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Automation in Contemporary Newsrooms: AI Writing Tools, Verification Systems, and Their Influence on Editorial Decision-Making

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of automation technologies, specifically AI writing systems and automated verification tools, in contemporary newsroom editorial decision-making. Adopting a qualitative and exploratory research design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with journalists and editors from both legacy and digital-native news organizations. Thematic analysis reveals that AI writing technologies are deeply embedded in everyday newsroom routines and are largely perceived as collaborative tools that enhance efficiency, support content production under time pressure, and allow journalists to focus on higher-level analytical tasks. However, the findings also highlight several professional concerns, including automation bias, the potential loss of editorial voice, deskilling, and content homogenization. The study further indicates that automated verification systems strengthen journalists' capacity to manage misinformation at scale, particularly in fast-paced news environments, although these systems continue to require human oversight, contextual judgment, and ethical reasoning. Overall, the findings demonstrate that automation reshapes rather than replaces editorial authority, while hybrid human–algorithmic gatekeeping arrangements raise critical questions regarding accountability, transparency, and professional autonomy. This research contributes to journalism scholarship by providing qualitative insights into both the opportunities and challenges associated with the integration of automation technologies into editorial practice.

Keywords: Automation in journalism; AI writing tools; Automated verification; Editorial decision-making; Hybrid gatekeeping