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# Ethics of AI-Generated Content: Authenticity, Ownership, and Trust in Digital News Media

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ABSTRACT

Rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) to digital news media has changed the Speed, scale, personalization and distribution of news content. AI-generated news can be more efficient and accessible to a wider audience, but it also raises ethical concerns regarding truthfulness, copyright, and credibility. This paper critically analyzes these issues and proposes an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-generated news content. Ethical awareness for AI produced news content. The discussion is concerned with three interrelated aspects (1) authenticity of AI-generated content and misinformation; (2) authorship, intellectual property, and copyright issues related to AI-generated content; and (3) relationship between AI-mediated news production and audience trust. Based upon literature on media ethics, media law, AI-generated journalism, and algorithmic accountability, the paper integrates Gatekeeping Theory, Media Ethics, and Algorithmic Accountability to develop an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News. Authenticity, ownership, and trust constitute three ethical dimensions, while transparency, accountability, verifiability, and proportionality represent four principles of responsible AI-mediated journalism. Together, these dimensions and principles provide a conceptual foundation for addressing transparency, human involvement, verification, accountability, and the risk-based application of artificial intelligence in journalism. Current laws, regulations and professional standards cover some issues related to AI-generated content; however, there are still many questions about transparency, authorship, responsibility, authenticity, and human involvement that need to be addressed through policies and institutions' evolution. This proposal offers an intellectual foundation to future studies on newsroom policies and ethical issues with ai-generated news articles.

## Introduction

AI has been increasingly integrated with current news gathering processes. Automated news gathering and ai based tools are used by news agencies to do things like data analysis, news writing, personalization of content, headlines generation and distribution. Earlier studies have shown an increasing impact of algorithms and automation on news gathering and reporting. Though these tools may speed up news reporting, increase its scope and productivity, they raise ethical issues concerning journalism. Specifically speaking, there are issues related to credibility of information due to artificial intelligence involvement during news gathering and dissemination; ownership and authorship problems; relationship between journalists' news outlets and consumers' trustworthiness. Ethical issues are also complicated by artificial intelligence as it helps reporters with writing, choosing stories to cover; ranking them; and publishing them. Journalism is mostly a humanistic profession that involves editorial judgment, professionalism, verification and responsibility.

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However, ai systems work with algorithms, data sets for training; computation and automation of decisions. It changes traditional relationships of authorship and editoriality. If a piece of ai-generated writing is false, misleading, biased and plagiarized then there are issues to be solved like who will check it; who will blame them for this mistake; and what about their victims. Similarly, issues with authorship and copyright become more complicated due to algorithmic generation of content along with information provided by journalists, programmers. There is some existing literature on some of these issues such as ai journalism, algorithmic decisions; fake news; transparency; responsibility; copyright; and credibility. Nevertheless, they are usually addressed individually. More integrated concepts need to be explained for explaining relationship between authenticity, ownership and trust within an ethical framework of ai-generated news. This paper addresses this gap by developing an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News. The proposed framework makes a theoretical contribution by integrating three ethical dimensions-authenticity, ownership, and trust-with four interrelated principles of responsible AI-mediated journalism transparency, accountability, verifiability, and proportionality. These are not ethical issues to be considered separately by this model. Instead, they are interlinked with ai-generated news production. Transparency allows people, journalists to know when and how AI was used; verifiability provides means of verifying authenticity and origin of ai-generated news stories; accountability identifies humans and institutions involved with AI based editorial decisions; and proportionality helps determine appropriate degree of AI involvement based upon ethical and public interest considerations. Gatekeeping Theory, Media Ethics, and Algorithmic Accountability are also incorporated by this model to explain how AI affects news selection and production, how journalistic ethical values can be maintained in ai-mediated environments, and how responsibility can be assigned for algorithmic decisions. The paper integrates these theories to go beyond addressing issues related to ethical concerns of ai-generated news as separate problems; it develops an integrated theoretical framework for discussing issues like authenticity, ownership, and credibility of online news. It's an academic essay that is based on theoretical and conceptual analysis of relevant literature. It does not provide primary empirical data. Rather than that, this develops an integrated conceptual framework to serve as a theoretical basis for future empirical research, newsroom policy development, and discussions of ethical governance in AI-generated journalism.

## Review of Literature

### AI-Generated Journalism, Transparency, and Accountability

One of the major changes to news production today is more use and integration with artificial intelligence (AI) such as automated news writing, data analysis and personalized news delivery. Nevertheless, there are also ethical and epistemological issues such as transparency, accountability, and algorithmic bias that have been discussed by existing literature. The ai journalism is having an impact on news selection, framing and dissemination significantly nowadays. (Radhika & Vinod, 2025) based on their empirical study of AI-generated content, report moderate levels of public awareness and comparatively low levels of trust in AI-generated news. They found out there are still issues with trustworthiness and veracity among people. Non-normal distribution of trust and perceived impact also indicates a variety and polarization among audiences' attitudes towards ai-mediated news. Also, it relates to Social Responsibility Theory and algorithmic accountability by focusing on human involvement, transparency of information, and regulation of algorithms. Although AI can improve newsroom efficiency, (Radhika & Vinod, 2025) argue that its increasing use must be accompanied by mechanisms that protect journalistic integrity, promote transparency, and ensure responsible human-AI interaction. Nevertheless, though this research does show that transparency and accountability are important issues, it does not address them as part of questions concerning authenticity, ownership, and audience trust. It is this limitation that calls for an integrated ethics system of ai-generated news.

### AI-Generated Content, Synthetic Media, and Authenticity

The artificial intelligence generated content and artificial reality is one of the major disruptions to digital communication, creativity, and media industry. Wang (2023) states that artificial intelligence, deep learning, and generative models are responsible for creating highly realistic texts, images, and videos that are hard to distinguish from real ones. While there are some creative and communicative opportunities provided by these tools, they also have issues with fake news, trustworthiness of news sources; consent; authorship; algorithmic bias. Wang (2023) also identifies deepfakes and synthetic identities as emerging risks to privacy and social perception and discusses technological responses such as AI-based detection systems and blockchain-based authentication. Thus this research offers a significant technological viewpoint to address issues with synthetic media. Nevertheless, it is more focused towards possibilities, threats and potential technologies for ai-generated writing. It gives less focus on how these technological

issues are related with journalism ethics and credibility of readers. Thus, the literature indicates that there is a need for technological tools to detect synthetic content with editorial, ethical and institutional accountability measures.

## Post-Truth, AI, and Epistemic Trust

AI-generated news is also contributing more to these discussions about post-truth society and journalism ethics. (Mathew & Narayanan, 2025) state that algorithmically generated content, including automated journalism and deepfakes, is increasingly complicating the distinction between authentic and fabricated information, thereby challenging the epuppositional authority of media institutions. From a philosophical

and media theory perspective, the authors argue that there are problems with verifying authenticity and credibility due to proliferation of fake news. It is also a part that algorithms are used to prioritize engagement and this may lead to spreading fake news and reinforcing existing biases. From a viewer's point of view, constant exposure to misinformation and unreliable news sources could be one of those things that are referred to as "epistemic fatigue" where people start being or feel more skeptical about what they see online. (Mathew & Narayanan, 2025) therefore advocate hybrid ethical approaches combining human oversight, AI systems, transparency, labeling, and verification. Though it does extend beyond technological efficiency to epistemological issues, this approach is mainly conceptualized around authenticity, trustworthiness and journalism ethics. Ownership, authorship and institutional responsibility are still not well defined for this issue. It provides an important conceptual space for this research.

## AI-Generated Disinformation, Authenticity, and Audience Perception

Recent studies are increasingly focusing on the relationship between ai-generated disinformation and audience perceptions of authenticity. (Farooq & de Vreese, 2026) show that the aesthetic realism of AI-generated images can significantly influence perceptions of authenticity, whereas emotional salienceience has a comparatively smaller effect. The results show that people might be influenced by perceptual and superficial factors when assessing synthetic media, especially when there is little mental processing involved. The study also suggests that user's confidence in AI technology and their trust in detection systems may affect their willingness to rely on such systems when evaluating digital content. The results are significant since this shows that authenticity judgments aren't only based upon technological characteristics of ai-generated content but also audience cognition, perception, and trustworthiness of technological mediation. Nevertheless, this research is more concerned with public perception of ai-generated images than with institutional and editorial processes involved in creating, verifying and dissem disseminating ai-generated news. However, although this helps to understand perceptions about authenticity it does not address questions regarding newsroom level accountability and verification processes that would help build audience trust with ai-generated news stories.

Generative AI, Journalism, Ethics, and Epistemology

Generative artificial intelligence (GAI) has expanded the role of AI in journalism from automated content production to a wider range of tasks such as content generation, summarisation, translation, personalization, and other forms of editorial assistance. Shi and Sun (2024) offer an expanded view of generative AI in journalism, which is broader as it considers technological production and ethical/ epistemological issues. Previous studies have often focused on technological efficiency, regional adoption, and ethical issues as separate areas of study. Shi and Sun (2024) bring these strands together at various stages of the news-production process. The evaluation shows how GAI will improve information processing, content creation and personalization but also increase issues of trust.

This paper also highlights that there are ethical issues with GAI that go beyond technology performance, including journalists, news organizations and consumers. Nevertheless, there is a lack of development regarding relationship between truthfulness, possession, credibility and moral responsibility. Specifically, current debates do not adequately address issues related to authorship and ownership that relate to for transparency, credibility of information provided by artificial intelligence to consumers. The limitation is that this requires an integrated conceptualization of ai-generated news as an ethical, as well as institutional and communicative process not just technological advancement.

## AI, Authorship, Copyright, and Ownership

AI is used to write news articles which raises issues regarding authorship, copyright and ownership. Generative AI challenges traditional notions of authorship as it involves AI systems, journalists CORNERS, news reporters, and media companies. Kuai shows that the United States, European Union, and China have different approaches to copyright protection for AI-generated news, leading to ambiguity regarding ownership and authorship. WIPO also identifies AI-generated outputs and the use of copyrighted material in AI systems as important unresolved intellectual-property issues. Nevertheless, much current scholarship focuses on legal issues and copyright concerns rather than, and not so much on relationship with news reporting ethics and credibility of readers' trust. Unclear authorship and ownership of ai-

generated news may be hard to assign blame for mistakes, plagiarism, and falsehoods. Thus, then, ownership needs to be considered a part and in relation

with credibility, responsibility and trustworthiness of artificial intelligence news reporting.

### Provenance, Verification, and AI-Generated News

Generative AI usage is increasing so that authenticity of news verification has become a concern for journalists on-line. The provenance gives details on origin, creation, production, and modification of information and can tell you if a news article was written by humans, helped by AI and modified by AI. This disclosure might affect audience perception of reliability politico-legal integrity and reliability of artificial intelligence news reporting. **Licenji & Hoxha (2026)**, in their systematic review, found that the effects of AI provenance and disclosure on audience credibility and trust vary according to factors such as topic, source cues, existing trust, and communication of human oversight. It means only disclosing AI involvement is not enough; also need to disclose human editorial responsibility. Also, professional standards require human verification for ai-generated articles prior to publication. For instance, the Associated Press Association advises that ai-generated content should be considered as news that needs editorial review and fact-checking. Nevertheless, current discussions usually refer to provenance, verification and disclosure as separate technical/ editorial issues. There is less not much focus on it's integration with other ethical responsibilities. This paper addresses that issue through making verifiability one of our core principles for implementing an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework. In this is a part of those things like AI transparency, source verification, fact-checking and human editorial review that help to increase trustworthiness, credibility and accountability of AI news.

### Synthesis and Research Gap

The existing literature on AI-generated journalism can be grouped into four areas based on their primary focus. One group looks at the technology itself—what generative systems can do. The risks they bring. Another focuses on ethics highlighting the need for transparency, accountability and professional responsibility. A third area studies how audiences see things—how people judge authenticity and whether they trust AI-generated content. The fourth area centers on media especially

how misinformation spreads and how it can be detected. Even though these approaches look at aspects they all show that AI-generated journalism is not just a tech issue. It also involves ethics, institutions and how information is communicated. The studies reviewed show that AI-generated journalism brings together a number of concerns. These include transparency, accountability, bias in algorithms, authenticity, fake news, who owns the content and how much trust audiences place in it. Researchers have already made progress by looking at these issues from angles—technology, ethics, knowledge and audience reactions.. The field is still spread out. Most studies look at one piece of the puzzle than the full picture. For example some research on transparency and accountability stresses the importance of control and clear disclosure about the use of AI (Radhika & Vinod 2025). Other work on media focuses on whether content seems real how misinformation works and the tools used to detect fakes (Wang, 2023). Studies about -truth environments highlight how people judge truth—especially in situations where its hard to tell real from fake (Mathew & Narayanan 2025). Meanwhile research on audiences examines how realistic visuals and trust in technology affect people's belief in news (Farooq & de Vreese 2026). There is growing effort to link technology, ethics and newsroom practices in the context of AI but the connections between these areas are still weak (Shi & Sun 2024). There is a gap in understanding how authenticity, ownership and trust are linked when news is made by AI.. There is also a need for a strong ethical framework that brings all these ideas together. This study fills that gap by introducing an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News. This framework connects the role of AI in choosing what news gets published with ethical values like transparency, accountability, verifiability and proportionality. The goal is to help improve news credibility and build trust, with the public.

## Conceptual Gaps

Previous research on AI in journalism has extensively explored technology development, automation, algorithmic news production and AI-assisted news processes efficiency. There has also been research on particular ethical problems related to AI-generated content, such as misinformation, transparency, accountability, authorship, copyright and trust from the audience. But such concerns are generally explored individually, as distinct aspects of the larger ethical framework for digital news production. There is a specific lack of integration between the concepts of

authenticity, ownership and trust in one analytical framework. The question of "authenticity" primarily deals with whether AI-generated news can be seen as accurate, reliable, and verifiable; the question of "ownership" involves questions of authorship, IP and responsibility; and the question of "trust" deals with how audiences can trust the news content and news organizations. While each dimension has been studied, the interrelationship and combined implications of the dimensions on news credibility are not enough explored. Moreover, theoretical frameworks on AI journalism have been discussed separately from Gatekeeping Theory, Media Ethics and Algorithmic Accountability. An integrated approach is needed that clarifies the ethical obligations of the algorithmic involvement in the production of news in the

various stages of selection, production, verification and publication. This paper introduces an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News to fill these gaps. Authenticity, ownership and trust are ethical components of the framework, linked together and with four principles: transparency, accountability, verifiability and proportionality. It serves as a guide to thinking about how these can help to tackle ethical issues related to AI-generated news and support the credibility Of news and trust of audiences. In this sense, the proposed framework has the goal of not only, but also: To discuss ethics on the individual problem level and also provides a AI use responsible and holistic conceptual model in digital. journalism.

## Research Objectives

- To address the ethical concerns of the AI-generated content in the digital news media, specifically, the questions of authenticity, ownership, and trust.
- To analyze how Artificial intelligence affects traditional journalistic values such as accuracy, transparency, and accountability.
- To understand the influence of AI-generated news on the audience and the need to practice responsible and ethical media.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based on three perspectives: Gatekeeping Theories, Media ethics and Algorithmic Accountability. These viewpoints are AI-generated content can present moral challenges, and understanding these is crucial for navigating them effectively.AI-generated content can also raise moral issues, and it's important to be aware of these. digital news media. Gatekeeping Theory is designed to understand how algorithms have come to play a new role in the selection and distribution of news; Media Ethics is designed to evaluate and assess the accuracy, fairness, truthfulness and responsibility of AI-generated news; Algorithmic Accountability is designed to address the question of responsibility, transparency and oversight when automated systems are involved in journalistic decision-making. All these perspectives offer a theoretical basis to discuss authenticity, ownership, and trust as interrelated ethical aspects of news produced by AI.

### Gatekeeping Theory

Gatekeeping Theory is about the selection, filtering, prioritizing and presenting information to audiences. Journalists and news editors, as representatives of traditional news organizations, traditionally played the role of gatekeepers, determining what will make news and how it will be interpreted and presented. The decisions were made based on Professional Judgement, Editorial Standards, ethical standards, and organizational practices. As AI and algorithmic systems take over more and more functions, some of the gatekeeping roles are becoming more supported, and even sometimes taken by automated systems. AI can help detect events worth reporting, prioritize and sort content, customize news feeds for readers, create headlines, and publish content based on pre-programmed criteria and user-specific data. This is a shift in the usual dynamics between human editorial judgment and technological decision-making. Algorithmic gatekeeping matters for this study because of its role in selection, generation, ranking, and distribution, and how these factors can impact the authenticity and visibility of news content. When the criteria used by an algorithm is not known or when the algorithm reinforces existing prejudices, transparency and accountability are raised questions. Hence, the use of Gatekeeping Theory enables this study to explore the location and the mechanism of the news information flow based on the impact of AI and its impact on the credibility of the news information and the trust of the audience.

### Media Ethics

Media Ethics is the ethical standard for judging journalistic practices in light of values like truth, accuracy, fairness, responsibility, and public interest. Journalists and editors in conventional journalism are held accountable for verifying the information, reducing errors, adding the necessary context and acknowledging their responsibility for the published content. The creation of AI-generated content presents further ethical concerns as it can generate content quickly and at a massive scale, potentially outpacing traditional editorial procedures. AI systems can also produce false, incomplete, biased, and/or misleading information. In short, while the use of AI does not diminish the ethical obligations that journalists have, newsrooms must rethink how to keep key ethical standards in place in a human–AI production context. Authenticity and trust are two aspects of Media Ethics that are particularly relevant for this study. It's crucial to ensure the integrity of news content through verification, accuracy, transparency about AI involvement, and responsible editorial oversight. Therefore, Media Ethics is the normative framework by which to evaluate the ethical content of AI-produced news and the fundamental ethical obligations that should be fulfilled by journalists.

### Algorithmic Accountability

Algorithmic Accountability is about accountability and oversight for algorithmic systems and individuals and organisations developing and using them. AI-generated journalism can include journalists, editors, media companies, tech vendors, developers, and automated systems. Therefore, it may not always be clear what is wrong with the output, a mistake, or a bad choice, when one occurs. This raises a crucial ethical dilemma: Who is

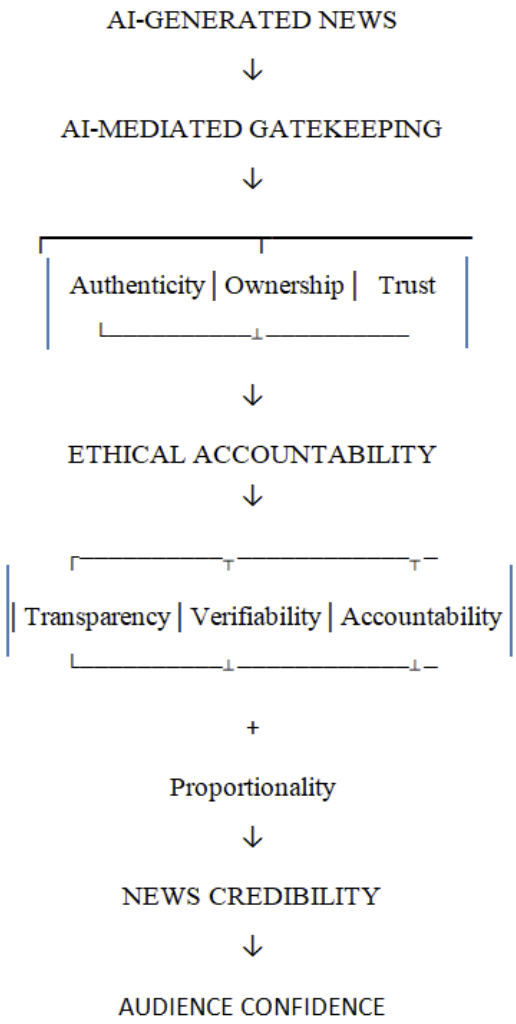


**Figure 1:** Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News

liable in the event of a mistake or harm in AI-generated news content? It could be the journalist or editor who used the system, the news media that published it, or anyone else who played any role in its development or deployment. Algorithmic Accountability therefore highlights the importance of having mechanisms in place to monitor, explain, review and correct editorial decisions supported by AI. This research examines ownership, responsibility and transparency in AI-generated news, under the umbrella of Algorithmic Accountability, which serves as the theoretical foundation of this study. It also

reinforces the concept of human and organisational responsibility being identifiable even in those instances where automated systems are involved in news production.

## Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

The present study is based on the integration of Gatekeeping Theory, Media Ethics and Algorithmic. A sense of responsibility to develop a theoretical understanding of the ethical responsibility of AI-generated digital news. The first analytical dimension provided by GateKeeping is the capacity to make decisions.The first analytical dimension provided by GateKeeping is Decision Making. Theory, dealing with the role of AI supported systems as they became more, Play a role in selecting, prioritizing, framing and distributing news content. There is a trend towards using automated technology to assist or replace the human in performing a task. Some of these powers of the gate-keeper, but not all, are assumed by human journalists and editorial organisations. play an important part in the editorial process generally. Media Ethics sets the rules for the game with the rules of accuracy, truthfulness, fairness, responsibility and protection from harm. In this respect, quality of AI-generated content can't be judged solely by its technological efficiency; It is also crucial to take into account and observe journalistic and ethical principles. Algorithmic Accountability gives the institutional/procedural side of the argument by asking who is at fault if an automated system has caused an error, bias, Has intentionally spread

misinformation, or otherwise harmed. It's not just a question of whether or not technology broke down, but what are the responsibilities to share among? journalists, news organizations, technology developers and the other stakeholders involved? Combined, these three viewpoints give a sequential analytical relationship: Gate Keeping Theory points to "where and how" AI affects the news production and While distribution process provides a set of instrumental standards, Media Ethics provides a set of normative standards to which distribution process should strive to adhere. The Algorithmic Accountability is about to abide by AI journalism, which should adhere. responsibility for enforcing, monitoring and monitoring those standards, accountability for those responsibilities. They're corrected if they are violated. These perspectives constitute a theoretical prism through which to examine the understanding. Knowing the three fundamental ethical issues in this present study (authenticity, Trust Builder (ownership, and trust) and building an

Integrated Ethical Accountability. To create an AI-powered digital news framework.To design an AI generated digital news framework.

## Conceptual Discussion

The proposed conceptual framework explores the ethical implications of AI-generated news by combining three ethical dimensions (authenticity, ownership, trust) with four principles of ethical accountability (transparency, verifiability, accountability, proportionality). The framework is based on Gatekeeping Theory, Media Ethics, and Algorithmic Accountability, which are three theories that can contribute to understanding the ethical consequences of AI-assisted news production. The first level is the technological context in which automated systems get involved in the process of news creation and dissemination, which are generated by artificial intelligence.The first level is AI-generate news, which indicates the technological context in which automated systems are involved in the process of news creation and dissemination. AI gatekeeping can impact the information selection, prioritization, creation, and dissemination process. These processes can impact on the trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility of news products and, by extension, calls into question the editorial responsibility. The framework in the second level highlights three interrelated ethical dimensions. Authenticity relates to the accuracy, reliability and verifiability of AI-generated information. Ownership is the issues of authorship, intellectual property, copyright and responsibility regarding AI-generated content. Trust relates to audience trust in AI-produced news and the news organizations that produce and publish it. The dimensions are considered interrelated as a concern about the authenticity and ownership of AI-generated content can impact credibility and trust. In the third level, four principles offer mechanisms for tackling these ethical challenges. For transparency, it's essential to disclose AI involvement and relevant details regarding the content-production process. Appropriate fact-checking and verification of AI-generated information is necessary for verifiability. Clearly defined human or organizational responsibility is needed for AI-assisted or AI-generated content as part of holding the creators of AI-generated content accountable. Proportionality means that as much as AI is used, as much as human oversight is required, depending on the potential risks, consequences and sensitivity of the news content. Practical newsroom practices can be used to implement the four principles of the Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework. In news production, transparency

means that there should be disclosures of a significant role played by AI. Accountability must have clear human and/or organizational responsibility, and procedures for correction. Verifiability means that fact checking and source checking should be done prior to publishing. Content with greater sensitivity, risk, and impact needs more human oversight, proportionality. These principles can be applied in a variety of ways, such as disclosure of AI use, human editorial review, fact checking, documentation of provenance, correction systems, and regular audit of AI-supported systems. This is a set of practical guidelines for responsible AI generated journalism, depending on the suggested framework, which is based on moral values.Translation: That of the proposed framework from the general moral concepts into practical editorial. Principles of responsible journalism with artificial intelligence. The framework thus puts in place A conceptual relationship is that the AI-Generated News paradigm is based on: in three key principles: Authenticity, Ownership & Trust; Transparency, The three areas are: Verifiability, Accountability & Proportionality; and News Credibility.AI-Generated There are three fundamental principles underlying news: Authenticity, Ownership & Trust; Transparency, verifiability, accountability & proportionality; and News credibility; and these principles are each part of the paradigm. The framework doesn't imply that these relationships are linear and causal. Instead, it offers a framework for analysis of the interplay between technical intervention, ethical issues, and accountability in the context of digital news that is created by AI. Therefore, the proposed framework could serve as a conceptual basis for understanding the responsible interactions between human and AI and their implications for digital journalism's credibility and trustworthiness.

## Discussion

### Implications for Journalistic Identity and Professional Norms

AI is reshaping the daily lives of journalists by streamlining

mundane tasks such as data analysis and content creation. On the other hand, as automation becomes more of a necessity for journalists, it could have negative impacts on their autonomy, quality, diversity, and accountability (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007; Thurman et al., 2019). As a result, the role of the editor should be a core element of editorial decision making, including in issues of accuracy, authenticity, verification, disclosure and correction. The proposed Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework highlights the importance of transparency, accountability, verifiability, and proportionality in order to make sure that AI does not undermine the professional and ethical principles of journalism.

### The Global Dimension of AI-Generated Journalism

Ethical considerations of AI generated journalism could be different in different media systems, depending on the digital infrastructure, language resources, regulatory power, and institutional practices of the news outlets. Thus, ethical guidelines for AI-assisted journalism should be tailored to fit the technological, institutional, and regulatory context. The proposed framework needs further testing and refinement through comparative research across the various media systems.

### Regulatory and Policy Challenges

Regulatory issues with transparency, copyright, authorship, accountability and verification have arisen from the creation and use of AI-generated content. The EU AI Act establishes transparency obligations for some AI-generated and manipulated content, such as deepfakes and some public interest content. Human involvement and contractual agreements are significant factors, as copyright and ownership of AI-generated outputs remain uncertain, as stated by WIPO (2024). Human oversight is also in the spotlight with professional guidelines. For instance, the Associated Press (2026) calls for checking and verifying AI-produced copy before it is published and mandates the disclosure of AI-generated or manipulated content. The trend highlights the importance of transparency and guidelines within newsrooms regarding the use of AI, human oversight, verification, ownership, and responsibility. The framework outlined in this document links these to transparency, accountability, verifiability and proportionality.

### Comparative Perspective

Current research suggests that AI-powered journalism faces a complex set of issues of authenticity, transparency, accountability, and trust. Some research highlights newsroom efficiency and accountability (Farooq & de Vreese, 2026), authenticity and/or synthetic media (Radhika & Vinod, 2025), and perceptions of the audience (Shi & Sun, 2024; Wang, 2023). This comparison shows that research on the issue is not monolithic, and that an integrated approach is needed. The proposed framework is thus linked to the notions of authenticity, ownership, and trust on the one hand, and transparency, accountability, verifiability, and proportionality on the other.

## Limitations

This article is theoretical, and does not provide original empirical data, but instead it is based on a review and conceptual examination of the literature available. The ethics explored in the paper are therefore not empirical, but rather based on previous scholarship and logical analysis of the nature and consequences of AI technologies,

not on first-hand experience with their use in journalism. The proposed Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News, therefore, is, at this point, theoretical and needs to be tested in practice. Future studies might focus on the ways in which particular news organizations deal with ethical issues related to AI, the reactions of audiences to AI-produced news in different settings, and the practical application of regulatory and editorial frameworks. These empirical studies would enable the evaluation of the proposed framework's applicability and further develop it.

## Conclusion

AI has had a significant impact on the field of journalism and it is no longer a future scenario, but a present reality and a pressing concern. challenge. However, there are ethical implications to this, particularly that it raises the question of the authenticity of AI-generated content, who should be the owner of AI-created text, and how news outlets can keep audiences engaged in an AI- driven media landscape. Ethical issues need to be considered systematically and adequate institutional processes need to be developed for these challenges. The ethical dilemma posed by AI-created news has been discussed in this paper in three overlapping aspects: authenticity, ownership, and trust. While there are existing legal and regulatory frameworks and professional guidance that touch on some areas of AI-generated content, further policy and institutional development is needed to tackle issues of disclosure, authorship and accountability, verification, and human oversight. The rapid pace of AI-driven content creation can pose difficulties for traditional verification methods. Likewise, issues of machine-assisted authorship and copyright are complicated. As automation continues to grow, it also could impact the relationship between news organizations and their readers, viewers and listeners, if they are not clearly informed about the use of AI in news production. To address these challenges, this paper proposes four principles for an Integrated Ethical Accountability Framework for AI-Generated Digital News: transparency, accountability, verifiability, and proportionality. These principles are not against acceptance of AI technologies in journalism. Instead, they stress the use of AI in a manner that preserves the integrity

of journalism, the human factor and accountability towards the audiences. Transparency means that the participation of is transparent and open. The policy of accountability entrusts accountability to AI; errors and decisions made by AI are subject to accountability. fact-checking and verifying

sources is essential for verifiability, with AI; and There is more human intervention required in sensitive and high impact situations (proportionality). journalistic situations. These do not only have to do with the individual news organizations. News media is one of the features of society in democratic societies. as it gives citizens information that is critical for them to be able to meaningfully engage with the life of the society. The impact on public trust and the information environment can be broader if AI-generated content undermines the authenticity, Trustworthiness or believability of news. As such, there's a need for collaboration The report examines the interaction between journalists, editors, news organizations, tech makers, regulators and others. The presentation will feature a discussion among stakeholders on how to ensure responsible use of AI in journalism. The proposed framework provides an intellectual basis for this ongoing discussion and provides guidelines for When considering the ethical responsibilities for digital news content created by AI, the key points to keep in mind are:When addressing ethical issues related to AI-generated digital news, it's important to consider the following points

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