AI-Driven Journalism: Examining the Impact on News Credibility and Public Trust in The Star

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This research paper attached hereto, entitled “AI- Driven Journalism: Its Influences on news credibility and public trust- A Case Study of the Star” prepared and submitted by” Helmi Nafiz Lee Bin Hanif Lee” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) Journalism is hereby accepted.

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Supervisor

Supervisor’s name

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on news credibility and public trust in The Star, a prominent Malaysian news outlet. As AI tools are increasingly employed in journalism for content creation, data analysis, and audience engagement, this research investigates their influence on the reliability of news. Employing content analysis, surveys, and interviews, the study compares AI-generated articles with human-written content to evaluate accuracy, tone, and transparency. Findings reveal that while AI enhances efficiency, public perceptions of credibility hinge on transparency and editorial oversight. Ethical concerns, such as algorithmic bias and accountability, also significantly affect trust. By addressing these challenges, the research underscores the need for responsible AI integration and clear communication strategies in journalism to maintain public confidence. This study contributes to the discourse on AI ethics in media, offering insights for news organizations and policymakers navigating this evolving landscape.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background Studies

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into media has prompted serious concerns about the consequences for news reliability and public confidence. AI-driven journalism uses algorithms, machine learning, and automation to create, curate, and disseminate news material (Chen et al., 2024). With the expanding importance of AI technology, journalists are looking into how AI might increase productivity, optimise content, and personalise user experiences. However, the adoption of AI in media has raised worries about the veracity of news reporting and the deterioration of public faith in the media (Salah & Adams, 2023).

AI in journalism provides various benefits, including the automation of routine operations like data analysis, news aggregation, and even the creation of simple news reports

(Johnson & Lee, 2024). This enables journalists to focus on more complicated research and creative narrative (Chen et al., 2024). For example, The Star, a well-known Malaysian newspaper, has implemented AI technologies to improve content distribution and expedite editorial procedures (Nguyen & Ho, 2023). AI's ability to analyse massive volumes of data can assist journalists in identifying developing trends, producing timely reporting, and providing personalised material to various parts of the audience (Morris, 2024).

Despite these developments, there are still questions regarding AI's involvement in determining news trustworthiness. As AI systems rely significantly on data inputs and algorithms to curate information, concerns about transparency and bias emerge (Nguyen & Ho, 2023). Critics contend that AI-driven material may lack the human judgement required to critically examine sources and provide fair reporting (Lee, 2024). The opaque nature of AI decision-making processes might also damage public trust in news providers, since consumers may not completely comprehend how news is generated or why certain items are prioritised over others (Johnson & Lee, 2024).

Furthermore, the growing use of AI in newsrooms has prompted ethical issues about the potential manipulation of public opinion. Algorithms developed to increase user interaction may unintentionally reinforce existing prejudices, amplify sensationalist information, or create echo chambers (Salah & Adams, 2023). These activities have the potential to harm news outlets' credibility and impair public trust in journalism (Morris, 2024). These challenges are especially pertinent for The Star, a newspaper with a strong online presence, because the growing use of AI-driven algorithms to adapt information to individual tastes may result in a fragmented and polarised news landscape (Nguyen & Ho, 2023).

Finding a balance between utilising AI's efficiency and upholding journalism's ethics is consequently difficult. According to studies, artificial intelligence (AI) can improve

newsrooms' capacity to generate material rapidly and in large quantities, but its application needs to be done carefully to prevent the possibility that automation could compromise journalistic values (Chen et al., 2024). To guarantee that AI does not undermine news organisations' reputation and dependability, editorial supervision, continuous examination of AI-generated content, and transparency in AI systems are crucial (Lee, 2024).

There are advantages and disadvantages of using AI in journalism. Although AI-driven technologies have the potential to transform news creation and improve audience engagement, the ethical ramifications must be carefully considered, especially with regard to the news's integrity and public confidence. The Star case study highlights the possible benefits and drawbacks of incorporating AI into journalism by demonstrating how these technologies are being applied in modern newsrooms (Nguyen & Ho, 2023).

1.2 Problem Statement

The production, distribution, and consumption of news have all changed dramatically as a result of the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) into journalism. Even though artificial intelligence (AI) has many advantages, such as increased productivity, scalability, and personalisation, it also poses serious questions about the legitimacy and public confidence of media companies. Traditional journalistic principles like truth, fairness, and transparency may be jeopardised by AI-driven technologies like data analysis, personalisation algorithms, and automated content creation (Carlson, 2021). According to O'Neil (2016), these technologies may also make algorithmic bias worse, a phenomenon in which AI systems inadvertently reinforce preconceptions or false information by affecting the news articles that are presented and the way they are presented.

Understanding how the usage of AI affects the public's faith in news has become more important because of its emergence in media sources like The Star. Although AI can increase

the effectiveness of reporting and boost audience engagement with personalised information, it also has the potential to compromise the news's credibility (Tsfati & Cappella, 2020). Even while AI is being used more and more in journalism, little empirical research has been done on how these tools impact public trust in the media and the reliability of news information, especially in early adopters like The Star (Helberger, 2020). By examining how AI-driven journalism affects news credibility and public trust, this study seeks to close that gap.

1.3 Research Objective

1. To understand the key factors that public trust in AI-Driven Journalism
2. To investigate how AI- generated content influences audience perceptions of news credibility and accuracy in the context of The Star
3. To examine the extent to which audiences perceive AI-generated news as effective in meeting their information needs.

1.4 Research Question

1. What are the key factors that affect public trust in AI-Driven Journalism, particularly in news organizations like The Star
2. How does AI-generated content in journalism influence audience perceptions of the credibility and accuracy of news
3. To what extent do audiences perceive AI-generated news on meeting their information needs.

1.5 Research Significance

Despite the growing usage of AI in newsrooms, little is known about how AI-driven journalism affects public trust and news credibility. This makes the study noteworthy. Using The Star as a case study, the research offers important insights into how public views of dependability and trustworthiness are impacted by AI-generated material. Along with outlining

ethical issues such algorithmic bias, a lack of responsibility, and transparency, it also makes suggestions for the proper use of AI in journalism. The results are pertinent to both regulators looking to control the use of AI in media and media companies trying to strike a compromise between ethics and efficiency. Furthermore, the study adds to larger conversations regarding the ethical application of AI in fields that depend on public confidence, such healthcare, banking, and public relations

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The way news is created, shared, and consumed has changed significantly as a result of the growing use of AI in journalism. AI-driven journalism poses questions about public trust, trustworthiness, and the human element that usually contributes to ethical journalism, even though it has the potential to improve efficiency and personalization in news delivery. Through the application of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), this study seeks to investigate how AI affects public trust and news credibility, particularly in The Star. UGT will shed light on the needs and motivations behind user interaction with AI-generated news material as well as the methods for fostering credibility in an AI-driven media landscape.

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) investigates why people actively look for media to meet their wants. UGT, which was developed in the 1940s and improved by researchers like Elihu Katz, Jay Blumler, and Denis McQuail, asserts that media consumers are not passive recipients but rather use media to obtain specific gratifications depending on their own circumstances and motivation. The sociology of mass communication idea known as "uses and gratifications theory" looks at how audiences use media goods to make choices and establish objectives (Drew, 2024). This theory contends that people choose media according to their needs for knowledge, amusement, social integration, and personal identity, challenging conventional media theories that presume passive consumption (Katz et al., 1973). UGT will assist in elucidating how consumers interact with AI-generated information and the reasons behind this interaction (such as the desire for quick, reliable news) in the context of AI-

driven journalism. Readers may use AI, for instance, to get speedier updates on current affairs or tailored content that suits their interests.

According to the study, a sizable percentage of journalists use AI for duties including data collection, research, and content creation, and 57% of them agree that AI fosters creativity and innovation. In line with UGT's focus on active media use to achieve certain gratifications, this highlights how media workers actively engage with AI technology to meet their professional demands (Kumar, 2024). This idea also emphasizes how actively using media can lead to specific satisfactions. Readers of AI journalism might appreciate the speed at which AI covers news stories or look for personalized, real-time updates (Sundar, 2008). However, there are issues with AI-generated content's lack of human nuance, particularly in terms of building emotional connection and trust, both of which are essential for news's perceived trustworthiness. Analyzing how AI affects public trust and news credibility thus requires a knowledge of these user demands and motives in the context of AI's autonomy in news production.

Users' perceptions of news can be directly impacted by the autonomy and design of AI systems. The sensing, thought, and action model (Sundar & Marathe, 2010) defines autonomy as the capacity of an AI system to perceive news events on its own, process data, and take action by creating or selecting content. The creation of news is significantly impacted by AI systems' increased autonomy. AI-driven systems, for example, may collect information and produce stories with no supervision or emotional intelligence, which raises questions about the morality of news distribution. However, a well-designed autonomous AI system can still give consumers accurate, timely, and relevant information, which increases the possibility that the user will find the material satisfying (gratifying) (Sundar, 2008). According to UGT, the autonomy of AI-powered journalism mediates the experience of important user gratifications like social engagement, entertainment, and information seeking. For instance, if AI systems give consumers timely, trustworthy news that matches their interests, users are more likely to interact with the information, which will boost their level of happiness and confidence in the medium. However, if AI falls short of these expectations—for example, by emphasizing sensationalism or

compromising truth in favor of engagement—it runs the danger of eroding user credibility and confidence, which will result in disengagement (Rubin, 2009; Ruggiero, 2000).

The theory is extended to a new area of media—AI-driven journalism—by incorporating the idea of AI autonomy into UGT. This study emphasizes how media design—in this case, artificial intelligence—shapes the satisfaction process, ultimately impacting the user's trust and intention to interact with news material, whereas standard implementations of UGT concentrate on passive media consumption. In addition to expanding our knowledge of media interaction, the study's incorporation of autonomy as a crucial design element of AI systems in journalism offers a guide for creating AI systems that are considerate of user requirements and ethical issues, ultimately guaranteeing increased media legitimacy.

Uses and Gratification Theory(UGT) Theoretical Framework

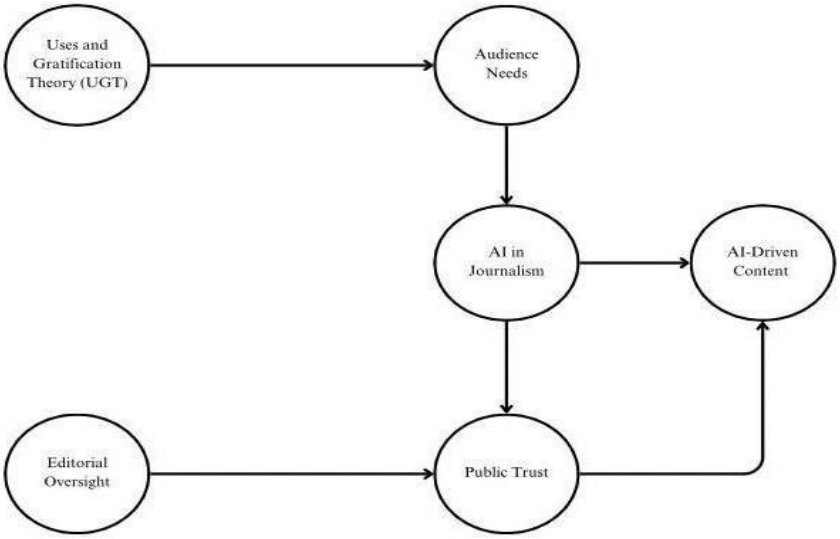

Diagram 1

1.7 Research Limitation

This study has several limitations that could affect its conclusions and generalizability, even if it provides insightful information about how artificial intelligence (AI) affects public trust and news credibility. The exclusive focus on The Star, a single private news source, is one major drawback. This restricts the findings' application to other news organizations with distinct workflows, resources, and technological capabilities, even as it permits a thorough analysis of AI integration within a particular context. Furthermore, the small sample size limits the range of perspectives that can be recorded, which may make it more difficult to represent the variety of opinions found in the journalism profession, particularly during the initial data collection phase that involves 3 participants

Additionally, because of its Malaysian context, the study might not accurately represent the experiences of news organizations working in other countries with varying legal, cultural, and technological frameworks. The results may not adequately cover the difficulties or advantages of integrating AI in different media ecosystems or geographical areas. Moreover, semi-structured interviews rely on subjective responses, which can bring bias or inadequate information because of organizational affiliations or personal viewpoints, even though they are useful for examining detailed insights. Although the Likert-scale questions add a quantitative component, the limited sample size means that they are not statistically significant.

Furthermore, the use of self-reported information from interviews raises the possibility of social desirability bias, in which respondents give responses they think are favorable or expected. This might affect the findings' legitimacy, especially when it comes to delicate subjects like trust and credibility. These restrictions emphasize the need for careful interpretation of the findings, but they do not lessen the research's overall usefulness. In order to provide a more thorough knowledge of AI's involvement in journalism, future research could

overcome these constraints by using longitudinal methodologies, cross-regional analysis, and larger and more diverse samples. Incorporating further quantitative techniques, like audience surveys or experiments, could improve the study's thoroughness and further supplement the qualitative observations.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to AI in Journalism

Artificial intelligence (AI) are making human journalist job more easier by revolutionizing news production, dissemination, and consumption. Newsroom operations are incorporating AI technologies to promote audience engagement, optimize procedures, and improve content development. Advances in automation, machine learning, and natural language processing (NLP) have made it possible for tools like automated reporting, personalized news distribution, and real-time fact-checking, which are driving the increasing use of AI in journalism. These advancements are transforming conventional journalism techniques and posing important queries regarding AI's function in preserving public confidence and news trustworthiness.

By automating repetitive processes like data collecting, transcribing, and preliminary drafting, artificial intelligence (AI) is being used in journalism to free up journalists' time for more intricate investigative work. With little assistance from humans, tools like automated content generating systems can now create articles about election outcomes, sports recaps, and financial updates. By tailoring news feeds to each user's preferences, AI-powered recommendation systems are also improving user experiences and raising audience engagement. According to Mahato (2022), AI provides dependability and cost-effectiveness, resolving complicated issues faster and more precisely than human labour.

However, discussions concerning the effects of AI on news ethics, bias, and quality have also been triggered by its incorporation into journalism. Although AI has a lot of promise for efficiency and scalability, issues with algorithmic bias, transparency, and content depersonalization have surfaced. AI lacks human touch, creativity, and emotional intelligence, which can be problematic in professions like journalism where ethical and nuanced considerations are crucial, claims Mahato (2022).

Studying the relationship between AI and media is crucial, particularly in light of how it affects public trust and news trustworthiness. Examining the developments, prospects, and difficulties related to AI in journalism, this literature review seeks to shed light on how this technology can change the media environment.

2.1.1 Artificial Intelligence and its impact in Journalism

Given the resource-intensive nature of the news industry, artificial intelligence is having a big impact on the commercial and operational sides of journalism. Traditional journalism entails a lot of work, including data collection, interview travel, and creating outputs in multiple formats, including interactive graphics, text, and video. AI provides a cost-effective solution by enhancing several aspects of journalism, such as content generation, operational workflows, and audience interaction, in light of the media industry's declining revenues and growing expenses. Noain-Sánchez (2022) examines the effects of artificial intelligence (AI) on journalism in this exploratory paper, concentrating on the opinions of academics, journalists, and experts. The incorporation of AI in newsrooms is presented in the study as a dual reality. On the one hand, by boosting productivity, AI improves journalistic satisfaction and opens up new markets for media companies. However, AI makes journalists fearful and hostile, necessitating a mental change and posing serious ethical issues.

For journalists who must swiftly go through enormous volumes of data in order to find stories, AI's capacity to handle and analyze massive datasets can be quite useful. AI can produce information in a variety of formats (such as text, images, videos, and charts) and even tailor it to the tastes of the user by automating data processing. In line with the contemporary need for a multi-modal experience (text, graphics, audio, and video), this allows news organizations to create more captivating and interactive outputs (Schmelzer, 2024). Increased output and efficiency are two benefits of AI, which is particularly beneficial given the ongoing global financial crisis and competition from social media platforms in the media sector (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). By automating tedious chores, artificial intelligence (AI) tools assist journalists, freeing them up to concentrate on investigative work, high-quality reporting, and finding information or witnesses (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). AI can therefore assist journalists in getting back to the basics of their trade, where they can concentrate on producing human-crafted journalism rather than just recording facts (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). This has the potential to improve journalism's standing and fortify the industry overall.

Additionally, AI systems assist with standard newsroom duties like interview transcription, conversation summarization, and multilingual content translation, greatly cutting down on the amount of time spent on these time-consuming chores. By automating processes like content tagging, social media post scheduling, and figuring out when to publish articles for optimal reader engagement, AI solutions also streamline editorial workflows. Additionally, newsrooms can more easily handle the growing demand for multimedia material thanks to AI's ability to manage massive volumes of visual content, including automatically detecting and labeling photographs and videos (Schmelzer, 2024).

AI is being utilized more and more for content creation as well as visual media authenticity verification, which helps fight deepfakes and false information. Newsrooms like The Star may increase trust and guarantee that the media they publish complies with

journalistic and ethical standards by utilizing AI to authenticate content (Schmelzer, 2024). However, It also draws attention to AI's potential for harmful application, particularly in the production of deepfakes and other deceptive content. Nevertheless, by enhancing fact-checking and spotting hoaxes, AI techniques can also aid in thwarting such threats. However, maintaining appropriate oversight continues to be a concern as the amount of AI-generated content increases rapidly (Noain-Sánchez, 2022).

In the end, AI's operational advantages enable news companies become more productive and efficient, allowing them to overcome the industry's historical obstacles and generate relevant and powerful journalism that satisfies the needs of contemporary consumers (Schmelzer, 2024). To guarantee that AI applications are in line with journalistic integrity and public trust, explicit codes of ethics and obligations must be established, as AI tools engage professionals from a variety of fields, including programmers, information technologists, and journalists (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). In order to ensure that all professionals involved in the AI implementation process adhere to stringent standards of accountability and transparency, these ethical principles should require that ethical ideals be incorporated into the design of AI tools (Noain-Sánchez, 2022).

2.1.2 The Growing Role of AI in Journalism

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has been used by the media to inform the public over the past ten years. AI has had a big impact, altering the creation and consumption of news. It's not just a futuristic idea; media companies are incorporating it into their everyday operations to increase productivity. There are many different uses for AI tools in the journalism industry. These range from simple jobs like turning audio conversations into text to more intricate ones like spotting fake photos or movies. 4 Advanced AI applications show how AI may greatly improve reporting skills. For example, the Associated Press uses AI to provide

automated revenue reports, while Reuters uses Lynx Insights to analyze large datasets (Mahajan et al., 2024). The credibility of news content has been significantly impacted by the introduction of AI-powered tools. The quality and sensitivity of the data sources used, as well as algorithms' capacity to precisely identify the "nose for news" that human journalists possess, are among the limitations of automation that journalists have voiced concerns about. In 2017, Thurman et al. However, because AI enables faster content creation, multilingual capabilities, and a decrease in human error, it has also been acknowledged that it has the potential to improve news quality, accuracy, and message credibility. Kim and Lee (2021)

AI's use in journalism has grown far beyond simple automation. Advanced data analysis is made easier by machine learning (ML) algorithms, which reveal hidden patterns and trends that are especially helpful for investigative journalism (Stray, 2019). Though this presents ethical questions with filter bubbles and echo chambers (Pariser, 2011), artificial intelligence (AI) powers news personalization and recommendation systems, customizing material to specific users' tastes (Jerbi, 2023; Noain-Sánchez, 2022). These days, AI methods are used for disinformation identification and fact-checking, using computer vision and natural language processing to validate material in a variety of media formats (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024; Khan et al., 2023; Noain-Sánchez, 2022). The growing application of AI in a variety of news value chain domains demonstrates the technology's revolutionary potential, impacting audience interaction, news collecting, content production, editing, and dissemination. (de-Lima-Santos & Ceron, 2022). The adoption of AI in journalism also presents several ethical and practical challenges. One major concern is the potential erosion of journalistic professionalism and the human element in reporting. AI systems, while highly efficient, lack the nuanced understanding and ethical judgment that human journalists bring to their work. There is also the risk of spreading biased or false information if AI systems are not properly developed and monitored (Mahajan et al., 2024). Since sensitive information is frequently included in the massive

volumes of data needed to train AI systems, data security and privacy are further issues. A decrease in the diversity of viewpoints within the media sector and job displacement may result from the growing reliance on AI technology (Mahajan et al., 2024).

Additionally, AI might be used to provide immersive narrative experiences using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), giving viewers a stronger connection to news material.To guarantee that the fundamental principles of journalism are maintained, it is imperative to address concerns about algorithmic transparency, moral AI application, and maintaining journalistic integrity (Mahajan et al., 2024). The development of AI in journalism is changing the field by improving reporting skills and providing news companies with previously unheard-of prospects.Although there are obstacles to overcome, the ongoing development of AI holds the potential to significantly transform the collection, creation, and dissemination of news, which will eventually benefit both reporters and viewers (Mahajan et al., 2024).

2.2 AI in News Revolutionizing and Production

Applications of AI in journalism have been characterized as a potential disruption of conventional journalistic practices as well as a tool for increasing efficiency. According to Noain-Sánchez (2022), artificial intelligence (AI) can automate repetitive tasks like creating content from structured data (like sports results, financial reports, and weather forecasts), freeing up journalists to work on more intricate and in-depth stories. This supports the findings of Newman (2020) and Diakopoulos (2019), who contend that by managing repetitive tasks and offering data-driven insights, AI technologies increase journalists' productivity. The use of AI in news production also includes trend detection, information verification, and personalized content creation (Tejedor & Vila, 2021).

Verification and fact-checking are two of AI's most exciting applications. According to Opdahl et al. (2023), artificial intelligence (AI) systems can assist journalists in rapidly analyzing large datasets, spotting discrepancies, and providing real-time fact verification. News companies may become more effective at stopping the spread of false information by using automated tools to help verify the integrity of data, photos, and videos. The Star could make sure that their content satisfies the strict requirements for accuracy and dependability by using AI to expedite fact-checking. Journalists may concentrate on more intricate, investigative reporting by employing AI to automate repetitive verification activities, which will increase news output speed and quality.

Despite these advantages, there are serious reservations about the caliber of content produced by AI. According to studies, AI systems might not have the same sophisticated awareness of tone, context, and ethics as human journalists (Graefe, 2016). Because algorithms mirror the biases present in the data they process, AI's reliance on pre-existing data sets may also reinforce biases (Manfredi-Sánchez & Ufarte-Ruiz, 2020). These biases cast doubt on the veracity of news produced by AI and the possible harm that misinformation can cause. These issues highlight the necessity of ethical standards and human oversight as AI tools proliferate in newsrooms. Paes (2024) discusses the effects of AI-generated news on content curation, specifically with regard to tailored news feeds. According to the study, people can design their own customized news agendas with AI-driven systems, choosing the content they wish to receive according to their tastes (Paes, 2024, p. 17). Although this increases user involvement, it also brings up serious issues with news quality, diversity of opinion, and filter bubbles (Paes, 2024, p. 18). Algorithms run the risk of strengthening preexisting prejudices and limiting exposure to different viewpoints since they favor content that supports users' preexisting opinions.

The practice of journalism is being revolutionized by AI's capacity to automate the creation of content. According to Broussard (2018), AI is capable of performing jobs like data analysis, basic news article production, and report writing at a rate that is far faster than that of humans. AI algorithms are already being used by The Star to provide reports on weather, sports scores, and financial markets—areas that call for a lot of data and repetitious content. In addition to saving time, this automation lowers operating expenses, allowing journalists to concentrate on more in-depth and complex reporting (Broussard, 2018).

However, Napoli (2020) notes that AI can only produce content based on organized data. While AI is excellent at reporting on subjects like sports or financial earnings, it is limited in its ability to cover intricate, interpretive concerns. AI cannot replace the critical intellect, context, and ethical judgment needed for investigative reporting, political analysis, and social criticism (Napoli, 2020). Therefore, there is a chance that while AI boosts efficiency, it could also result in less thorough and high-quality writing, particularly when complicated topics call for editorial control and human empathy. This implies that The Star needs to use AI sparingly and set explicit guidelines for the kinds of material it can produce.

According to Marconi & Siegman (2020), artificial intelligence (AI) in journalism should not be viewed as a substitute for human journalism, but rather as an addition to it. By automating tedious chores, AI can improve content production, but it shouldn't replace human creativity and editorial judgment. Instead, than replacing human reporters in the creation of thorough, in-depth, and analytical journalism, they propose that AI be utilized to assist journalists in creating richer, more individualized material (Marconi & Siegman, 2020). This realization emphasizes how crucial it is to maintain the human element of journalism even as newsrooms incorporate AI technologies.

Audiences' perceptions of news information are greatly influenced by their level of trust in the media, and AI-generated content has sparked fresh debates over the veracity and authenticity of news. According to Mayer et al. (1995) and Riegelsberger et al. (2005), trust is the readiness to depend on people because of their perceived competence and integrity. This refers to the conviction that news outlets present fair, reliable, and true information in journalism. According to Opdahl et al. (2023), audience context is crucial since how news is presented and structured can have a big impact on how people interpret it. Depending on the platform, source, and level of transparency of AI engagement, public trust in content produced by AI might vary. When transparency indicators reveal the use of artificial intelligence (AI) or customization in content generation, audiences may be more likely to accept news from well-known, reliable sources like The Star than from less well-known platforms (Opdahl et al., 2023).

Paes (2024) investigates the connection between transparency indicators and public trust, concentrating on whether revealing that news is AI-generated or tailored to the reader affects the organization's and the story's credibility. According to the study, trust in the company, the news article, and the author's reputation generally declines when transparency indicators indicating tailored content are present (Paes, 2024, p. 14). This implies that while tailored news can increase user engagement, it can also increase doubt about the content's veracity if it is thought to be manipulative or algorithm-driven. According to Opdahl et al. (2023), XAI can increase the credibility of AI-generated news by enabling users to comprehend the reasoning behind specific choices or content selections. By using explainable AI, The Star may make sure that their AI technologies are viewed as transparent, which would increase public confidence in their material. The term "explainable AI" (XAI) describes AI systems that are made to be transparent and intelligible to people, especially when it comes to decision-making. Opdahl et al. (2023) point out that this feature might be used to increase the variety of content and give readers a more comprehensive view of the news.

Furthermore, media skepticism encompasses mistrust of both news content and AI tools employed in news production. The dehumanization of the news production process, loss of editorial control, and job displacement are among the reasons why journalists themselves are frequently afraid about AI (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). Even sophisticated AI tools are still seen as lacking the human element necessary for genuine journalistic integrity, as Paes (2024) points out, even though they have the potential to enhance journalists' talents. Davis (1989) created the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which describes how people's opinions about a technology's utility and usability affect their choice to embrace it. According to Choung et al. (2023), the model has been expanded to incorporate trust as a crucial element in determining attitudes toward technology. Paes (2024) uses TAM in the context of AI in journalism to investigate how acceptance of AI impacts confidence in news outlets, articles, and their veracity. According to the study, as long as the AI system is seen as dependable and helpful, there is a positive correlation between increased AI adoption and increased trust in AI-generated news (Paes, 2024, p. 19). This research implies that reader familiarity with AI systems and journalists' opinions of AI technologies are important factors in shaping trust in AI-generated content.

. This idea needs to be updated for the digital age, where machine learning and customization algorithms are crucial in deciding which news stories are shown to customers, in the context of AI-driven journalism. Through customization, AI-driven systems shape the news agenda by selecting articles according to user preferences and actions, which has an effect on the general public conversation. Tsfati (2003a) points out that the conventional agenda-setting effects can be weakened by media skepticism. Perceptions of bias, false information, or a lack of transparency in the news production process, especially when AI tools are used, can erode public faith in media companies. Paes (2024) adds to this conversation by examining the ways in which transparency markers—like stating that a news article is AI-generated or

personalized—can affect readers' confidence in the company, the narrative, and the author's authority. According to Paes's research, transparency indicators can have a positive or negative impact on trust, and unless explicitly identified, tailored content is seen with suspicion (Paes, 2024, p. 17).

Algorithmic prejudice is one of the biggest ethical issues with AI-driven journalism. Because algorithms are trained on pre-existing datasets that may naturally reflect societal biases, Dörr & Hollnbuchner (n.d.) identify bias as a fundamental ethical concern. AI systems have the potential to reinforce and even magnify these biases, resulting in underrepresentation of particular points of view or distorted depictions of news events (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, n.d., p. 9). This is especially troublesome when it comes to journalistic integrity because biased algorithms can skew news narratives, which exacerbates issues of marginalization and inequality in society. According to Opdahl et al. (2023), AI systems have the ability to reinforce preexisting biases in news generation by relying too much on reputable sources while ignoring other viewpoints. By elevating some voices or viewpoints while marginalizing others, the automation of information collection raises the possibility of influencing the news narrative. Furthermore, the credibility of digital journalism is threatened by AI's capacity to produce deepfakes and cheapfakes, which are incredibly realistic but fraudulent media content. The credibility of the media is directly threatened by the capacity to create and alter multimedia material without human scrutiny (Opdahl et al., 2023). The Star believes that human monitoring and specialized technologies for content authenticity verification are crucial because AI has the capacity to create information that is deceptive or manipulated. To guarantee that the information disseminated to the public is reliable and correct, AI systems must include verification techniques (Opdahl et al., 2023).

2.3 The Future of AI in Journalism

AI-journalism offered a significant potential in transforming the media industry by improving the operational efficiency, increasing the coverage and also enhancing the audience engaement. However, this review demonstrated that the growing role in AI in newsrom raises important questions regarding the ethical implications, news credibility, transparency, the accountability and also the pulic trust in the media. The integration of AI must be managed very carefully to make sure it complements journalistic values rather than undermines them.

The ongoing incorporation of AI technologies is probably going to be a defining feature of journalism in the future. Journalists will have to adjust to new procedures and methods that make efficient use of AI as its capabilities develop. This could entail reconsidering conventional journalistic responsibilities and adopting a more cooperative strategy that blends machine efficiency with human inventiveness (Latar & Nordfors, 2011).

Furthermore, continued debates among interested parties, such as journalists, engineers, and legislators, will be necessary to address the ethical implications of AI in media. Latar and Nordfors (2011) emphasize the necessity for ethical guidelines to govern the use of AI in the news business and urge a cooperative investigation of the possible impacts of AI algorithms on journalism and its social role. To make sure AI is used as a tool to improve journalism rather than to undermine it, this cooperative approach will be crucial.

2.3.1 The Role of AI in Shaping the Future of Journalism

Newsroom are using AI technologies more and more to improve the efficiency and efficacy of news production. By customizing news to each user's tastes based on their behavior and interaction patterns, AI can help deliver personalized content. By analyzing digital identities, news organizations can produce information that is specifically tailored to appeal to particular audience segments, enabling this personalization (Latar & Nordfors, 2011). AI might

thereby improve audience contentment and engagement, which would ultimately result in a better-informed populace.

Journalism is changing significantly because of artificial intelligence's (AI) quick development. In addition to automating repetitive journalistic chores, AI-driven technologies are opening new avenues for news production, distribution, and consumption. But there are also serious drawbacks to this technological revolution, such as moral conundrums, worries about job displacement, and the requirement to preserve public confidence in automated news systems. With the ability to handle jobs like transcription, fact-checking, data analysis, and content translation, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are becoming more and more integrated into journalistic processes. By increasing the speed and effectiveness of journalistic procedures, these tools free up journalists to concentrate on more imaginative and critical facets of their work. AI can, for example, examine enormous information, spot trends that the public finds interesting, and even spot irregularities that could inspire investigative journalism. Additionally, it helps in text-to-audio conversion, video editing, and subtitling. (Whittaker, 2019; Iaroshenko, 2024). These days, AI can create whole articles, multimedia, and even virtual and augmented reality experiences. Since AI tools can create material faster and more cheaply than human journalists, this has important ramifications for newsrooms. Concerns about the transparency, dependability, and biases present in AI-generated information persist despite these benefits. AI could spread false information or produce material that lacks the sophisticated judgment of human journalists if it is not properly supervised. (Iaroshenko, 2024; Türksoy, 2022).

News businesses like The Star have embraced AI's potential to automate repetitive jobs like delivering financial reports, weather updates, and sports scores, as noted by Broussard (2018). The increasing need for data-driven, real-time content is met in part by automation in these domains. But the quality of journalism shouldn't suffer as a result of this technical

improvement. The Star must make sure that its journalistic output maintains depth and insight, especially for complicated, human-centered topics, even while AI technologies can increase speed and scale. AI lacks the human judgment and ethical concerns necessary to comprehend the wider ramifications of political, social, or cultural issues, as Napoli (2020) highlights. Human oversight will continue to be necessary for investigative reporting, which entails ethical decision-making and sophisticated analysis. Therefore, while AI can streamline routine reporting, it should never replace the role of skilled journalists in shaping and interpreting the news.

In the future, artificial intelligence (AI) will probably play a more complementary role in journalism, supporting it rather than replacing it. News companies should embrace AI as a supplementary tool that complements human journalists, enhancing their skills rather than replacing them, according to Marconi & Siegman (2020). In order to preserve journalism's integrity and credibility while making sure that news creation stays quick, effective, and pertinent in a media world that is changing quickly, it is imperative that AI and human abilities be integrated.

The entire news production pipeline is expected to see increasingly complex AI applications in journalism in the future (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024; de-Lima-Santos & Ceron, 2022; Noain-Sánchez, 2022). The creation of more complex and human-like writing will be made possible by developments in natural language processing (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024). More impactful investigative journalism will result from AI's growing capacity to mine and analyze massive datasets (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024). Personalized content delivery, automated fact-checking, and real-time reporting support will proliferate, increasing the effectiveness and engagement of news consumption (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024). But human interaction is still important in journalism (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024; Noain-Sánchez, 2022; Pavlik, 2023).

The critical thinking, ethical judgment, nuanced narrative, and investigative abilities of journalists will always be crucial, especially when covering delicate, difficult, or emotionally charged subjects (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024). In order to guarantee accountability, reduce biases, and preserve journalistic integrity, human oversight of AI systems will continue to be necessary (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024; Noain-Sánchez, 2022). It is anticipated that new journalistic positions will emerge and that human journalists and AI systems would work together more frequently (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). Additionally, giving journalists the knowledge and abilities to use and assess AI technologies critically will require education and training in AI literacy (Noain-Sánchez, 2022; Pavlik, 2023). Navigating the ethical issues raised by AI-driven media will require constant research, the creation of ethical standards, and industry-wide partnerships (Amponsah & Atianashie, 2024; Noain-Sánchez, 2022).

Transparency, accountability, and responsibility are ethical concerns that have grown in significance as AI is further incorporated into media. According to Paes (2024), transparency markers are essential for guaranteeing the legitimacy and responsibility of material produced by artificial intelligence. According to the study, news companies need to be clear about whether their content is personalized or AI-generated because audience trust is greatly impacted by this disclosure (Paes, 2024, p. 14). This is in accordance with the demand for AI journalism codes of ethics, which would clearly define the roles and duties of journalists, designers, and engineers who create and use AI tools (Noain-Sánchez, 2022). Building on this worry, Dörr & Hollnbuchner (n.d.) emphasize the importance of algorithmic openness in reducing biases and guaranteeing the responsibility of AI systems in journalism. They contend that journalists and viewers alike are unable to evaluate the neutrality and dependability of AI-generated material due to the lack of openness in the data sources, algorithmic procedures, and code used to create news (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, n.d., p. 9). Since transparency helps the public

and journalists alike to comprehend the sources of the information and assess its reliability, it is essential for maintaining journalistic integrity.

Algorithmic bias is a problem with AI systems, particularly those powered by machine learning algorithms. A misleading picture of events, individuals, and issues might result from biases contained in the data that these systems are trained on (Opdahl et al., 2023). Even though this bias may not be deliberate, it has important ramifications because AI systems frequently function without transparent decision-making processes or explicit explanations. Users are consequently unable to comprehend or evaluate the dependability of content produced by AI (Opdahl et al., 2023). Algorithmic transparency is essential to fostering public trust in The Star's case. Audiences will need to be able to understand how AI systems decide, from choosing stories to creating content, in order for them to have faith in the integrity of the news they consume

The paper "Ethical Challenges of Algorithmic Journalism" by Dörr and Hollnbuchner (n.d.) provides a thorough framework for examining the moral ramifications of automated news production. The authors draw attention to the particular difficulties presented by algorithmic journalism while drawing on previous research in media ethics, cyberethics, and philosophy of technology. Their recognition of algorithmic bias as a serious ethical issue is a crucial contribution (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, n.d., pp. 9-10). Drawing on Weischenberg, Malik, and Scholl's classification of journalism as well as Pürer's multi-layer theory of responsibility, Dörr & Hollnbuchner (n.d.) present a sophisticated framework for dealing with these ethical dilemmas. This paradigm emphasizes that media companies, programmers, platform providers, and even the public have ethical obligations in AI-driven journalism that go beyond those of individual journalists (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, n.d., p. 12). It is the duty of all parties involved in the creation, dissemination, and consumption of AI-generated news to guarantee the technology's moral and open application.

2.3.2 Responsible AI Integration for the Future of Journalism

There are a lot of ethical issues as well as great potential for AI in journalism. Though they must be used with careful consideration of ethical norms and transparency, AI-driven technologies have the potential to transform content production, increase productivity, and broaden coverage. As shown by Marconi & Siegman (2020), Broussard (2018), and Napoli (2020), the incorporation of AI must enhance human editorial control rather than take its place. Transparency, accountability, and fairness must be given top priority by news organizations like The Star in order to preserve their reputation and public confidence.

The Star can capitalize on AI's advantages while maintaining its journalistic integrity by creating explicit ethical standards for its usage, guaranteeing human input in editorial choices, and tackling problems like algorithmic bias and transparency. In a time when technology is developing quickly, media companies must continue to be watchful in their attempts to utilize AI responsibly, respecting journalism's ideals and making sure that AI improves rather than lowers the caliber of news reporting.

Chapter 3: Methodology

A qualitative research approach will be used to give a thorough understanding of how AI affects audience perceptions, journalistic practices, and news credibility. In addition to collecting broad, generalizable data on public perceptions, these methods will allow the study to explore the detailed, nuanced insights from industry professionals who are directly involved in the integration of AI in newsrooms. To capture the complex nature of people's subjective experiences and interpretations, this study uses a phenomenological approach within a qualitative research design. An open-ended questionnaire is the main tool used to collect data, allowing participants to share their thoughts, feelings, and lived experiences related to their interactions with AI-generated journalism. Thematic analysis provides insights into the

different ways AI-driven content influences readers' viewpoints and behaviours by locating and analysing recurrent themes and patterns in participant narratives. The phenomenological method also seeks to investigate the perceptions and lived experiences of participants who have interacted with AI-generated news from The Star. This method aims to reveal the complex ways that AI affects people's perceptions, levels of trust, and actions about the veracity and transparency of news. The study predicts that these experiences will show up as changed behaviours, like heightened scepticism toward news sources or shifts in online engagement patterns brought on by apprehensions regarding the objectivity and dependability of AI-generated content.

3.1 Research Design

This study's research design is based on a descriptive and exploratory framework. By examining how journalists and viewers view AI-generated news and the moral dilemmas surrounding its use in newsrooms, the study seeks to understand how AI-driven journalism affects public trust and news credibility. Because the subject is new and complicated, an exploratory design is necessary to find fresh perspectives and comprehend the various ways AI is changing journalism. To give comprehensive information regarding the opinions of various stakeholder groups (such as audiences, journalists, and media professionals), the study will also use a descriptive methodology to methodically explain the relationship between AI and trust in journalism.

- **Descriptive Research**: This design will allow for a detailed description of how AI is integrated into journalism at *The Star* and how it affects audience trust and credibility perceptions.
- **Exploratory Research**: This approach will help identify potential ethical concerns related to AI and uncover **new insights** on AI’s role in shaping journalistic practices.

To give a comprehensive analysis, the study will use qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus group. In the context of AI-driven journalism, this combination guarantees a comprehensive understanding of how AI affects news credibility and public trust.

3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

Journalists, editors, and media managers will participate in semi-structured interviews to acquire qualitative information on their experiences using AI in the newsroom. The ethical issues, the effect of AI on editorial control, and the ways in which AI-generated news influences their perspective on journalistic credibility and trust will all be covered in these interviews.

3.2.1 Interview Structure:

Open-Ended Questions: The interview guide will feature open-ended questions that allow for in-depth responses. Example questions include:

- "What ethical challenges have you faced when integrating AI into your newsroom?"
- "How do you ensure AI-generated content maintains journalistic standards such as accuracy, fairness, and transparency?"
- "What are the barriers to effective editorial oversight when working with AI in the newsroom?"
- "In your experience, does AI help improve the credibility and trustworthiness of news content?"
- "How do you balance AI-driven content creation with human editorial judgment?"

Follow-Up Probes: The semi-structured nature of the interviews allows for flexibility. After receiving an initial response, the interviewer can probe deeper into specific topics. For example:

- "Can you share an example of how AI content influenced a news story's editorial direction?"
- "How do you address potential biases in AI-generated content?"

Sampling Method: To choose individuals with first-hand knowledge of AI in journalism, purposive sampling will be employed. This covers The Star's and other media organizations' journalists, editors, and media managers who use AI to produce news. Sample size: Around 3-6 interviews will be conducted, ensuring the depth of data while maintaining the variety in responses across the different role within the media organization.

Data Analysis: Thematic analysis will be used to code and categorize the interviewees' responses into themes. Thematic analysis will assist in locating recurrent problems, trends, and revelations about bias, AI ethics, journalistic standards, and confidence in AI-driven media. The coding process will be aided by software tools such as NVivo or Atlas.ti.

3.4 Preliminary Data Collection

To create a solid basis for the primary data collecting procedure, the preliminary data collection phase is a crucial prelude to this study. This stage improves the study's validity and reliability by making sure the technique and research instruments are in line with the goals and research questions.

3.4.1 Purpose of Preliminary Data Collection

Preliminary data collecting serves several purposes. First, by obtaining preliminary information from a small sample of stakeholders, it seeks to improve research instruments including interview guides and focus group protocols. Second, it finds new problems and reoccurring patterns in AI-driven journalism that are pertinent to the goals of the study. For example,

knowing the issues around bias, transparency, and trust in AI-generated news will guarantee that the research tools adequately address these areas.

Additionally, gathering preliminary data offers a chance to assess the viability of the study's technique. The research team can find any uncertainties or difficulties that may come up during the primary data collection phase by using pilot testing and casual conversations. Lastly, this stage provides baseline information to direct the more in-depth investigation of research issues, guaranteeing that the study is in line with practical viewpoints.

Literature Review

A thorough assessment of the body of existing literature is the first step in the preparatory phase. Examining scholarly and commercial studies on AI's function in journalism, its effect on public confidence, and the moral dilemmas raised by its incorporation are all part of this. The study's theoretical foundation is established through a critical analysis of issues including algorithmic bias, accountability, and transparency.

There are two main functions of the literature review. It first identifies research gaps that the study seeks to fill. For instance, while a lot of research shows how effective AI is at journalism, less attention is paid to how viewers view AI-generated news in terms of trustworthiness and trust. Second, the results of the literature research are used to guide the formulation of pertinent and knowledge-based interview.

Pilot Testing of Research Tools

The effectiveness of the semi-structured interview guides is assessed through pilot testing. To test these tools, a small sample of participants is chosen, comprising readers, editors, and journalists. The purpose of the pilot testing is to: Evaluate the questions' relevancy and clarity; Ascertain whether they successfully elicit insightful and thorough answers. Examine the research tools for any inconsistencies or gaps. A pilot test might show,

for instance, that some questions are overly general or neglect to cover important facets of AI-driven journalism. The guides are updated in response to participant input to make sure they are accurate, interesting, and in line with the goals of the study.

Chapter 4: Findings/Result

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will show the result of six respondents through a semi- structured interview, and the interview is analyzed using thematic analysis, which systematically transcribed the answer given by the respondents through where their perspective is categorized into recurring themes and sub-themes. The researcher will address the three key research questions by exploring the

Name	Age (years old)	Gender	Occupation	Role Respondent
Ms. Amanda Lee Xin Yee	22	Female	The Star Media journalist (Intern)	Journalist Respondent A
Ms. Kirubashini Rasalingam	31	Female	The Star Media Sport journalist	Journalist Respondent B
Mr. Arun A/L Narayana	40	Male	The Star Media senior journalist	Journalist Respondent C
Lee Weng Kit	24	Male	Student	Reader Respondent A
Teoh Wen Tian	22	Female	Student	Reader Respondent B
Alexes Ng Yi Yen	22	Female	Student	Reader Respondent C

factors that influence public trust, perceptions of credibility and accuracy. The study involved two groups of respondents which consisted of three journalists from *The Star* and three readers of the newspaper. This allowed the researcher to segregate both perspectives, which is the newsroom perspective and the audience perspective that enables a more balanced understanding

of AI's role in shaping in shaping the news production. Through thematic analysis, the researcher can identify three major themes that are identified as Factor Affecting Public Trust in AI-Driven Journalism, Influence of AI on Credibility and Accuracy and Perceptions of Effective in Meeting Audience Information Needs.

According to earlier studies, public trust, ethics, and preparedness are critical concerns about AI in journalism in Malaysia (Ismail Sualman, 2025; Dominic, 2025). Malaysian journalists, for instance, are deeply concerned about how artificial intelligence (AI) technology may affect public trust through elements like algorithmic bias, job loss, and commercial pressure, according to a study on AI technology and its significance to the profession and ethics journalism in Malaysia. As a result, this study expands on that line of research by examining public perceptions of the trade-offs of AI support in addition to the newsroom viewpoint.

4.2 Theme 1: Factors Affecting Public Trust in AI- Driven Journalism

Public trust lies in the central of Journalism, and all the respondents highlighted the concern of transparency, ethical risks and biasness when talking about the usage of AI in the newsroom that would disseminate to the public. This are key factors that influence the trustworthiness of AI- generated content.

4.2.1 Ethical Challenges and Transparency

As AI becomes more embedded into the newsroom and content creation, it has significantly changed how the information is produced, distributed and consumed. For journalists, AI represents both opportunities to be more efficient and a challenge to editorial integrity. For readers point of view, the news created by AI raises concern about the accuracy, transparency and the trustworthiness of the source. This theme discusses the respondent's exposure to AI- generated content whether they are using it or reading from the source that are AI generated.

(… "Not knowing which piece is written with AI or by a journalist… felt like the news is less trustworthy like sometimes it's not just about the write up but the image might appear distorted which will affect my further trust on the newsroom…like feels like they don't give much effort in fact checking before publishing the new…" , Reader Respondent A)

(… "Actually, I don't mind AI being used when creating a content but at least make a disclaimer at the bottom instead of making it hidden. I feel like this is a bit dishonest...", Reader Respondent B)

(… "I had tried using AI to help me with my content but not entirely… I know having AI right now is super easy to create content but most of the elder generation editor do not use it as we are scared that it will impact to the audience view towards us. But being honest we do use AI but not entirely for the content but just for assisting us with better headlines… It is true that sometimes we use AI but never informed our audience, but it was not for the whole content…", Journalist Respondent A)

From the interview, it shows that trust not only comes from AI producing correct information but also about respect that the audiences should get as a news consumer. Even journalist acknowledged this issue as a newsroom participants noted that even though they use AI sometimes for drafting or creating headlines but rarely informed the audiences about the use of AI. According to Paes (2024), that audiences always rate AI-generated contents are usually less trustworthy when they are not clearly labelled. Trusting News (2025) reports found out that the readers mostly demand the transparency of the use of AI. Being transparent is one of the functions of ethical safeguard even though AI might or might not produce correct information but failure to disclose its roles to lead the loss of trust from the audiences towards the news portal. The lack of clear labelling of AI-generated content may lead to readers feeling cheated as transparency is crucial to uphold the journalistic standard.

4.2.2 Accuracy and Manual Verification

Another factor for trust is accurate, how accurate can AI disseminate the content to the audience. When asked about the accuracy of AI generated news, the journalist stated that they still emphasized the need for manual verification.

("…AI is not 100% accurate... Even for us journalists we do not always rely on AI like I said previously, for me I do always manually check facts to ensure the content that I am publishing is real and readable to the audience. So, it is very important for me to always fact check...", Journalist Respondent A)

("… We only use AI for creating draft like how the skeleton of the content instead of the whole content as I seen so many fake AI videos on social media, but we have integrity would not take advantage of AI like… After all, human brains are still better than computers that can do a better fact check…", Journalist Respondent B)

This highlights the importance of human intervention when it comes to AI-generated content to ensure that it is factually correct and trustworthy. According to Tandoc & Johnson (2016), it is observed that AI can speed up reporting, but it cannot guarantee accuracy without a editorial oversight. Accuracy should be present with trust as respondents can accept AI if human touch is still involved in checking facts. This shows that audiences do not reject the AI uses but they only reject the overuse of AI without accountability. The findings from both groups' respondents were the same.

The respondents also highlighted the limitations of AI which can help with content creation but still could not replace the editorial oversight needed to verify the facts of the contents.

4.2.3 Awareness of Bias

Biasness in the program is common due to the reason being that humans were the creator of AI, and the organization could program or train them to be biased which would not explore more perspectives. The respondents stated about the potential dangers of relying fully on AI to create a content without careful checking would result in bias of the content.

("… I mean AI are also created by humans and they would program the technology to be biased. If AI learned something from a biased source, then the news would be biased and not neutral when you know as a news portal, they should not support any parties but if AI were to use to generate content, I doubt that it will be fair…", Reader Respondent C)
("… AI bias is a big issue because do can program or train it to bias to one perspective and it will keep on repeating endlessly even after so long…It is kind of concerning even for us journalist that is why we never recommend our colleagues to use AI other than drafting or to check spellings or grammar mistakes only…We do experiment with AI sometimes but we still feel that human can do better as we are better in keeping our stance neutral when writing a new or creating a content….", Journalist Respondent C)

This concern could be related to the findings by Dörr & Hollnbuchner (n.d.), that explained the responsibility for bias lies not only with the journalists but also with the developer and organization. The issue of the biasness of the system would also result in a repetition or reproduction of the same or existing societal biases, which further affect the credibility of AI- driven journalism.

4.3 Theme 2: Influence of AI on Credibility and Accuracy

The next theme focused on whether AI enhances or diminishes credibility. The responses show a subtle complex but interesting view, which is AI helps with clarity and efficiency, but the credibility will be dependent on editorial oversight and human expression.

4.3.1 Speed, Accessibility and Conditional Credibility

Today, AI can easily produce content quickly in today's fast-paced news cycle, most of the readers particularly understand the AI's speed as they can receive any updates on events in real time. AI can be efficient at summarizing the facts and provide you with timely updates, but it struggles with the human touch that are important to build trust and credibility in news produced. AI produces faster news compared to humans, but it does not mean that it is entirely true, and the credibility of the readers would be less as the respondents stated that they would not believe an article that is 100% AI-generated.

("…AI is good for summarizing reports or scanning through data quickly. It saves times…", Journalist Respondent A)
("…If AI only helps the journalist to present facts more clearly or handle data, then it would be okay… But it is not okay when the article is fully AI- written, then I will be skeptical about the accuracy of the article unless it is written disclaimer to warn the readers that this article is fully generated by AI…", Reader Respondent B)

("…News nowadays comes out so fast that I think editor might not even have the time to double check whether the article is written by AI or it is a humanized article. Article like this will be shallow or feel rushed in my opinion… I know that sometimes news are quick because of citizen journalism that are there on the spot but let's not count them but we look at that official news portal, some would be out faster than another one… But some information will be difference due to the use of AI and some article came out later but is filled full with detailed information…". Reader Respondent B)

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("…Some headlines or trending stories seem shaped by AI analysis of social media and sometimes it is useful…", Reader Respondent C)

While speed is crucial, it lacks emotional depth and this highlights the tension between the speed of the content and the emotional depth that the readers expect from the journalist. The concern highlights the opinion expressed by the journalist who explained the AI can be useful but not entirely. Journalists should see AI as an assisting tool instead of fully relying on the AI- generated content for the audience.

4.3.2 Editorial Oversight and the Human Voice

Editorial oversight was consistently addressed by both journalists and readers as they agreed as AI cannot replace human judgement. AI as an assisting tool should only be use for summarizing or spotting trends.

("…I feel like I would be able to easily recognize if the article is written by AI or not and it's all because AI could not imitate the human voice and emotion when writing an article. The final voices should be more humanized because we readers connect better when emotional perspective is included…", Reader Respondent C)

("…AI are very useful when it comes to summarizing but one thing that lacks by AI is the understanding the story behind the facts… I think humans are still needed so it is basically like humans are the cake and AI is like a garnishing helping to polish the article to make it more interesting…", Journalist Respondent B)

4.4 Theme 3: Perceived Effectiveness of AI and Its Implications for Trust and Credibility.

The third theme highlight the effectiveness and the respondents acknowledged that AI could help to meet the functional needs for the audience, but they found out that AI lacks in emotional depth and contextual richness in producing content.

4.4.1 Depth and Emotional Resonance

AI-generated content was usually seen as lacking emotional depth and understanding of human journalistic needs. The reader highlighted that emotional resonance is important in journalism as they want their stories no only inform but also able to engage them emotionally thus helping them understand towards the events involved. Gilardi et al. (2024) stated that while AI could handle tasks like summarization and analysis, human journalists remain essential for emotional storytelling. The respondent highlighted that he love it when journalist write as it enhances the emotion of the storytelling whereas AI could not imitate what human journalism can do.

("…I prefer when journalists give more perspective or emotion because this is one thing that AI cannot do…AI is good but I think they could only give us a general view or less emotion article compare to humanized article…I think because of the journalist tends to research more and AI just gather information and if they could not gather they would just give their own opinion…", Reader Respondent B)

4.4.2 Conditional Acceptance

Although AI has obvious limitations that necessitate human control, its useful efficiency and aid in some elements of content creation are the reasons for its conditional acceptance in journalism. As AI develops and is used in various newsrooms, questions have been raised about how technology can strike a balance between speed and the depth and emotional resonance needed for excellent writing.

("…AI is fine as long as it is only for assisting, but I wouldn't trust it to write a full article without the perceptions of accountability and responsibility…I have been writing my own content with the minimal use of AI yet I always am able to produce tip top", Journalist Respondent B)

(…AI can help summarize news quickly, but it doesn't have the ability to capture the emotional weight that a human writer can… As a student who love to read news, I always prefer to read something that is capture my attention than a repetitive point that kept on appearing", Reader Respondent A)

The statement by Reader Respondent A illustrates that AI alone will not be enough to produce an interesting content. This difference is further highlighted by Opdahl (2023), who claims that although AI is capable of handling data-driven content or simple reporting, human journalists are the ones who can emotionally engage an audience through human-centered storytelling. AI might, for example, produce a sports report that highlights scores and important data, but it would omit the human elements that readers value, such the player's journey, the team's hardships, or the emotional background of a significant win or defeat. On the other hand, journalists can give these stories human stories, emotional understanding, and wider cultural ramifications, which give readers more context and significance.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

5.1 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine how both journalists and readers of The Star perceive the integration of AI-driven journalism in relation to public trust, credibility, and effectiveness. Using semi-structured interviews with six participants and analysing responses through thematic analysis, the study identified three key themes: factors affecting trust, influence on credibility, and effectiveness in meeting information needs. This section discusses the findings considering existing literature and theoretical frameworks such as Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), journalism ethics, and algorithmic accountability.

5.1.1 Public Trust in AI- Driven Journalism

Trust in AI-driven Journalism is shaped by transparency, accuracy and awareness of bias. Without disclosure and oversight, audiences lose confidence. As highlighted by Reader Respondent A that she would wish that if the content is AI generated it must be labelled as a more trustworthy source. This helped to answer the first question as stated below. The respondent from both side had gave the same answer as the three factors would greatly impact how the audience would perceive the information. Without enough disclosure, readers may feel underinformed, which could erode their trust in the reliability of the news they are consuming (Paes, 2024).

The accuracy of content produced by AI is another important consideration. Even if AI is capable of processing massive datasets and summarizing news effectively, accuracy must be confirmed by humans. As Journalist Respondent A emphasized, “AI is not 100% accurate… Even for us journalists, we do not always rely on AI. I always manually check facts to ensure the content I am publishing is real and readable.” This shows the limitations of AI in independently verifying facts and ensuring that content aligns with the rigorous standards of journalistic integrity (Tandoc & Johnson, 2016).

Finally, bias became a major problem for readers and journalists alike. AI-generated material has the potential to reinforce prejudices because AI systems are frequently trained on datasets that may contain biased information. "AI is made by humans, and they could program it to be biased," said reader respondent C. The news will be prejudiced and not impartial if AI learns from a biased source. Bias in AI is a serious ethical problem, as Dörr and Hollnbuchner (n.d.) clarify, and human supervision is required to guarantee that material is impartial and devoid of systematic biases.

Research Questions 1: **What are the key factors that affect public trust in AI- Driven Journalism, particularly news organizations like The Star**

5.1.2 Influence of AI on Credibility and Accuracy

AI can support credibility by handling data and improving speed, but it undermines credibility when used without human voice and editorial control. When AI is deployed without human editorial oversight, it can damage journalism's credibility even though it can handle vast volumes of data and produce material rapidly. According to the study, AI is especially useful for jobs like financial summaries, routine reporting, and data aggregation, but it is not as good at more delicate or sophisticated reporting. One major worry raised was AI's incapacity to independently confirm facts. Respondent B, a journalist, said, "AI shouldn't completely replace human judgment. Although it might be useful for summarizing or identifying trends, the editorial process should still be guided by human judgment. This suggests that human supervision is essential to guaranteeing the fairness and correctness of content produced by AI (Tandoc & Johnson, 2016).

Furthermore, Zhaxylykbayeva et al. (2025) and Opdahl (2023) both stress that AI-generated content frequently lacks the contextual analysis that human journalists introduce to stories, especially when ethical issues are at play. AI might swiftly sum up a social issue or political event, for instance, but without a human viewpoint, it might overlook crucial moral subtleties or human ramifications.

Research Questions 2: **How does AI-generated content in journalism influence audience perceptions of the credibility and accuracy of news**

5.1.3 Perceived Effectiveness of AI and Its Implications for Trust and Credibility.

AI effectively provides fast, accessible news but fails to meet a deeper need for emotional resonance and contextual analysis. The results of this study, show that AI falls short in meeting deeper requirements for contextual analysis and emotional resonance, both of which are essential for holding readers' attention and building trust. As noted by Reader Respondent A, "I question the effectiveness of AI in reporting sensitive topics because, while it can summarize the facts for me, I don't feel like it ever captures the full emotional weight of an issue."

Particularly in fields like healthcare reporting, human interest tales, and political analysis, where empathy, emotional connection, and context are crucial for producing meaningful content, AI's lack of emotional depth was identified as a major drawback. AI can deliver fast updates, but it cannot replace the human factor that causes news stories to emotionally connect with readers, according to Gilardi et al. (2024).

According to the study, artificial intelligence (AI) does not meet deeper emotional or contextual demands, even while it does meet immediate information needs, especially for short updates. Although readers value AI's quickness, they believe it lacks the human insight and depth needed for more intricate stories. This supports the findings of Gilardi et al. (2024), who point out that whereas AI works well for routine reporting, it falls short for viewers who demand complex tales and human-centered storytelling.

Research Questions 3: **To what extent do audiences perceive AI-generated news on meeting their information needs**

5.2 Limitation

This chapter aims to answer the research question and to summarize the key findings related to the literature reviewed previously. The study shows how both journalists and readers of *The Star* perceive the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in journalism, with the focus on issues about public trust, news credibility and the effectiveness of AI- driven content. While conducting the research, the researcher came across few limitations in terms of scope and sample size. Firstly, the respondents are represented by younger and middle-aged groups, which means that the perspective of the elder group generation would not be fully captured as they do not always use AI in content creation. Next, the study relied mostly on self-reported answers from the interviewees, which might result to personal bias or maybe selective memory to answer only the result that they want us to know instead of having an official answer from the newsroom. Thirdly, Artificial Intelligence is constantly innovating, and the research cannot reach a proper conclusion due to the ever-changing of the AI technology.

5.2 Recommendation for future research

Being only given a short period of time to finish up chapter 1 until 3, which is only 7 weeks, is totally insufficient to properly do research on a topic that is ever-changing. This may result in not a very comprehensive literature review. More time should be allocated to properly review past references. Next, instead of just focusing on a specific newsroom, the researcher should include a larger and more diverse sample of respondents as this research was only limited to six respondents which consisted of only three journalists from *The Star* and three more readers. The single newsroom does not determine other different newsrooms so expanding the sample to include journalists from various media organizations and wider range of readers would be able to enhance more understanding conclusions. Apart from that, AI technology is constantly and rapidly evolving, not recommended for short-term research and

needs to be longitudinal research to examine on how the audience perspective changes over time. This would be able to help in identifying whether the initial skepticism would decrease or increase as AI becomes more practices in the newsroom.

5.3 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate how The Star's readers and writers view the application of artificial intelligence (AI) in journalism, with an emphasis on efficacy, credibility, and public trust. Using semi-structured interviews and an inductive qualitative methodology, the study examined the viewpoints of viewers and newsroom professionals, providing a fair assessment of AI's place in modern journalism. The research shows that the trust in AI- driven journalism is conditional and context dependent. While the respondents acknowledge that the efficiency and speed of AI would result in the lack of transparency, factual accuracy and the reproduction of bias in news production. For readers, they did mention that the integration of AI would reduce their willingness to trust news article while the journalists emphasized that the necessity of maintaining human oversight through fact- checking and editing. All these concerns reflect broader debates in journalism ethics.

Effectiveness of AI was understood in nuanced term, while most of the respondents stated that they agree that AI could meet certain criteria such as summarising information or tracking social media trends, but they also highlighted that there are limitations in providing emotional depth, context and narrative richness.

In conclusion, the study shows that rather than replacing journalists in the newsroom, AI should be viewed as an additional tool that helps them create content. Transparency, accountability, and ethical monitoring must serve as guiding principles for its adoption to ensure that audiences' trust is maintained and journalism's credibility is maintained.

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Faculty of Arts & Social Science

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AI- Driven Journalism: Examining the Impact on News Credibility and Public Trust in The Star

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Introduction

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in journalism has raised concerns about **News Reliability** and **Public Trust**. AI automates tasks like content creation and data analysis, enabling faster production and personalized content (Chen et al. , 2024; Morris, 2024). However, issue like bias and transparency arise, with critics arguing that AI lack human judgement needed for a fair reporting (Nguyen & Ho, 2023; Lee,2024). Balancing AI's efficiency with ethical journalism practices is crucial to maintaining credibility and public confidence (Salah & Adam, 2023)

PROBLEM STATEMENT

1. **AI's Impact on Journalistic Credibility:** The integration of AI in journalism raises concerns about its potential to undermine traditional principles such as truth, fairness, and transparency, leading to ta loss of public trust in news

2. **Lack of Empirical Research:** There is a significant gap in existing research on how Ai-Driven journalism specifically affects the credibility of news and public trust, especially in early adopters like The Star, creating a need for further investigation in this area

Research Objectives/ Significance

1. To understand the key factors that public trust in AI- Driven Journalism

2. To investigate how AI- generated content influences audience perceptions of news credibility and accuracy in the context of The Star

3. To examine the extent to which audiences perceive AI-generated news as effective in meeting their information needs

This Research address the gap in understanding how AI-Journalism affects the news credibility and public trust. By focusing on early adopters like The Star, it explores the ethical implications of AI, offering insights that can inform media practices and polices to maintain journalistic integrity and public trust (Carlson, 2021)

LITERATURE REVIEW

1) AI in Journalism

AI has revolutionized journalism by automating repetitive tasks such as data collection, transcription, and generating content. These tools allow journalists to focus more on creative and complex storytelling, while AI handles operational efficiencies (Nguyen & Ho, 2023). However, this integration raises concerns about the lack of human nuance and the potential depersonalization of news content (Mahoto,2022). Ethical consideration, such as transparency and the potential for Ai to reinforce existing biases, remain a challenge (Johnson & Lee,2024)

2) Impact on News Credibility and Trust

Public trust in AI- generated news is influenced by perceptions of bias and a lack of transparency in how algorithms curate and produce the content. Critics argues that AI's rely on algorithms could undermine the audience's confidence in journalism's integrity (Nguyen & Ho, 2023). To address these challenges, the concept of Explainable AI (XAI) has been proposed to clarify how decisions are made, enhancing credibility and audience trust (Opdahl et al.,2023)

3) Ethical Challenges

Algorithmic biases embedded in AI systems can distort news narratives and perpetuate societal stereotypes, threatening the credibility of AI-Driven journalism (Dörr & Hollnbuchner, n.d.). There are also concerns about job displacement and the dehumanization of the news production process, where AI is viewed as lacking the ethical judgement and emotional intelligence necessary for nuanced reporting (Mahajan et al.,2024). The lack of accountability and opaque decision-making processes further complicate the ethical landscape (Manfredi-Sanchez & Ufarte_Ruiz, 2020)

4) Future of AI in Journalism

The future of AI in journalism is seen as a complementary roe to human creativity. AI can enhance efficiency, automate repetitive task, and support real-time reporting, but would not be able to replace a human journalists' ethical judgement, critical thinking, or storytelling (Marconi & sigman,2020). Human oversight is crucial to ensure Ai-generated content adheres to journalistic standards and retains public trust (Napoli,2020)

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative

Sampling Technique:
Purposive Sampling

Sample
Media Outlet

Respondents
Journalist

Public Society :
Readers

Research Setting

Journalists from The Star and readers of newspapers

Data Collection Method

Semi – Structured Interviews

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis

FINDINGS

Ethical Challenges and Transparency

The lack of transparency in AI would affect the trust in news as readers expect a clear disclosure when AI is used. Sometimes AI are used by journalists but are not informed to the audiences

Accuracy and Manual Verification

Human fact checking is still needed as AI is not fully reliable in taking over journalists work. Journalist uses AI to draft a write up and will do manual verification to ensure accuracy

Awareness of Bias

AI would be systemic bias and both readers and journalists are worried that the biased AI undermines neutrality and fairness

Influence on Credibility and Accuracy

AI can make content feel rushed or shallow due to the speed of creating a content. Readers prefer human-written articles as it portrays more emotional depth and trust

Perceived Effective and Implication for Trust

AI can be accepted as a supporting tool but not a full content creator as trust remain tied to human involvement and the ehical use of AI.

Impact

Public trust in AI-Driven journalism is heavily influenced by three key factors which are transparency, accuracy and the bias awareness.

Though AI is fast in content creation compared to human content creation, but AI does not have the depth that audience looks for that only a human content creator can be done.

Audience will trust on content that is human created with human oversight rather than a news that is fully created by AI to avoid misinformation. However, they will accept if the news portal is being transparent when AI is being used.

Human-centered storytelling is necessary to build a deeper engagement and long-term credibility although AI meets the basic needs of what audiences need

Conclusion

- **Perception of AI Journalism**: Both readers and journalists view AI's role in journalism as a conditional use by valuing its speed and efficiency but concerns about the transparency, accuracy, bias, and reduced public trust.
- **Limitation of AI**: AI can be seen as a useful tool only like summarizing data or tracking trends but it has lack of emotional depth, context and narrative that is different from human journalistic
- **Role of AI and Ethical Consideration**: AI should only be a supporting tool instead of replacing human journalist. However this adoption of AI must be guided by transparency, accountability and ethical oversight to uphold the trust and journalist credibility

Recommendation

- **Insufficient Timeframe**: Having only 7 week to complete chapter 1 to 3 is too difficult due to the rapid evolving technology of AI in journalism, resulting in the potential shallow literature review. More time is needed if AI topic is being researched about

- **Limited Sample Size**: Only 6 respondents (3 journalists and 3 readers), responded making the finding less accurate. Journalist from different media outlet and a wider audience base would provide more robust insights.

- **Short- Term Scope:** The topic is not suited for a short- term research due to the fast-paced development of AI. A longer study should be done to track the changes of audience perception towards AI overtime

Limitation

- **Age Representation:** Due to the lack of respondents, the sample can't generalize the whole society opinions as the sample includes younger and middle-aged respondent, and their knowledge might not be as good as the younger one **.**

- **Self- reported bias:** The data was fully based on self reported interview, which may influence the bias of the respondent when answering the questions.

- **Rapidly Evolving AI :** Fast-changing nature of AI technology make the research could not entirely come to a conclusion

SUPERVISED BY : Ms Ang Siew Mun @ Ang Pike Har and Ms Michelle Wong

Note:
Incorporation of Blended Learning for UAMJ3073 and UAMJ3083

As per the DJR meeting held on 29th May, Wednesday, after FBO in P106, Block P, HOD Ms. Michelle has informed the department staff that DJR has nominated UAMJ3073 FYP 1 and UAMJ3083 FYP 2 to incorporate Blended Learning (OTL - Online Teaching and Learning) with effect June 2024 Trimester and onwards.

To implement OTL for UAMJ3073 FYP 1 and UAMJ3083 FYP 2, the supervisors can now arrange for consultation with the students ONLINE (OTL) for a minimum of 4 weeks and a maximum of 8 weeks.

FYP Student Name	ID: 2207209	HP Number : 017-5579510	
1. Helmi Nafiz Lee Hanif Lee			
Date	Attended by	Progress	Signature
1.	24/6/2025	Talk about what is needed in final year project 2	
2.	8/7/2025	Restructuring of the interview question	
3.	22/7/2025	Update on the progress of the data collection	
4.	5/8/2025	Progress on the type of analysis to be used after data collection	
5.	27/8/2025	Report on progress and update on the data collection	ANG SIEW MUN
6.	3/9/2025	Managed to find 3 journalists as respondents and will be looking for 3 UTAR students as news readers	ANG SIEW MUN
7.	10/9/2025	I had interviewed two UTAR students and will be interviewing one more the next day. I will also try to find Mr. Phillip Gollingai and remind Ms. Kirubashini for the interview	ANG SIEW MUN
8.	17/9/2025	Data collection is completed. Update on the writing process	ANG SIEW MUN
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