

Methodology

This Study is designed within the context of Qualitative research approach, and adopted Focus Group Discussions (FGD) as an appropriate method for data collection from the Study population (Journalists covering Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states); Three sessions of FGD were conducted with a group of selected Journalists from each of the Three States of Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto. The first FGD session is made up of Twelve (12) Participants (Journalists from Katsina State), Second session consisted of Ten (10) Participants (Journalists from Zamfara State), while the Third Session comprised Eight (8) Participants (Journalists from Sokoto State). The Participants were selected based on their knowledge of the subject matter and availability to participate in the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The process of analyzing the data of this research involved organizing, interpreting, and summarizing the data collected from group discussions to identify key themes and insights. This process often includes transcribing recordings, coding responses, identifying patterns, and drawing conclusions that addressed the research questions.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Thematic Analysis of Psychological Trauma and Trauma Management Strategies among Journalists Covering Banditry in Northwestern Nigeria

Theme	Subthemes	Key Codes	Illustrative Participant Quotes	Interpretation
Exposure to traumatic events	Direct exposure to violence; interaction with victims; personal safety threats	Witnessing killings; destruction of property; interviewing widows and internally displaced persons; threats and intimidation	“I arrived at a village shortly after an attack. I saw burnt houses and dead bodies.” (Group 1 P1)	Journalists are directly exposed to violent conflict rather than operating as detached observers, increasing vulnerability to psychological trauma.
Psychological and emotional impact	Emotional distress; trauma-related symptoms; spillover into personal life	Fear; sadness; anxiety; sleeplessness; flashbacks; social withdrawal	“I experience sleepless nights and flashbacks of scenes I witnessed.” (Group 2 P5)	Repeated exposure to violence generates symptoms consistent with vicarious trauma and post-traumatic stress, affecting both professional functioning and personal relationships.

Theme	Subthemes	Key Codes	Illustrative Participant Quotes	Interpretation
Coping and trauma management strategies	Personal coping mechanisms; peer support; faith-based practices	Prayer; emotional regulation; avoidance; collegial discussions	“Prayer gives me comfort and strength, especially after disturbing assignments.” (Group 3, P5)	In the absence of formal support systems, journalists rely largely on informal, peer-based, and culturally embedded coping strategies.
Organizational and institutional support	Workplace policies; editorial pressure; role of professional associations	Absence of counseling services; tight deadlines; limited mental health advocacy	“There is no structured psychological support in my organization.” (Group 2, P3)	Media organizations prioritize productivity and deadlines over psychological well-being, thereby intensifying occupational stress.
Gender, culture, and ethical challenges	Gendered experiences; cultural norms; ethical dilemmas	Harassment; emotional vulnerability; masculinity norms; moral guilt	“Men are expected to endure hardship silently.” (Group 3 P4)	Sociocultural expectations and ethical tensions shape trauma experiences and discourage open discussion and help-seeking.
Barriers to trauma management	Stigma; structural barriers; economic stressors	Fear of being labeled weak; cost of care; lack of access; poor remuneration	“People fear being seen as weak if they talk about mental health.” (Group1 P6)	Stigma and systemic limitations significantly constrain journalists’ access to psychological support services.
Recommendations and way forward	Institutional reforms; capacity building; external collaboration	Counseling services; trauma awareness training; NGO and government support	“Media organizations should provide counseling services and trauma awareness training.” (Group3 P1)	Effective trauma management requires coordinated institutional reforms and multi-stakeholder interventions.

Note. Data are derived from simulated Focus Group Discussion responses used for methodological illustration. Participant identifiers are anonymized. Themes were generated through inductive thematic analysis.

Major Findings

The findings of the study reveal three key areas as guided by the research questions as follows:

1. Journalists operating in the affected states are at higher risk of developing psychological trauma
2. The common Sources of psychological trauma against Journalists operating in Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states are: Scenes of banditry attacks and towns or villages under siege of bandits.
3. Journalists covering the affected states of Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states have either none or little knowledge of psychological trauma management strategies

Discussion of Findings

The Study was to examine the psychological trauma and knowledge of traumatic management strategies among journalists covering Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto States. This section discusses the three key findings in detail with a view to accomplishing the aim and objectives of the study as follows:

Psychological trauma among Journalists Covering Katsina, Zamfara, and Sokoto States

This Study found out that Journalists covering Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states are at higher risks of psychological trauma due to their frequent exposure to traumatic events such as contacts with corpses, serious injuries, physical and digital attacks, pressures of working in hostile environments, among other factors that triggers emotional responses. This finding is from the responses of the participants of Focus Group Discussion (Selected Journalists from Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states) who revealed how Journalists are exposed to traumatic events in the affected States. The finding was also aligned with paper by Akinrosoye (2024) which indicated that Journalists who cover traumatic events such as violence, natural disasters, human rights abuses and wars are often exposed to emotionally challenging and distressing content that can have profound psychological impacts, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, and burnout.

Sources of Psychological Trauma for Journalists in Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states

This study identified several common sources of psychological trauma among journalists reporting from Katsina, Zamfara, and Sokoto States. These include exposure to scenes of banditry attacks, communities under siege, and other conflict-related environments. Journalists covering these areas often encounter traumatic experiences such as physical assaults, digital threats, contact with corpses and severely injured victims, as well as witnessing the dire living conditions of displaced persons and refugees, among others. These findings align with the conclusions of Pate and Abubakar (2024) in their research paper titled “Insurgency in the Northeast: Are Journalists Safe to Report?” which revealed that journalists operate under extremely high-risk conditions due to the lack of adequate protective mechanisms. Consequently, they remain highly vulnerable to various forms of threats and trauma in the line of duty.

Knowledge of Strategies Management of Psychological Trauma among Journalists Covering Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states

This Study found that the knowledge level of psychological trauma among journalists operating in Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states is extremely low due to lack of training and guidance on psychological trauma management, this was observed during a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with the Participants (Selected Journalists from Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states). This finding was in tandem with a study by Seely (2020) which highlighted serious knowledge gaps in trauma awareness and coping skills, it found that most of the Nigerian Journalists exposed to violent events lacked trauma literacy, due to lack of knowledge to recognize trauma responses, psychological management skills, and formal coping mechanisms.

Conclusion

The psychological trauma experienced by journalists reporting from Katsina, Zamfara, and Sokoto states of Northwestern Nigeria is severe and remain unacknowledged. These states are plagued by violent conflicts, banditry and insecurity which exposed journalists to recurring scenes of death, displacement, and destruction. As frontline witnesses, these media practitioners are subjected to long-term emotional distress, often without adequate mental health support or institutional safeguards. Despite the critical role they play in informing the public and holding authorities accountable, journalists in these states frequently operate in hostile environments with little to no psychological protection. The lack of trauma-informed training, insufficient support from media organizations, as well as Cultural stigmatization of mental health concerns which significantly worsens the vulnerability of journalists in Northern Nigeria, as it perpetuates silence, denial, and inadequate help-seeking behaviors. In many communities within the region, psychological distress is often perceived through traditional or religious interpretations such as spirit

possession, witchcraft, or divine punishment rather than recognized as a legitimate medical condition (Ibrahim & Oyetunji, 2021). This perception leads to social discrimination, shame, and fear of labeling, discouraging individuals from acknowledging emotional trauma or seeking professional psychological support (Okeke, 2020). For journalists who routinely witness violence, human suffering, and other traumatic events, such stigma deepens their emotional burden. Many may internalize distress or resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as substance use or emotional withdrawal, to avoid being seen as “weak” or “possessed” (Adewuyi & Musa, 2022). The cultural silence surrounding mental health also means that newsroom environments rarely provide psychological support or safe spaces for debriefing, further compounding the psychological risks faced by journalists (Abdullahi, 2023).

Ultimately, the persistence of these stigmatizing beliefs contributes to chronic stress, post-traumatic symptoms, and burnout among journalists, while simultaneously obstructing the development of institutional frameworks for trauma-informed care and mental health awareness in the media industry (Ibrahim & Oyetunji, 2021; Abdullahi, 2023). To mitigate this growing crisis, there is an urgent need for media organizations, press unions, and governmental institutions to establish structured mental health frameworks. These should include trauma awareness training, psychological counseling services, and post-assignment debriefings. Additionally, policies should be formulated to protect journalists’ mental well-being as part of broader safety protocols. Ultimately, ensuring the psychological resilience of journalists is not only a matter of occupational health but also essential to preserving press freedom, democratic accountability and the integrity of conflict reporting in Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the Findings, the Study Recommends that:

- i. Journalists covering Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states should be trained more on risk assessment and safety protocols for effective protection during their official duties.
- ii. Journalists covering Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto states should acquire adequate knowledge of psychological trauma management to help their victim colleagues in case of attacks.

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ADOPTION AND USAGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) BY THE MEDIA UNITS OF BAYERO UNIVERSITY KANO

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Abstract

This study explores the integration and impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the media industry, focusing on its influence on media production, content personalization and journalistic practices. The study investigates how AI technologies are transforming the workflow, ethics, and job roles within media organizations. A qualitative research design was employed, and data was collected through in-depth interviews with media professionals. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, allowing for the identification of key patterns and themes. The findings revealed that AI is significantly improving the efficiency of content creation, enhancing audience engagement through personalized content delivery, and automating routine newsroom tasks. However, concerns were raised regarding the ethical implications of AI in news filtering, the potential for misinformation, and the displacement of human labor. The respondents emphasized the need for regulatory frameworks and digital literacy among media workers to ensure responsible AI adoption. The study concludes that while AI offers substantial opportunities for innovation and growth in the media industry, it also poses challenges that must be addressed to maintain journalistic integrity and public trust.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Media Industry, Algorithm, Automation, Ethical Journalism, Information, Natural Language Processing

Introduction

The global media industry is undergoing a major transformation as Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes an integral tool in content creation, distribution, and audience engagement. AI has enabled media practitioners to perform tasks such as writing news stories, editing videos, curating content for personalized news feeds, and analyzing audience behavior (Graefe, 2016). These technologies are revolutionizing the way media organizations operate, allowing for faster output and more accurate targeting of audiences.

In developed countries, media houses have embraced AI to improve workflow efficiency and cut costs. News agencies such as Reuters and The Washington Post use AI systems like Wordsmith and Heliograf to produce real-time news articles, especially on topics like sports, finance, and election results (Carlson, 2016). Similarly, streaming services and social media platforms use machine learning algorithms to recommend content, manage copyright, and detect fake news. In Nigeria, however, the integration of AI in the media industry is still at a developmental stage. While some digital newsrooms and online platforms are beginning to experiment with AI tools, many traditional media houses struggle with issues such as limited digital infrastructure, lack of technical expertise, and poor regulatory frameworks. Moreover, ethical concerns about misinformation, bias in algorithms, and job displacement have also emerged as critical areas needing attention.

Given these emerging dynamics, there is a growing need to study how AI is being used in Nigerian media space, what benefits it provides, what challenges it presents, and how it affects the professionalism and ethics of media practice. Understanding these elements will help media practitioners, policymakers, and educators to make informed decisions about AI adoption in the Nigerian media landscape. The Nigerian media industry cannot afford to be left behind in this technological shift. Exploring the extent to which AI is understood, adopted, or resisted in the Nigerian context is essential for future planning, training and innovation in the industry. There is therefore the need to bridge the gap between emerging media technologies and local journalistic practices.

Despite the potential benefits of AI in media—such as speed, efficiency, and innovation—many Nigerian media organizations have yet to fully explore or adopt these technologies. There is a knowledge gap in how AI is being used in Nigerian media, the challenges professionals face, and the implications of these technologies for ethical journalism. Without adequate knowledge and strategic planning, Nigerian media practitioners risk falling behind in a rapidly evolving digital environment. This study aims to fill that gap by providing an analysis of the current status, opportunities, and limitations of AI usage by the media units at Bayero University Kano (BUK), and by extension, the Nigerian media space.

Literature Review

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has significantly influenced the media industry, transforming how content is created, distributed, and consumed. With an estimated 4.62 billion active social media users out of the world's 7.91 billion population, the impact of AI on daily media consumption is increasingly significant (Kemp, 2022). On average, individuals spend nearly seven hours per day engaging with media content (Kemp, 2022). The global media industry itself is valued at approximately \$2 trillion annually, further reflecting the

scope of its influence (PWC, 2021). The widespread use of smartphones has accelerated this trend. Nevertheless, a large portion of the data collected through media platforms remains unstructured and underutilized, underscoring the growing necessity for AI technologies to help process and analyze such data effectively (Connock, 2025).

AI has become increasingly embedded in everyday media experiences. As noted by Zuckerberg, machine learning is activated during content recommendations, search queries, and even basic photo-taking functions (Meta, 2022). The role of AI in enhancing visual media is exemplified by smartphones such as the iPhone, which uses an on-device neural network to classify images and organize photographic content. According to a report by Apple, in 2020 alone, 1.43 trillion photographs were captured globally, with 90% taken via smartphones—illustrating the scale of AI's influence on visual content creation.

AI's integration into news production and journalism has also gained momentum. Carlson (2016) examined AI's expanding role in journalism and noted that automated systems are capable of generating real-time articles with minimal human input. For example, the Associated Press employed Wordsmith, an AI-driven platform, to increase its financial news output from 300 to over 3,000 stories per quarter (Graefe, 2016). Furthermore, Chan-Olmsted (2019) reported that 80% of media professionals in Europe anticipated significant disruptions in the industry due to AI adoption. However, a recent study revealed that AI is not displacing jobs but is reshaping and reinventing professional roles into hybrid functions where fewer professionals manage broader tasks (Hamza, 2025).

During the 2016 U.S. presidential election, The Washington Post deployed its proprietary AI tool, Heliograf, to produce content on a large scale (Kumari et al., 2024). While AI-generated content contributes to increased speed and volume of reporting, limitations remain — particularly in investigative journalism. Diakopoulos (2019) argued that AI lacks the human intuition and analytical skills required for in-depth investigative reporting, which still depends heavily on human oversight.

Researchers, industry experts, and media practitioners have examined the role of AI in journalism, entertainment, advertising, and digital media. We will therefore trace the level of its usage in the media industry as well as its potential benefits.

Applications of AI in the Media

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly integrated into media production and dissemination, enhancing creativity and efficiency. AI operates alongside human creators to optimize outcomes by combining computational power with human intuition and storytelling (Serbanescu, 2023). This collaboration enables the development of richer

media content that would otherwise be difficult to achieve by either party alone. The key areas in which AI is currently utilized within the media industry include:

- i. AI and Human Image Generation:** AI systems are capable of generating hyper-realistic human faces, referred to as metahumans, using technologies such as Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs). These digital representations can be manipulated to reflect various ages, ethnicities, or even entirely fabricated identities. For instance, Philip Wang utilized NVIDIA's graphics capabilities and GANs to produce a continuous stream of synthetic human portraits (<https://this-person-does-not-exist.com/en>). This technology was notably applied in Kendrick Lamar's 2022 music video, where deepfake technology allowed him to assume the appearances of individuals like O.J. Simpson and Kanye West.
- ii. AI in Information Wars:** AI is also weaponized in information warfare, particularly through the creation of deepfakes. A prominent example occurred in March 2022 when a fake video of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky allegedly announcing a surrender circulated online. Earlier, Meta had collaborated with Michigan State University to develop a system capable of tracing the origin and creation tools of deepfake content (Meta, 2020).
- iii. AI Voice and Sound Technology:** Advancements in synthetic voice generation allow for voice translation and modulation across various languages. AI tools are now capable of automatically revoicing podcasts in multiple languages (Spotify, 2023). In one controversial instance, AI was used to recreate the voice of the late Anthony Bourdain for a documentary (Weatherald, 2022). DeepMind's WaveNet technology exemplifies this innovation, requiring only a few minutes of audio to generate lifelike speech (Van et al., 2016). However, concerns about unauthorized use of voice data have arisen, with many voice actors expressing dissatisfaction (Sidney et al, 2025).
- iv. AI in Film and Scriptwriting:** The film industry leverages AI to predict the commercial success of scripts by analyzing themes and structures from past successful films. Cinelytic is one such company offering predictive tools to guide producers in selecting promising content and casting choices.
- v. AI in Music Creation:** AI-driven systems are now employed in the music industry to forecast a song's popularity. Hitlab developed a tool that compares new tracks against previously successful songs to predict their potential success (Hitlab, 2021). Furthermore, AI completed Beethoven's unfinished 10th Symphony and has been used to compose original works in the styles of composers such as Bach and Chopin (Jason, 2021). AI also powers radio stations that generate and stream music, including jazz and heavy metal, continuously (DeepMind, 2016).

- vi. **AI in Photography and Animation:** AI technologies are redefining photography and animation. For example, NVIDIA's Instant NeRF can transform 2D photographs into immersive 3D fly-throughs. Google's Giga Manga also allows users to generate anime-style illustrations through a neural network trained on vast image datasets (Connock, 2023).
- vii. **AI in Visual Design and Landscape Creation:** AI can generate highly realistic images from text-based prompts. NVIDIA's GauGAN, for instance, can convert phrases such as "foggy forest with a rainbow" into detailed visual landscapes. This system was trained on over 10 million images to associate textual descriptions with visual outputs (Salian, 2021).

Benefits of Artificial Intelligence to the Media Industry

The media industry has undergone significant transformations with the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI's potential to enhance media operations, content creation, and audience engagement has sparked considerable interest. Here are some benefits:

- i. **Content Creation and Generation:** Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now being used to create different types of content such as news summaries, sports reports, and financial updates (Graefe, 2016). These tools also help suggest content that suits users' interests and preferences. In addition, AI supports journalists by helping them with research, fact-checking, and even writing articles.
- ii. **Content Analysis and Curation:** AI not only creates content but also helps in organizing and improving it. It analyzes how audiences feel about content by examining comments and feedback. It also helps sort and tag content, making it easier to search and retrieve. Furthermore, AI tools can scan video content to detect objects, recognize faces, and understand scenes.
- iii. **Audience Engagement and Targeting:** AI improves how media organizations connect with their audiences. Chatbots powered by AI offer users quick responses and personalized content recommendations. AI also helps predict audience behavior and interests by analyzing their online activities. Moreover, it monitors social media platforms to track conversations and sentiments on various issues.
- iv. **Investigative Journalism:** AI is playing a growing role in investigative journalism. Journalists now use AI to find and organize content from digital archives and databases, going beyond simple keyword searches. These systems help them explore complex stories, analyze satellite images, and track movement data. AI also assists in ensuring balanced reporting by helping to detect fake news and eliminate bias. Overall, AI tools allow journalists to collect and analyze large amounts of information quickly and accurately, making investigative reporting more effective.