





## Challenges of ethical regulation of digital sports media

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### Abstract:

Specialized media aims to prepare and publish specific types of media materials directed at a specific audience, with specific characteristics and features. Therefore, this type of media requires accurate knowledge of the audience. Among the most important of these types is sports media, which aims to raise the level of sports culture and increase sports awareness, while introducing the importance of sports to the audience, given also the importance that sports have in the lives of individuals Sports media has many and varied roles, with the diversity of needs of individuals and groups. It satisfies the desires of large groups and segments of society. Therefore, those who practice it must adhere to a set of foundations and standards that govern their profession, which is called professional ethics.

The development of modern communication technology has led to great competition between digital sports media to reach the public, to meet their demands and needs. This competition has produced many ethical and even legal problems, which has prompted specialists to reconsider preparing ethical charters that suit the environment in which this type of media is practiced, as digital sports media faces many challenges in order to control it with ethical and professional standards This is a result of the rapid development of technology and the expansion of the digital audience through social networks, in addition to the ease of publishing in them, and the difficulty of legal regulation of this space. Through this article on the challenges of digital sports media ethics, we will highlight the role of professional ethics in directing various positions and topics for practitioners of this profession, as the ethics of the journalism profession do not stop at this point, but also work to protect the audience from any irresponsible use Highlighting the most important challenges that hinder the ethical regulation of digital sports media.

**Keywords:** Sports media, digital environment, media ethics, professional standards



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Digital sports media means employing modern means and digital technologies to cover sporting events and activities, to enhance the interaction of audiences and their connection to sports around the world, as it relies on a set of tools such as social networks and artificial intelligence tools.

Digital sports media is characterized by interactivity, as it provides opportunities for direct interaction with recipients, helps reach wider audiences, and also affects the way sporting events are broadcast via digital platforms, which has contributed to changing the new media industry, which has been greatly affected by rapid technological developments.

The effectiveness of digital sports media is linked to many standards related to the contact person, the credibility of his sources, the accuracy of his information, protecting the target audiences from false news, and the ease of violating privacy. This falls within the ethics of the profession, which means the set of principles and standards that aim to rationalize the behavior of media professionals while covering events and guide them to make decisions that are consistent with the general function of media institutions and their role in society, and ensuring the fulfillment of the public's rights to knowledge.

Nowadays, with the great technological development, we face challenges related to the ethical regulation of this type of media, by providing sports news and analysis with all honesty, especially the increase in diverse digital content, the increase in rumors and false news and the difficulty of confronting them due to the complexity of technology itself and its rapid and permanent development. Therefore, this article came to address the importance of ethics in controlling the practice of this profession, whose audiences are diverse and diverse, especially with the diversity of modern means used In order to protect the public first, by verifying the sources, in order to protect the public from the irresponsible use of digital sports media, and to determine the standards that should be available to those who practice it.

The use of artificial intelligence in producing sports media content is also the biggest challenge that lies in the ethical and professional problems created by the digital environment, as the journalism has witnessed major changes in the digital age, as technology has allowed individuals to publish, and this is considered the biggest transformation brought about by modern technologies, in addition to the interactive feature, and many other features that have distinguished this type of media, which has raised many questions about the credibility of this content What is published to the public, and the extent of media professionals' commitment to professional ethics, especially the honesty of the information provided in the digital space, and on this basis the problem of the study was built as follows:What are the challenges facing ethical regulation of digital sports media?



This article will address the most important challenges facing media professionals in providing honest content to the public in the digital environment, whose algorithms are sometimes biased, which leads to questioning the content provided to the public, paralleled by the right of the public to access correct information, which prompts media sport professionals to adhere to professional ethics. This problem will be addressed through the following elements:

The concept of digital sports media

Characteristics of digital sports media Standards for the professional level of a journalist in the digital environment

Credibility of sports news sources and accuracy of information

Uses of artificial intelligence in sports media

### **1-The concept of digital sports media**

Sports media is defined as the process of publishing sports news, information and facts and explaining the rules and laws related to sports and sports activities to the public with the aim of spreading sports culture among individuals and developing their sports awareness (Al-Hadj, p. 06)

Digital media is defined as a set of new digital methods and activities that enable us to produce, disseminate and receive media content (Mansour, *The Media: Its Concept, Means and Theories*, 2022, p. 89), in its various forms, through electronic devices (media in an interactive process between sender and receiver)

The concept of digital media refers to media based on digital technology, such as websites, video, audio, text, etc., and thus it is the social process in which communication takes place remotely, between parties who exchange roles in broadcasting and receiving various communication messages, through digital systems, and their means to achieve certain goals. Thus, it includes all media that operate according to digital systems, including interactive television Or non-interactive television that uses digital systems to produce and broadcast media content.

Digital media began with the emergence of a number of electronic newspapers and magazines, which at the time constituted a new media phenomenon, linked to the information and communications technology revolution, and electronic applications and blogs began to appear, which opened many horizons for the public as new media that were quickly spreading and low in cost. New media also emerged as a broad term in the latter part of the twentieth century to include the integration of traditional media such as films, pictures, music, spoken and printed words, with the interactive capabilities of computers and communications technology. Social networking sites are among the most prominent types and forms of digital media Technological developments have contributed to unprecedented tremendous achievements in the field of means of communication.



Social media networks were the first of these achievements, which opened a new dimension in interactive communication processes. Social networks are those huge sites that bring together thousands, even millions, of individuals and applications of the scientific revolution witnessed by the field of media and communication, as the technological revolution in the field of communication contributed to overcoming geographical space and political borders (Mansour, *The Media: Its Concept, Means and Theories*, 2022, p. 89)

Digital sports media is the dissemination of sports news and information using digital technologies and Internet platforms, which allow public interaction and participation in an accurate, objective and neutral manner, through commitment to professional ethics.

## **2- Characteristics of digital sports media**

Sports media has a set of characteristics, including:

- Popular sports media has the ability to cover wide areas and address large segments of the public.
- The message of sports media should not conflict with the values of society and the media messages it provides as a mirror that reflects its image (Al-Hadj, p. 08)

Sports media includes a large aspect of selection, as it chooses the audience it addresses and wants to reach. For example, this is a sports program directed at football audiences, this is a sports magazine dedicated to basketball, and this is a television event directed at handball.... Ect (Tarif, 2020, p. 31)

As for digital sports media, it has other characteristics in addition to the previous characteristics, which are:

- The public follows sports news and events instantly.
- Audiences easily interact with digital content and news through comments and sharing.
- Diversity of content, including texts, images, videos, and analyses, with content customized according to their interests.
- Follow sporting events by fans all over the world without geographical restrictions.

## **3-Professional standards for media professionals in the digital environment based on professional ethics**

Media ethics is a system of principles and standards that aim to rationalize the behavior of media professionals while covering events and guide them to make decisions that are consistent with the general function of media institutions and their role in society (Fathi, 2024, p. 04), while ensuring the fulfillment of the public's rights to knowledge and the management of free discussion, while minimizing to the maximum extent the harm that may befall the public, individuals or sources, and ensuring the protection of the dignity of the profession and the integrity of journalists Sports media, as an integral part of the media system, is considered



primarily responsible for delivering sports information and events directly from the place where they occur to the target audience. This type of media has witnessed a clear spread, especially with the tremendous development of media in the digital environment. However, the great freedom enjoyed by electronic applications may make individuals publish all news without verifying it and without subjecting it to scrutiny and self-censorship (Sarah Jumaa Haraz & Hadeer Abdel Rahman , 2021, p. 05)

Honesty is the cornerstone of the literature on dealing with media material. Truth is the foundation of media work, and the media message seeks to reach it. Reaching the truth requires a substitute of effort and hardship on the part of media professionals in order to reach its sources, but without resorting to devious methods. Rather, it is necessary to adhere to the correct methods permitted by law.

Credibility means that the public trusts the accuracy and reliability of news. This is done by verifying it, not being biased towards one party over another, and supporting everything published with evidence and facts. All of this falls within the framework of professional ethics, commitment to objectivity, and presenting information in a complete and clear manner. It also means the recipient's tendency to accept the information received as accurate, as the source that is credible is the one that is accepted by the public, and it is also the degree of trust that individuals place in the information received from the media, which they see as reflecting the events presented (Ghaniya, 2018, p. 217).

Discussions about credibility have been a fundamental part of communication research since the 1930s, as scholars realized that credibility is actually the relationship between audience and medium, shaped by audience perceptions.

Most studies have focused on the influence of source credibility, channel credibility, and information credibility, which have brought about major changes in the modern communications landscape. For example, the source has become ambiguous, due to the multiple stages of message transmission. Furthermore, Users can access information not available in traditional communication environments, which is automatically generated by digital media. These changes have blurred the boundaries between source, channel, and information, posing a new challenge for studying communication and its effects. Users are rarely interested in validating information online, and if they do do so at all, they tend to choose strategies that are easy to implement Individuals also tend to believe fake news more when it is presented in video form (Zhou & Wang, 2025, p. 1656) .

They address it in a bold way without taking into account its repercussions and repercussions later, as sports information and news are published without credibility, and false news and information are often addressed.

The traditional concept of media ethics refers to the field of application of ethics that is concerned with the behavior and standards that the media is committed to implementing in



general, such as (journalistic practice, audio-visual media, and censorship of electronic content). Despite this, we find that those working in digital sports media face a challenge to maintain a set of ethical principles for the new media, and this is limited to focusing on the ethical effects of the media. With their interest in the principles associated with the production of media material, this is because media ethics in the traditional sense include standards of journalistic integrity, and the professional standards produced by technology are evident in several fields, including:

**Digital writing:** Digital training requires a set of skills and professional rules, especially in light of the increasing need for investigative articles as a result of the major developments brought about by the network in the style of news coverage.

**Interactive Links** Hyperlinks are a distinctive feature of media work in the environment. Digital, as it adds vitality and interactivity due to the diversity and speed it provides in content, as the use of these links has transformed the disease of the journalist, as the process of selecting information is based on a set of foundations and mechanisms that may be determined by the media or journalist.

**internet research skills:** Dealing with the large amount of data available on the Internet requires a set of skills related to verifying and evaluating the reliability of information compared to other sources, in addition to the necessity of having controls and standards for selecting the information available on the Internet.

**Diverse Content Recruitment Skills:** In the age of technology, journalists have transformed from article writers to integrated media content producers, encompassing text, images, multimedia, and interactive media. This requires them to keep pace with these transformations and be able to use these modern media effectively (Joudi, 2024, p. 92).

**Protecting the user from irresponsible uses of digital sports media** The demand for digital services is increasing by users, as they want to obtain new and diverse services, in addition to expanding their reach to them by developing mobile phone applications, providing services over the Internet from any device connected to the network, and enhancing interaction between users and companies by providing Direct communication channels (Boutarous Nasreen & Al-Jami , 2024, p. 345)

Sports media works to reduce differences between individuals by spreading experiences and modifying behavior in line with sound sports customs and traditions. In light of the rapid technological progress in the sports field and the economic integration between media institutions with different specializations and economic institutions, the importance of this type of media has increased in the Arab world in general and sports media discourse sometimes shows fanaticism in covering sports news, intentionally or unintentionally. This is a result of the unprofessionalism of the media practitioner, and his inability to be objective and honest in conveying sports news (Hanan & Al-Arabi, 2019, p. 4). This shows the lack of professional ethics among media professionals working in this field, which negatively affects practice, and also the



public's right to view sports news objectively Especially in the digital environment, where many problems arise, such as fake news and respect for privacy, which makes media professionals working in this environment make greater efforts to protect the public from irresponsible uses of this type of media, by dealing with sensitive information with caution, not publishing any information without people's consent, respecting their privacy, and verifying news sources.

#### **4- The dialectic of renewing sports media ethics in the digital environment**

The issue of renewing the standards and ethics of the journalism profession in light of the digital environment to keep pace with the development taking place has sparked a great deal of controversy between supporters and opponents. Some believe that it is unreasonable for ethics to remain as it is without renewal in the era of artificial intelligence and the power of algorithms, as the digital environment presents a new system of media work that has not been framed before. Media professionals are striving to explore new ways to address the various ethical situations and states that they face This requires resorting to an ethical charter that contributes to helping them adhere to the recognized ethical regulations and duties, and those resulting from the digital environment, while others say that there is no need for renewal, as the ethics of the journalism profession are fixed and suitable for all times and places (Azouz, 2024, p. 07).

This also led to the emergence of many different opinions about the necessity of having an ethical system for media work within this new environment. These opinions can be highlighted in the vision of two groups, where the first group believes that the electronic media environment needs to formulate a new system of ethical rights and duties to assist media professionals in performing their profession, provided that this system is compatible with the challenges imposed by the communication and information revolution The problem, from their perspective, lies not so much in the validity of professional ethical standards for application to new means of communication, but rather in the fact that the communication revolution has rendered most of the media standards and ethics that developed during the twentieth century invalid. This revolution constitutes a new media and communication climate that requires new standards and ethics. However, this team's vision, which is to formulate ethical principles and charters for media work on the Internet, faces a set of difficulties represented by the nature of the electronic environment itself, which is characterized by continuous development and change, in addition to the absence of authorities concerned with monitoring the extent of compliance with these ethical and professional controls.

The second group believes there is no need to enact codes of honor or establish ethical controls for media work in the electronic media environment. Rather, it opposes the idea of



applying traditional values to the electronic environment, considering that the richness of the environment matches the value of the standards applied in the traditional environment. In light of this vision, they put forward several justifications, the most important of which is the difficulty of establishing specific and semi-fixed controls to control media work in a volatile, renewable, and rapidly changing environment, which makes establishing any ethical standard or control difficult, given that what is applicable today may not be acceptable after a short period of time, given the rapid developments in the electronic media environment (Badreddine, 2021, p. 102).

From the above, it can be noted that traditional ethical standards do not match digital media that violate intellectual property and printing rights. Digital media has allowed for direct copying and pasting without mentioning the source, so it wastes the rights of the original source. It is better for this digital practice to meet standards commensurate with the effectiveness of the Internet (Sarah Jumaa Haraz & Hadeer Abdel Rahman , 2021, p. 10)

The fundamental ethical question that the digital environment also raises is its ability to control the nature of information flowing to the public, especially since it is constantly changing, and there is no transparency on the part of companies in presenting their working mechanisms. On this basis, algorithms have the ability to determine the audience that will receive media content based on complex and intricate factors, which leads us to ask another question about the extent to which journalists' interests themselves are affected by the content they are exposed to daily on social media platforms. Journalists, like other users, sometimes exercise their personal biases when browsing social media platforms. This bias is absorbed by algorithms, which based on it display the content that suits them; that is, the journalist's preferences regarding topics. Therefore, dealing with user-produced content requires press institutions to set professional standards that clarify the scope of journalists' dealings with it, and how they use it In a way that ensures their commitment to the principles of professional journalism, such as ensuring the transmission of the truth, not causing harm, balance in presenting points of view, etc (Khamaysa, 2025).

In this context, researches stressed the necessity of developing an Arab regional code;It concerns digital media and is a guide for countries when setting their domestic electronic media laws, which requires separating electronic media from print media (Azouz, 2024, p. 05)

### **Uses of artificial intelligence in sports media**

Many researchers in various societies believe that there is a great responsibility for the media, as the media profession has not been devoid of behavioral and ethical rules throughout contemporary history that regulate the work of those involved in it. There is increasing keenness to develop the rules that regulate the media profession, as it is the responsibility that most requires



rules of professional ethical behavior, and guarantees practitioners their rights that should not be infringed upon, within the framework of respect for privacy (Razek, 2019, p. 217).

Technology has become a changing day that affects media ethics, as the importance of using artificial intelligence technologies cannot be denied because it has revolutionized various aspects of contemporary daily life, including the sports media industry. Its ability to analyze big data, predict user behavior, and create content has facilitated and simplified processes. Which prompted media institutions to provide content tailored to individual users based on their desires, preferences and behaviour

Artificial intelligence can help perform key media functions such as classification, aggregation, ranking, and data collection by employing a combination of AI tools such as machine learning that uses statistical modeling, deep learning, and robotic process operation (Khaled, 2023, p. 40). Computer algorithms have entered as an essential element in the news creation process, as they are used to arrange and prioritize information and filter content to suit the audience's trends Rather, generating news stories at a very high speed, at a lower cost and with fewer errors (Al-Hazmi, 2025, p. 961).

Among the new challenges facing journalism practitioners in using artificial intelligence are the extent of familiarity with the keys to algorithms, studying the elements of programming, advanced statistics and probability, addressing aspects related to linguistic engineering, examining the quality of data, developing new forms of cooperation between professional cultures, in which the rationality of technology is integrated with the suggestion and symbolism of journalism, facilitating participation and cooperation between these two factors, and calling for a qualitative shift in the methods of journalistic production and editing represented by developing an automated form of journalistic thinking. Another challenge facing the world of media and artificial intelligence is the extent of commitment to the issue of ethics, as the ethical use of artificial intelligence to reveal data is a fundamental issue that journalists and editors must accept (Draz, Ethical and Professional Transformations in the Employment of Artificial Intelligence, 2025)

Using technical tools capable of tracking and detecting AI-generated content in newsrooms is an effective way to maintain journalistic integrity. From a utilitarian perspective, adopting such tools is ethical when it contributes to increasing public confidence and reducing the damage caused by fake news, so that the honest journalist remains the first line of defense for the truth (Al Jazeera)

In order for a sports journalist to be able to practice his profession on fair and sound rules, he must also follow the principle of responsibility, as there is no way to attract readers or



viewers and maintainAs a reader or viewer, he must be patient in taking care of his interests, and this places a great responsibility on him. This responsibility is distributed among all those working in it (trif, 2017, p. 138).

## **Conclusion**

There is no doubt that sports media, in its various forms, occupies a leading position in contemporary societies due to the public's need for recreation and entertainment to spend their free time, and to seek relief on the other hand, and to avoid the pressures of life, through exposure to sports programmes and with the rise of the current productive environment, and the world's connection to media and communication technologies and the current technological revolution.

The rapid technological development in the field of media and communication technologies has contributed to a set of changes in the media in the digital environment, a new revolution in how information is obtained and used, as it has affected the elements of the process. As much as the features provided by this environment, problems have emerged related to the extent of the credibility of this digital media content. Therefore, it has become very important for media institutions and professionals themselves to adopt codes of conduct to ensure honesty in conveying information to the public Accuracy in publishing news and investigating its sources.

Digital sports media, like digital media, also faces a set of challenges that constitute a barrier to ensuring the provision of reliable and objective information that serves society, especially with the change in standards resulting from modern technologies. Therefore, it is necessary for digital sports media to adopt ethical charters for each media institution separately, in which the standards that control media work in the digital environment are determined, by respecting the privacy of individuals, and verifying the source before publishing information Especially since sports news has a wide and diverse audience, which must be protected from any irresponsible action, to enhance trust between it and the media institution, while confronting fake news because it spreads quickly, due to the characteristics of modern technologies. All of these principles help media professionals working in the digital sports field to organize their work, which improves the quality of the content provided.

Organizing the media in general and sports in particular ethically is protecting freedoms and improving performance, and it is creating space for expression without harming others, to guarantee the rights of the masses to know, and to manage free discussions.

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