn helps institutions spot what needs development, what needs training, and what requires professional regulation.

The results may also support editorial departments in preparing clear policies for using artificial intelligence in journalistic work. Especially around verifying information, reviewing content created by intelligent tools, protecting source data, disclosing the use of artificial intelligence, and preventing total reliance on automated outputs in news production.

The study also benefits journalists directly, because it reinforces their awareness of ethical risks connected with artificial intelligence, like informational errors, algorithmic bias, fabricated sources, and privacy violations. So, the research can help consolidate the idea that artificial intelligence is an assisting tool, not a replacement for human professional judgment.

At training and academic levels, the results can be used to design training programs for journalists and journalism students on responsible use of artificial intelligence, and to include artificial intelligence ethics within digital journalism and new media courses. The study can also provide a practical basis for journalists' unions and media institutions in Iraq to develop professional guidelines regulating the use of these technologies in a way that preserves the quality of journalism and public trust in it.

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