

AI in Education: Teaching Journalism and Media With Chatbots

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ABSTRACT

The pedagogical, cognitive, and ethical implications of integrating AI chatbots like ChatGPT into journalism and media education are reshaping the landscape of classroom practice. This study investigates how students engage with AI tools across research, drafting, and revision phases, analyzing their impact on creativity, authorship, and ethical reasoning. Based on a mixed-methods study of 300 undergraduate and postgraduate students in India, the article presents usage trends alongside qualitative reflections on authorship clarity, trust, and narrative agency. Framed through critical media literacy, the analysis addresses concerns surrounding digital authorship, academic integrity, and epistemic trust in AI-generated content. The findings inform a set of practical curriculum design strategies, including AI usage declaration protocols, prompt engineering workshops, and ethics-centered classroom dialogues, offering a pedagogical framework for the responsible and reflective integration of AI into journalism training.

1. INTRODUCTION

The transformative influence of artificial intelligence (AI) on education is swiftly advancing (Gill et al., 2023), announcing a paradigm shift in how knowledge is generated, delivered, and evaluated (Blanding, 2025). The advent of generative AI is a key element in this shift. The large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT (Lo, 2023) have fundamentally modified writing, research, and classroom communications (Dempere et al., 2023). Although significant quantity of the existing research has been dedicated to STEM (Pérez et al., 2025) domains plus the automation of administrative jobs (Gill et al., 2023), a quieter yet equally thoughtful and reflective change is happening within the humanities and social sciences (Hummel, 2025). At the forefront of this change is journalism education, which places a strong emphasis on creativity, critical thinking, and ethical judgment (Şen, 2025). It is torn between the demands of epistemic integrity and the appeal of technological efficiency.

The research presented here examines how AI-powered chatbots (Chen et al., 2023) may affect journalism and media education, with a particular emphasis on how they may change students' writing

DOI: 10.4018/407559

habits, level of cognitive engagement, and sense of authorship. The study looks into how chatbots are being used in educational workflows (Wazan et al., 2024), how students interpret their impact, along with what ethical and pedagogical queries are emerging as a result. It builds on a mixed-methods analysis of 300 undergraduate and graduate journalism students in India.

Although artificial intelligence in education is not an entirely novel concept (Gecker, 2025), the inclusion of conversational AI tools into journalism teaching offers exclusive possibilities and challenges. Journalism and media are primarily about human objectivity, narrative standpoint, and social responsibility (Şen, 2025), unlike STEM disciplines where AI might help with data analysis or computation (Pérez et al., 2025). The capacity of artificial intelligence to replicate human language raises challenging questions: Can an AI chatbot co-author a journalistic piece? Or should it? When automation becomes second nature to the writing process, what happens to the student's voice, ethical thinking, and learning and achievement journey? These issues, which are positioned within the larger theoretical framework of digital authorship, critical media literacy, and educational ethics (Shata & Hartley, 2025), are central to this investigation. Assessing the practical application of AI in the classroom is only one objective; another is to examine how its implementation alters the core principles and objectives of journalism education.

1.1 The Rise of Chatbots in Education

After ChatGPT's late 2022 release, generative artificial intelligence has attracted a lot of attention on how it is changing education (Dempere et al., 2023), from K-12 classrooms (Woodworth, 2025) to higher education (Jahić et al., 2024). Gill et al. (2023) claim that the ability of LLM-based chatbots to produce coherent, context-sensitive, and human-like text has led to swift adoption of them. Now, they are used for language translation, content creation as well as for solving student queries, generating feedback, and even writing entire assignments for them.

Within the first three months of its launch, ChatGPT was widely used in academic settings, according to Lo's (2023) rapid review. Across disciplines, the tool has proven useful for brainstorming, content summarisation, and writing cohesive text. But Lo (2023) also raises concerns with student dependency, misinformation, and plagiarism. He pointed out that a lot of institutions are still unprepared to offer pedagogical support or policy suggestions for its application. Jen and Salam (2024) observe in their systematic review of AI-assisted writing that although students gain from improved writing fluency and decreased cognitive load (Jahić et al., 2024), chatbot-generated content frequently falls short of the critical depth and uniqueness required for academic work. This 'flattening of voice', which Fyfe (2022) also discusses, becomes especially problematic in fields like journalism where ethical inquiry, accuracy, and personal perspective are fundamental.

1.2 Journalism Education: New Pressures in the Age of AI

For media and journalism programs, the stakes are particularly high. Writing is only one aspect of journalism (Şen, 2025). It is an approach to research, an act of activism, and a public accountability practice. Students learn to check facts, challenge sources, and create stories that represent social justice and human experience (Shata & Hartley, 2025). Current AI models are unable to replicate the level of contextual sensitivity and epistemic rigour needed for investigative journalism, as Stray (2019) contends. He argues that investigative journalism demands epistemic rigor and contextual reasoning fundamentally different from other domains where AI has been successfully applied

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