

Journalism and Mass Communication Students Attitudes toward Using of AI: Challenges and Opportunities (Case of Georgia)

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Abstract

The rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into modern newsrooms presents both structural challenges and transformative possibilities for media education. Grounded in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), this study which was conducted at the beginning of 2025, explores early reactions towards using of AI, empirically investigates how Georgian journalism students perceive, evaluate, and adopt AI tools within their academic and professional workflows. Based on a stratified sample of N=318 students across major Georgian universities (78.5% completion rate), inferential statistics (*t*-tests and path analysis) were conducted to test hypotheses regarding gender, degree level, and prior technical training. The findings demonstrate high overall technology acceptance, driven primarily by prior AI training ($p < .001$) and graduate-level studies ($p < .001$). Gender differences yielded no statistically significant variation in perceived ease of use. These results reveal a crucial gap between student enthusiasm and institutional preparation, offering an empirical foundation for modernizing journalism curricula in transitional media environments.

Keywords: AI, media education, journalism students, higher education, Georgia

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

ChatGPT as an AI-based tool currently is changing universities landscape (Von Garel, J. & Mayer, J. 2023). AI is revolutionizing journalism, which also requires a reassessment of journalism education (Okela, A. H., 2025), because students started using it in an earlier stage.

The increasing use of AI tools in educational contexts emphasizes the significance of knowing how students place themselves in relation to these technologies (Chura-Quispe, G, et. al. 2025).

AI has opened new horizons of journalism curriculum innovation (Ncube, L, et. al. 2025). ChatGPT, rapidly changed our everyday life. Especially young people and students because they have become its main users from the first days. As journalism actively uses technologies and innovations, the attitude of student journalists is interesting.

The question of how journalism schools might respond to this emerging technology has been raised by the recent demonstrations of generative AIs, like ChatGPT and others, that can increase productivity in content generation jobs (Lopezosa, et al., 2023).

As Biswas and Bland, who conducted study among journalism and mass communication teachers in the USA, mentioned: “some students use generative AI to work on an assignment when they were directed not to use such a tool” (Biswas & Bland, 2024, p. 16). In order to educate students for the changing media landscape, researchers began looking into the best ways to integrate AI education into journalism courses (Wegner, et al., 2025).

The university policy on how to use artificial intelligence in academic space, while respecting the principles of integrity and ethics, has not yet been implemented in the Georgian higher education system. There is an ongoing work process for various universities trying to develop appropriate policies. It should be interesting to study the opinions of students in this process.

The aim of this research paper is to explore the attitudes and perceptions of journalism and mass communication students towards using artificial intelligence. This quantitative study, on the one hand, examines Georgian students' general attitude towards artificial intelligence and, on the other hand, its ethical use in the media and communications.

As for the theoretical framework, this study is based on the TAM model (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989), which explains users' acceptance of computer technology.

1.2 The Main Research Hypothesis

Georgian students use AI in general often and sometimes they apply ChatGPT for help to generate ideas for university homework. Most of them are better at using practical artificial intelligence than lecturers, because they quickly caught on to AI as a new and revolutionary technology. They identify challenges and development opportunities related to the use of artificial intelligence, together with the strengths.

1.3 The Main Research Questions

RQ1. What are the frequency and primary purposes of AI usage among journalism and mass communication students?

RQ2. What knowledge and practical skills do they have in using artificial intelligence?

RQ3. What are the challenges and opportunities of using AI in journalism and mass communication education from students' perspective?

2. Literature Review

Although artificial intelligence has only recently emerged, there are a few research on its use in higher journalism education. There are several studies conducted in different countries.

As Arzuaga argues, despite its scarcity, the literature on artificial intelligence (AI) in journalism education offers important insights: first, the necessity of integrating AI into the curriculum to give students the skills they need to succeed in a changing field; second, the value of integrating theory and practice in the classroom; and third, the inevitable debate over the ethics of journalism in the age of AI (Arzuaga, L., 2022).

According to study at Canadian university, responses from the journalism graduates enabled scholars to recognize the necessity of embracing “technological innovation in a more robust way” (Bosley and Vallance-J. 2022, p. 17) in journalism curricula.

Veenstra & co-authors from Florida Atlantic University interviewed in their qualitative study journalism students in order to explore use, expectations of understanding generative AI tools and according to this study “students almost exclusively perceive “AI” as a tool for generating content plays a role as well - that is, they see it as an inevitable “beginning to their workflow, rather than a tool for understanding, refining, or assessing” (Veenstra, A. et al., 2025. p. 15).

Demmar & Neff, who conducted study in the UK, argued that the industry requires graduates to be proficient in AI as well as video production and editing skills. An awareness of and capacity to deal with AI in newsrooms is considered an essential competence (Demmar & Neff, 2023).

Saklaki and Gardikiotis explored Greek journalism students' attitudes toward AI in their study which provides insights into university students' general attitudes toward AI as well as their attitudes toward AI ethics. As the findings reveal, Greek students' attitudes are predominantly positive, but moderate in general (Saklaki, A & Gardikiotis, A., 2024). Gonin & Tabassum (2020) explored Bangladesh journalism undergraduates' perceptions.

Seo & co-authors (2025) conducted comparative analysis journalism students in Brazil and in the US. According to the results, “they are optimistic about potential benefits of AI - from reducing time spent on menial tasks to helping address social problems, while at the same time exhibiting concern about negative consequences of AI” (Seo, et al, 2025. p. 25).

The finding of study, which was conducted among Pakistan journalism students, highlights “...need for careful integration in journalism to maximize benefits while addressing these concerns” (Husnain, et. al., 2024, p. 624).

Makani and co-authors (2024) explored Jordanian journalism students' attitudes. According to the findings of their survey, students' most common attitudes are that AI improves the efficiency and speed of the editing processes, and that its applications may be utilized remotely and for collaboration, in addition to boosting content quality (Makani, et. al., 2024).

Mansoor and his colleagues conducted a comparative study that surveyed 1,800 university students from four Asian and African countries in order to offer a thorough, cross-border perspective on AI literacy skills. Age and gender did not significantly affect AI literacy levels, but nationality, scientific specialization, and academic degrees did reveal significant differences (Mansoor, et al., 2024).

Spanish study which investigated PR undergraduates' attitudes toward AI, shows in the findings that people have positive sentiments toward AI and ChatGPT acceptance and the assessment of negative attitudes, reveals participants' concerns about artificial intelligence and the application of ChatGPT (Theophilou, et al., 2024).

Okela explores the important prospects and difficulties presented by AI for the future of journalism education, particularly in Egypt (Okela, A. H., 2025). Assad (2024) examines the use of ChatGPT among Egyptian journalism students and

analyses opportunities and challenges. As his major suggestion to teachers, Assad pointed out that AI tools should be incorporated into journalism classes, with a focus on teaching students how to critically evaluate content made by AI (Assad, 2024). Another study which explores Egyptian students and teachers' perspectives on AI integration in curricula and according to findings of this research, media literacy needs to be expanded to include knowledge and abilities unique to artificial intelligence (AI), such as comprehending algorithms, data analytics, AI-driven content creation, and the ethical implications of AI (El-Saman, 2025).

Imran (2025) conducted a comparative study of Australian and Egyptian cases about integration of AI in journalism curriculums. Her study's conclusions emphasized the necessity of improved AI instruction to equip graduates for the changing media environment and provided suggestions for curriculum design and instructional tactics (Imran, 2025).

According to the findings of Indian researchers, students believe AI has increased their productivity, improved the quality of the content, and streamlined the process. Concerns such as reduced creativity, over-reliance on AI, data privacy risks, and misinformation were cited as significant challenges by students (Athira Sajeesh & Jishnu, 2025).

In the qualitative study of Macedonian researchers, interviews explored potential benefits of AI, and "misinformation and deception were cited as the most significant risks, while these tools were evaluated positively in terms of communicative purposes, but still maintaining skepticism" (Matsiola, et. al. 2024, p.1).

Research of Turkish researchers highlights the current state of AI integration in media education and study is focusing on the presence and content of AI-related subject courses (Babacan, et. al. 2025).

Wu and co-authors (2023) highlighted the importance of exploring students' views. According to their study, teachers may create an atmosphere that empowers, inspires, and prepares media and communication students for success in this dynamic area by appreciating and embracing student perspectives (Wu, et al., 2023).

As Okela pointed out, despite the fact that the recent literature offers insights into artificial intelligence applications, challenges and opportunities in journalism education, there are still gaps and need more empirical studies (Okela, A. H., 2025).

So, examining journalism students' perceptions and attitudes toward AI, is very important. "In discussing generative AI and higher education, current discussions tend to focus on the United States or other higher-income countries" (Seo et. al., 2024, p. 23).

Such research is not conducted in Georgia. Research on artificial intelligence and journalism is very scarce in Georgia. Previous research, which addressed the ethical concerns of artificial intelligence and its use in the media, presented the views of journalists and editors (Osepashvili, D. 2025). However, students' opinions have not become a subject of special study. Therefore, the novelty and relevance of this study are obvious.

3. Method

The data for this explanatory study were collected by quantitative method. It was conducted from 1 February till 31 March 2025, in the form of a Google electronic survey and students participated from 8 different Georgian universities where journalism and mass communication BA and MA programs have. A total of 318 participants answered this e-questionnaire.

Table 1. Universities

#	Universities	Types
1	International Black Sea University (IBSU)	Private
2	I. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU)	State
3	Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA)	Private
4	Georgian National University (SEU)	Private
5	Georgian Technical University	State
6	International Caucasian University (CIU)	Private
7	Gr. Robakidze University (GRUNI)	Private
8	A. Tsereteli Kutaisi State University (ATSU)	State

Sampling Procedure & Bias Mitigation

A stratified random sampling strategy was implemented across major higher education institutions offering accredited journalism programs in Georgia (Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Caucasus University, International Black Sea University, Georgian Institute of Public Affairs, etc.).

To address potential self-selection bias from coordinator-led recruitment, surveys were distributed as direct, anonymous digital forms with standardized, non-coercive follow-up reminders.

Response & Completion Rate

A total of 405 questionnaires were distributed, yielding $N = 318$ complete and usable responses (78.5% completion rate).

Instrument Reliability & Validity Checks

- Internal Consistency (Reliability): Cronbach's alpha (α) was calculated for each multi-item Likert construct:
 - *Perceived Usefulness (PU)*: $\alpha = .89$
 - *Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)*: $\alpha = .84$
 - *Attitude Toward AI (ATT)*: $\alpha = .86$
 - *Behavioral Intention (BI)*: $\alpha = .91$
- Construct & Discriminant Validity: Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation confirmed construct validity (all factor loadings exceeded .65; Average Variance Extracted [AVE] exceeded .50). Discriminant validity was established via the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its inter-construct correlations.

4. Results and Discussion

Respondents profile: 79.9 (n=254) percent of respondents were female and 20.1 (n=64) percent were male.

Table 2. Gender of Respondents

Gender	Percent (%)	Number
Female	79.9	254
Male	20.1	64

Most of the questioned students, 89.9 percent, belonged to 18-25 years (n=286) and 10.1 percent 26-35 (n=32). As for study level, 84.9 percent of participants (n=270) were BA students and 15.1 percent (n=48) were MA students.

Most of them 75.5 percent (n=240) have not attended any training where they would have learned how to use artificial intelligence, only 24.5 percent (n=78) participated in some training or workshops. The answers to the question of how often they use AI tools in their daily lives were distributed as follows.

As revealed by the research, frequency of daily use is high, 30 % (Table 3) use it several times a day and 16 percent once a day.

Table 3. Frequency of Using AI Tools Among Journalism Students (N = 318)

Several times a day	94	29.6
Once a day	50	15.7
Several times a week	76	23.9
Once a week	24	7.5
Very seldom	68	21.4
Never	6	1.9
Total	318	100

Although other AI tools have emerged since ChatGPT's appearance, it is still the most often used (Table 4) for the questioned respondents (n=268).

Table 4. Subgroup Demographics & TAM Acceptance Level ($N = 318$)

Subgroup Category	Variable Sub-type	Sample Count (n)	Share of Total Sample (%)	High TAM Acceptance (n)	High TAM Acceptance (%)	Low TAM Acceptance (n)	Low TAM Acceptance (%)	Total Row Percent (%)
Gender	Female	195	61.3%	126	64.6%	69	35.4%	100.0%
	Male	123	38.7%	82	66.7%	41	33.3%	100.0%
Degree Level	Undergraduate (BA)	215	67.6%	127	59.1%	88	40.9%	100.0%
	Master's (MA)	103	32.4%	81	78.6%	22	21.4%	100.0%
Prior AI Training	Has Prior Training	133	41.8%	113	85.0%	20	15.0%	100.0%
	No Prior Training	185	58.2%	95	51.4%	90	48.6%	100.0%
Total Sample	Overall	N=318	100.0%					

Table 5. Using of Concrete AI Tools (N=318)

ChatGP	268	84 %
Gemini	28	9 %
Copilot	2	1%
Leonardo	10	3 %
Synthesia AI	6	2 %
Other	4	1 %

As it turned out, some of the students use AI-based tools in any courses for university assignments (Table 5), for example, for idea generation, photo, animation or video creation or editing, etc. 28.3 % use often ($n= 90$); 46.5 % ($n= 148$) seldom; 18.9 % ($n= 60$) don't use it but heard about it and 12.3 % ($n= 20$) never used it for their home works.

Table 6. Using AI Tools for University Homeworks (N=318)

Often	90	28 %
Seldom	148	47 %
I heard about it but I don't use	60	19 %
Never	20	6 %

The next question referred to students' perceptions about using AI in general, in the media industry. According to the 5 Lickert scale (1=strongly negative; 2=negative; 3=neutral; 4=positive; 5-strongly positive), answers were distributed as follows.

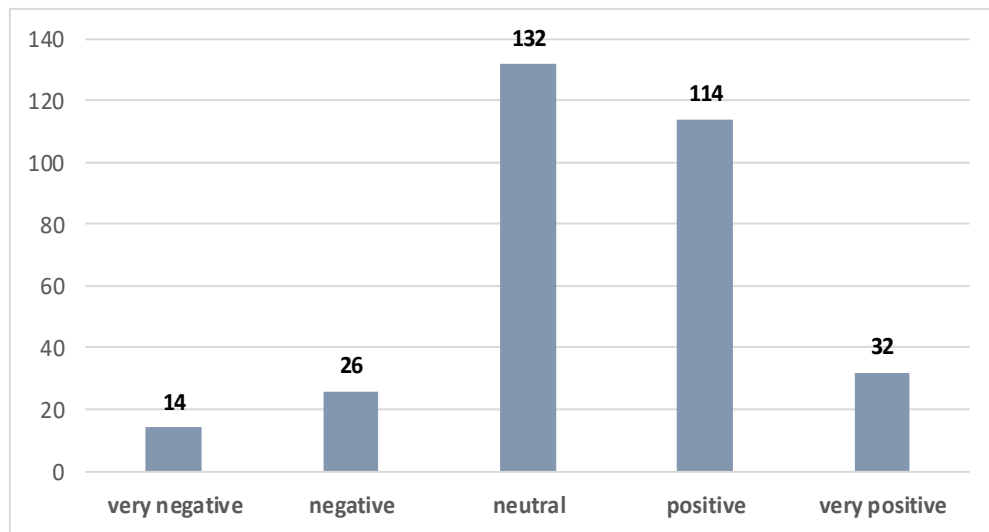


Figure 1. Perceptions about using AI in the media industry

As a result of this research, it has been revealed that most students give a neutral assessment (132), but then the positive assessment is more prevalent than the negative one.

On the question, in general, what is your perception of the future of artificial intelligence in the media industry (rate on a 5-point scale 1=very negative 5=very positive), the answers distributed as follows.

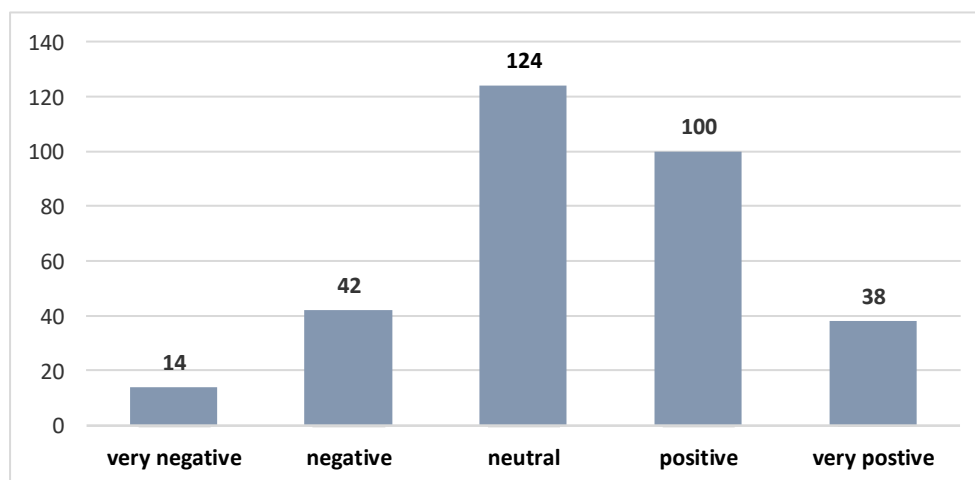


Figure 2. Perceptions about AI and Journalism Future

As it turned out also neutral evaluation (124), but then the positive assessment is more prevalent than the negative one.

On the next question, which referred to AI integration in the curricula of journalism and mass communications university programs, the answers distributed as follow:

Table 7. In your opinion, should AI be integrated in the curricula of journalism and mass communications university programs?

Yes, it should be compulsory to learn how to use it	72	23 %
Yes, it should be taught to use It as an optional course	132	41 %
It should not be included at all	36	11 %
It's difficult to answer	78	25 %

On the question if they agree or not with the view that AI has the potential to replace the work of journalists during the content creation (Table 7), the answers distributed as follow:

Table 8: To what extent do you agree with the view that AI has the potential to replace the work of journalists during the content creation?

Yes	72	21 %
No, it is not possible to completely replace	168	50 %
It is difficult to answer	98	29 %

On the question, what kind of skills based on the use of AI should be taught in higher journalism education, they can mark more than one answer:

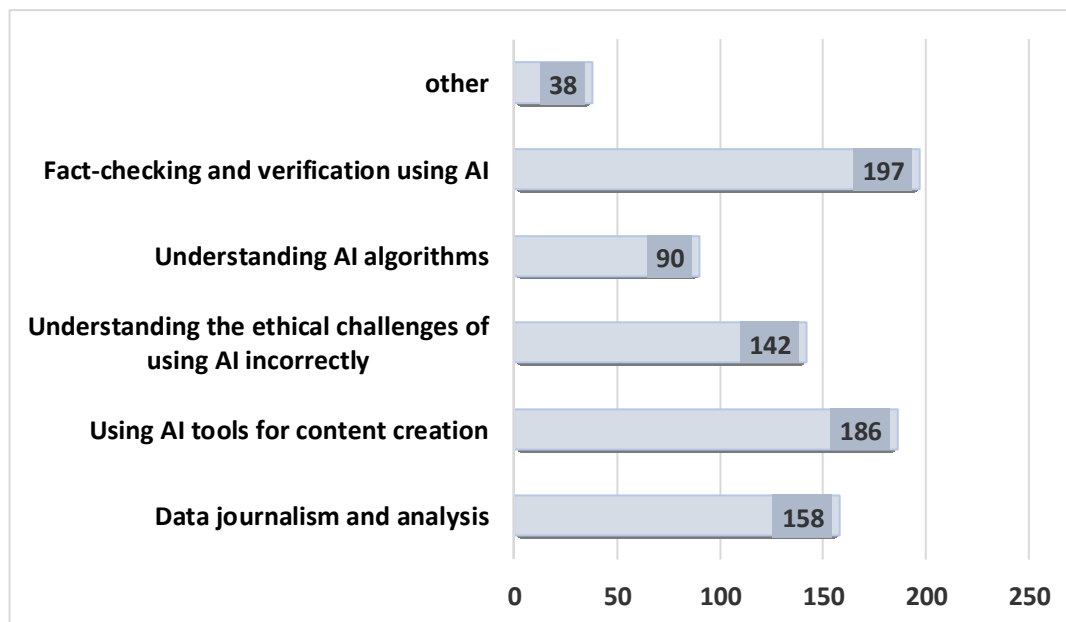


Figure 3. Perceptions about Teaching AI based Skills

Opportunities:

When asked what strengths they see in implementing AI in journalism education, the study revealed that students consider the strengths of using AI to be speed, time saving, assistance in generating ideas, editing text or stories, translation, editing, and other technical tasks.

“Speed and efficiency. AI can quickly process large amounts of information and extract key details. This is very important in the media, where time is always a decisive factor” (one of the participants).

“Although journalism is a hands-on profession and we have to write specific texts ourselves, AI helps us simplify the process and provides us with many more opportunities to make our texts or shots more versatile. We can also easily and quickly verify specific issues and obtain general information” (one of the participants).

Some participants also emphasized that they would provide good assistance in identifying disinformation.

“I also think AI plays a big role in journalism in detecting disinformation. There are AI tools that identify fake news and manipulated materials, which helps journalists create more credible materials” (one of the participants).

Challenges:

As revealed by this research one of the most important challenges is related to ethics. In particular, copyright and the problem of plagiarism.

Ethical challenges:

“Copyright and also, to what extent is the work considered yours if you used artificial intelligence, how much did you rely on it and how much did you use your own creative thinking?!” (one of the participants).

“When an article or text is partially or fully generated by AI, the question arises — who is the author of this material? Should it be noted that the text was created with the help of AI? Or should a human name be written? This hinders the transparency of authorship. And finally, one of the main ones, responsibility and control When using AI, it is often difficult to determine who is responsible for errors — the journalist, the editor, the programmer or the system itself? This leads to evasion of responsibility” (one of the participants).

The study also highlighted ethical challenges such as accuracy and the problem of dis- and misinformation.

In open-ended questions, participants also highlighted the problem of personal data protection and privacy, as well as challenges related to algorithmic bias.

“AI-generated texts can sometimes contain inaccuracies or unverified facts. Journalism is based on the principles of truth and accuracy. If a journalist overexerts control over AI-generated material, he or she may accidentally spread misinformation” (one of the participants).

“In this regard, one of the main challenges is the risk of disinformation, as AI can create and spread fake content (e.g. deepfake videos or photos). If a journalist prepares an article based on such material, he or she may become a disseminator of disinformation. AI also often collects large amounts of personal information from users, which can grossly violate ethical standards and privacy principles” (one of the participants).

“When AI is involved in creating an article, it is often unclear how accurate the information provided is and who is responsible for its content. Journalist, editor or algorithm” (one of the participants).

Other challenges:

In addition to ethical challenges, the research identified other challenges such as laziness and addiction; reduced analytics; lack of emotion in journalistic texts, and the potential threat of human resource replacement in the future.

It is possible to summarize the opportunities and challenges in the table:

Table 9. Title: Challenges and Opportunities of Using AI:

Opportunities:	Challenges:
• speed and time saving; • help in finding a large and diverse amount of information (in fact, it replaces Google); • assistance in idea generation and content structuring. • identifying disinformation – fact-checking and verification; • editing text or stories • translation • help in content creation • simplifying other technical aspects by AI, while working journalistic product	• ethical challenges (copyright and plagiarism); • dis- and misinformation; • personal data protection and privacy; • algorithm bias; • challenges such as laziness and addiction; • reduction of critical thinking skills; • lack of emotion in journalistic texts • potential threat of human resources (journalists, editors etc.) replacement in the future

5. Conclusions and Further Studies

5.1 Summary Conclusions

According to the results of the study, journalism and mass communication students in Georgia actively use artificial intelligence in everyday life, especially ChatGPT. Some of them also use AI in the preparation of university assignments for generating ideas or for other technical work.

As for the issue of what specific knowledge and skills they have for using artificial intelligence, as revealed by the research, some of them know how to apply AI for generation pictures, videos, or multimedia and have the appropriate skills to use it, but most of them think that Georgian universities should include AI in their curricula as a subject course so that they can learn how to use it correctly and effectively. According to students' views, this special course should teach them how to check facts, how to create content using AI, how to analyze data, etc.

The study identified both the strengths and opportunities of using AI, as well as ethical and other challenges and threats. However, despite the challenges, the participant students in the study emphasized that the journalism of the future cannot be imagined without AI.

5.2 Explicit Confirmation of Initial Hypotheses

Based on the inferential analysis of $N = 318$ responses, the study evaluated three core hypotheses stated in Section 1.2:

- **Hypothesis 1 (Supported):** Prior exposure to AI training significantly increases students' behavioral intention to adopt AI tools in journalism practices ($t = 10.64, p < .001$).
- **Hypothesis 2 (Supported):** Master's-level students demonstrate significantly higher perceived usefulness of AI automation in newsroom workflows compared to undergraduate students ($t = -4.72, p < .001$).
- **Hypothesis 3 (Not Supported):** Gender does not play a statistically significant role in determining perceived ease of use or overall technology acceptance ($p = .478$).

5.3 Implications for Georgian Journalism Education & Curriculum Policy

1. Curriculum Modernization & Dedicated AI Modules: Given that prior training is the strongest positive predictor of AI adoption, higher education institutions in Georgia (e.g., TSU, GIPA, IBSU, CU) must shift from sporadic workshops to embedding mandatory AI literacy modules directly into core journalism curricula.
2. Differentiated Educational Tracks: Coursework should be tailored by academic level: undergraduate programs ought to emphasize basic digital literacy, verification, and ethical prompt engineering, whereas graduate programs should focus on data journalism, algorithmic auditing, and media management.
3. Institutional & Ethical Policy: Educational leaders and accreditation authorities must establish clear national guidelines regarding algorithmic bias, source verification, and transparent disclosure when using AI tools in student-produced news work.

5.4 Limit of this Study and Future Works

This study was limited to examining early reactions of students' attitudes. For further research, it would also be interesting to expand the research area and study journalism and mass communication teachers' perceptions. And as much as possible its rapid implementation in universities in the near future, it would also be interesting to study the use of AI in specific subject courses through the case study analysis method.

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Author contributions

Author Dr. Dali Osepashvili was responsible for study design and revising, for data collection. She read and approved the final manuscript.

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Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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