Q&A

ROBOTIC REPORTING

Milestone spoke to Egyptian author, academic, and AI Journalism expert Dr. Mohamed Abdulzaher about the future of the media, 'AI Journalism,' human microchips, and reporting techniques linked to the predicted Fifth Industrial Revolution. Should we be worried about robots stealing the media limelight, and will it be possible to predict the news before it happens?

> **Milestone:** **What is AI Journalism?**

Dr. Mohamed Abdulzaher: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Journalism is a new concept I coined to describe how the media industry is adopting technologies created during the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).

These new technologies include big data analysis, robotisation, automation, 3D printing (to create cheap television studios, for example), blockchain, and the Internet of Things (IoT), all of which can help media organisations reach target audiences more quickly and drastically improve news broadcasting.

The 4IR is fuelling the ongoing automation of traditional manufacturing, industrial, and media practices using smart tech. Large-scale machine-to-machine communication (M2M) and the IoT are being increasingly integrated to boost automation, improve communication and self-monitoring, and produce smart machines that can analyse and diagnose issues without human intervention. The media industry is evolving thanks to these advancements, and I am in no doubt that AI Journalism will soon replace citizen journalism.

Media institutions as we know them today will cease to exist

> **So humans will eventually be phased out of journalism altogether?**

No, automation does not mean replacing humans altogether. Humans are a core element in the communication process, the media does not work without creativity and innovation and machines do not possess the creative tools or innovation to replace us.

> **Can robots determine fact from fiction when it comes to reporting on the news?**

No, they can't. Robots don't have an imagination, they can't innovate, so fact-checking must still be carried out by humans in the media industry. However, automation in other industries will probably lead to job cuts; one recent survey revealed that 39% of jobs in the legal sector could be automated in the next decade. Camera operators, sound guys, and technicians will be elbowed out of the media jobs by robots but there will always be a need for some humans behind the scenes.

> **You have coined another type of journalism, 7G. What is it?**

AI Journalism will become increasingly advanced and more effective, and it has the potential to truly revolutionise the media industry, especially as new technologies emerge. But as we head into the Fifth Industrial Revolution (expected to arrive in 2040) it will be phased out by Seventh Generation (7G) Journalism, which will be a more advanced, faster, and influential type of media. Media institutions as we know them today will cease to exist – they will transform into a network of millions of information centres spread across the globe.
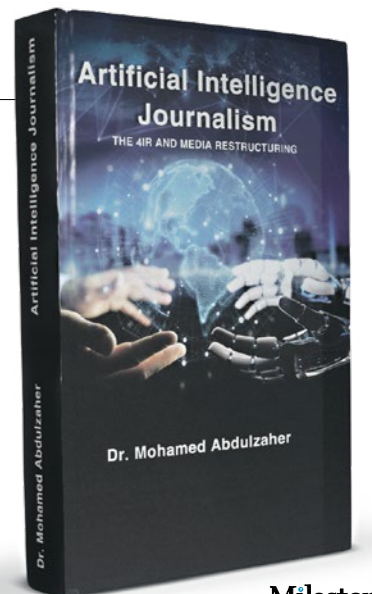
7G Journalism will be synchronised with 7G networks, which will rely on direct communication between people through human microchips. These tiny devices will replace television, radio, and news platforms. These microchips will replace all current media tools used to broadcast news; they will operate through smart electromagnetic waves transmitted through the Internet of Bodies (IoB).

> **You've said 7G Journalism will make it possible to predict the news. How?**

7G Journalism will rely on very advanced new tools and solutions to analyse big data related to everything around us: people, communities, events, organisations. It will be possible to create a detailed case history on every individual, group, etc before forecasting news related to them, a bit like forecasting the weather or financial markets based on what's happened before. In the 7G Journalism era, the news production process will rely on prior data to predict events, whether they be political, economic, or social.

> **Is there anything to be worried about AI and 7G Journalism?**

It will be much harder for states and governments to control the media like they do now. 7G Journalism will make it possible for anonymous media players to broadcast the news and exert influence on people and communities, which is likely to have both a positive and negative impact. Media will become like a ghost, moving incredibly quickly and wielding even more power than it does today.

Dr. Mohamed Abdulzaher's book "Artificial Intelligence Journalism: The 4IR and Media Restructuring" is available to buy on Amazon.