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Emerging role of AI in Karnataka media education: A study

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Abstract

The faster growth and rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into media and communication education have transformed various pedagogical practices worldwide. The study focuses on investigation of the adoption, applications, and academic impact of AI tools in selected media institutions across Karnataka State. Combining quantitative survey data from students and faculty with qualitative interviews and institutional document analysis, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how AI influences teaching, learning outcomes, skill development, and ethical awareness in journalism and media studies programmes. The findings indicate that AI enhances practical learning, industry readiness, and research efficiency, while also presenting challenges related to academic integrity, unequal access, and faculty preparedness.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence; Media Education; Karnataka; Journalism Education; Higher Education

1. Introduction

Understanding of technological shifts redefines how we create, distribute and consume content in the 21st century. Machine learning, natural language processing, Computer vision, Generative AI are game changer in the current scenario. Artificial Intelligence has become a defining technology of the digital era, significantly reshaping media production, distribution, and consumption. Consequently, media education institutions are under increasing pressure to integrate AI tools into curriculum to ensure graduate employability and industry relevance. AI driven applications such as automated news writing, data visualization, audience analytics, and AI assisted video editing are now integral to modern media practices.

Karnataka, recognized as a leading technological and educational hub in India, has witnessed growing experimentation and institutionalization of AI in higher education. Between 2025 and 2026 academic year. Karnataka State Higher Education Council has made many memorandums of understanding to strengthen the AI add on for all stream studies. Adding to the more even media education institutions in the state began incorporating AI tools into journalism and mass communication, and digital media programmes in both formal and informal ways. Despite this transition, empirical academic research focusing specifically on AI in media education within Karnataka remains limited. Area of focus addresses this gap through a multi methods approach, capturing both measurable trends and in-depth stakeholder perspectives.

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2. The Future of AI in Media & education

India's Media education sector is currently growing at nearly twice the global average. This momentum is being driven by a unique confluence of deep learning, a massive youth base, and the rapid integration of Generative AI across production pipelines.

From hyper-localized content in regional languages to AI-driven VFX for the world's most prolific film industry, the Indian landscape is becoming a global testbed for Gen AI. With over 90% of local marketing teams already experimenting with these tools, the focus is shifting from simple execution to strategic in education field as well.

3. Review of Literature

3.1. AI and Journalism Education

Anderson (2024) examined the growing role of artificial intelligence in journalism education and argued that AI tools are reshaping news production pedagogy by emphasizing automation, machine learning, data driven reporting, and algorithmic literacy. The study highlighted that while AI enhances newsroom simulations and practical exposure, journalism educators must balance technological efficiency with ethical responsibility and critical thinking skills.

3.2. AI Adoption in Higher Education

Dwivedi et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review on AI adoption in higher education and found that AI-supported learning environments improve student engagement, personalization, and academic efficiency. However, the study noted that faculty readiness and institutional policy frameworks remain critical barriers, especially in developing countries, indicating the need for structured capacity-building initiatives.

3.3. AI in Media and Communication Studies

Pavlik (2024) emphasized that AI is transforming media education by enabling immersive learning experiences such as virtual newsrooms, automated video editing, and audience analytics. The author argued that media curricula must evolve beyond tool-based training to include AI ethics, transparency, and societal implications to prepare students for responsible media practice.

3.4. Indian Perspective on AI in Education

Kumar and Ramesh (2025) explored AI-enabled pedagogies in Indian higher education and observed uneven adoption across disciplines. Their findings revealed that professional courses such as media studies show higher experimentation with AI tools, yet lack standardized curricular frameworks. The study stressed the importance of contextualizing AI integration within India's socio-economic and digital diversity.

3.5. Digital Inequality and Institutional Readiness:

Sharma and Menon (2026) investigated digital inequality and AI readiness in Indian universities, identifying infrastructure gaps between public and private institutions. Their research indicated that unequal access to AI tools directly affects learning outcomes, reinforcing the need for inclusive AI policies to prevent widening educational disparities.

3.6. Ethical Challenges of AI in Education

Holmes et al. (2024) analyzed ethical challenges associated with AI use in education, focusing on academic integrity, algorithmic bias, and data privacy. The study concluded that without clear ethical guidelines and AI literacy training, educational institutions risk misuse and over-dependence on automated systems, particularly in creative disciplines such as media and communication.

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1. Diffusion of Innovations Theory

The Diffusion of Innovations theory explains how new technologies are adopted within social systems over time. Applied to this study, the theory helps analyze how AI tools spread across media education institutions in Karnataka,

influenced by factors such as institutional leadership, perceived usefulness, infrastructure, and peer influence. The theory also accounts for variations in adoption between public and private institutions and among faculty members. This framework supports the analysis of institutional readiness and identifies barriers to widespread AI integration.

4.2. Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivist learning theory emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge through experience, interaction, and reflection. AI tools such as virtual newsrooms, automated editing software, and data analytics platforms facilitate experiential and problem based learning in media education. From this theoretical standpoint, AI functions as a cognitive tool that supports student centric learning, creativity, and skill development. This perspective is relevant to the study as it explains how AI enhanced environments improve practical competencies and learner engagement in journalism and media studies.

4.3. Objectives of the Study

- To assess the extent of AI adoption in media education institutions in Karnataka.
- To analyze student and faculty perceptions of AI oriented teaching and learning.
- To examine the impact of AI tools on academic performance and skill development.
- To identify ethical, infrastructural, and pedagogical challenges associated with AI usage.
- To propose strategies for effective and responsible integration of AI in media education.

5. Research Methodology

5.1. Research Design

The study employed a mixed methods research design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches for understanding of AI adoption in media education. Through *Survey and Interview* data were collected. Time frame for the study deployed in between 2025–2026 academic year.

5.2. Population and Sample

The study population included undergraduate and postgraduate students, along with teaching faculty, from selected media education institutions (2 Government & 2 Private institutions) across Karnataka State.

Table 1 Sample Distribution

Category	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Students	100	Stratified Random
Faculty	20	Stratified Random
Interview Participants	20	Purposive

5.3. Research Tools:

- **Survey Questionnaire:** A structured instrument consisting of 25 questions measured on a 5 point Likert scale, assessing AI usage frequency, perceived usefulness, skill development, and ethical awareness.
- **Interview Schedule:** Semi structured interviews with open ended questions focusing on experiential insights, pedagogical shifts, and ethical challenges.
- **Document Analysis Checklist:** Used to analyze existing curriculum and institutional policy documents related to AI.

5.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, mean scores, and frequency distributions. Qualitative data were coded thematically. Methodological triangulation enhanced the validity of findings.

6. Quantitative Results and Analysis

6.1. Extent of AI Adoption

Table 2 Frequency of AI Tool Usage by Students

Usage Level	Percentage
Regular Use	78%
Occasional Use	12%
Rare Use	10%

- 78% of students reported regular use of AI tools for assignments and projects.
- 65% of faculty incorporated AI tools in teaching activities.

6.2. Perceived Academic Benefits:

Table 3 Student Perceptions of AI Benefits:

Statement	Agree (%)
Improves learning efficiency	82%
Enhances practical skills	72%
Improves research quality	69%

- 82% of students agreed that AI improved efficiency and productivity.
- 74% respondents said of enhanced practical and technical skills.

6.3. Faculty Perspectives on AI Integration

Table 4 Faculty Responses on AI Usage

Aspect	Yes (%)
Uses AI in teaching	65%
Received formal AI training	38%
Concerned about ethics	85%

- 69% expressed concerns about plagiarism and over dependence.
- 58% cited lack of formal training as a major issue.

6.4. Qualitative Findings

6.4.1. Faculty Perspectives

Faculty members viewed AI as a valuable pedagogical aid that supports newsroom simulations and research activities. However, many emphasized the need for structured training and clear ethical guidelines.

6.4.2. Student Experiences

Students reported increased confidence in handling digital media tools and analytics platforms. Some expressed anxiety about originality and assessment fairness.

6.4.3. Institutional Context

Private institutions demonstrated higher readiness due to better infrastructure, while public institutions faced funding and policy constraints.

7. Discussion

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals that AI positively influences media education when used as a complementary tool rather than a replacement for human creativity. The results align with global research while highlighting Karnataka specific challenges such as digital inequality and curriculum lag.

Implications and Recommendations

- Introduce AI literacy and ethics as core curriculum components
- Conduct regular faculty development programmes specifically on usage of AI
- Establish institutional AI usage policies
- Promote equitable access to AI tools across institutions

8. Conclusion

Artificial Intelligence has emerged as a significant pedagogical influence in media and communication education in Karnataka, moving beyond its earlier role as a supplementary instructional aid. The findings of this study indicate that AI integration positively contributes to experiential learning, technical skill development, research efficiency, and industry preparedness among media studies students. High levels of student engagement and generally positive faculty perceptions suggest that AI supported learning environments, when applied within student centred and constructivist pedagogical frameworks, strengthen practical training without undermining creativity or critical thinking. However, the study also reveals uneven levels of adoption between public and private institutions, reflecting disparities in infrastructure availability, faculty training, and institutional readiness. These variations indicate that effective AI integration depends not only on access to technology but also on academic leadership, curriculum restructuring, and continuous professional development initiatives.

At a broader level, the study emphasizes that the long term effectiveness of AI in media education is closely linked to ethical governance and inclusive implementation strategies. Challenges related to academic integrity, data privacy, algorithmic bias, and excessive reliance on automated systems remain significant concerns, particularly in the absence of formal institutional policies. The limited presence of structured AI governance frameworks highlights the need for standardized ethical guidelines and regulatory interventions. Integrating AI literacy, ethical awareness, and critical engagement into media education curriculum can help institutions develop graduates who are both technologically competent and socially responsible. Overall, this research contributes context specific empirical evidence to the growing body of literature on AI in education and positions Karnataka as an important regional context for examining responsible and balanced AI adoption in media and communication education.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of ethical approval

Major ethical issues include academic integrity, data privacy, algorithmic bias, and reduced critical thinking. Most institutions lacked formal AI ethics policies, indicating an urgent need for governance frameworks.

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