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AI Diplomacy: Review Brief



Indian Strategy for AI & Law, 2020
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**Indian
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**INDIAN
SOCIETY OF
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LAW**

About Us

Indian Society of Artificial Intelligence and Law wants to spread our message of hope and compassion. We believe that a single action can make a difference in the community, and that collective action can greatly impact the world. The Indian Society of Artificial Intelligence and Law is the only society in India, which conceives of the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence into the field of Law, wherein it is a multidisciplinary collaboration between Law and Information Technology (particularly Data Science and AI).

Our Philosophy

Artificial Intelligence has a primordial importance in human society. It renders a suitable relativity with mankind, and reflects a cultural backstop to human nature and its bliss. It dates back to the possibilities of what a machine could realize under Alan Turing, in his paper, 'The Imitation Game'. Nevertheless, the advent of Law, from its traditional positivist approach to a generic synthetic yet positive approach, has affected the directional utility of a globalized world. The use of machine learning as a component of data dimensionality has sincerely affected and led to generic consequences and is deemed fit enough not be ignored by international and domestic legal systems. The Society, which we term as ISAIL as well, focuses on its 3-fold approach; Academic Innovation, Learning Opportunities and Social Entrepreneurship. As AI is a deemed possibility to exist, it is an imperative ground that its legal modalities empower an anthropomorphic future for the natural ecosystem, to regard its decisions and relevance. This is not a question, which is about an Artificial General Intelligence, above every stigma of intelligence. It renders a possibility of major reality where international law and its domains are capable to understand, disseminate, secure and recognize the present and future of AI.

Introduction

Diplomacy is the interaction between sovereign states and other international non-state actors through dialogues, negotiations, and other non-violent means. Historically, diplomatic practices were the conduct of bilateral and official relations between sovereign states (Chas. W. Freeman, 2019). However, the notion of diplomatic and consular relations has transformed throughout the years and for this piece, the impact of Artificial Intelligence on diplomacy will be analyzed on two fronts; (i) AI as a diplomatic tool, and (ii) AI as a diplomatic topic. The juxtaposition of the impact of AI on diplomacy often creates confusion between the two aforementioned fronts. Dr. Corneliu Bjola, in his report, 'Diplomacy in the Age of AI', has studied at length the impact of artificial intelligence technology on diplomacy on both the fronts. Therefore, this piece will analyze the report and explore developments by China, Russia, and the United States to provide a proposal for its implementation in India.

Working paper by the Emirates Diplomatic Academy

The working paper authored by **Dr. Corneliu Bjola** examines the concept of artificial intelligence and defines it as, **“the activity by which computers process large volumes of data using highly sophisticated algorithms to simulate human reasoning and /or behavior”**. The standard test to evaluate the ability of machines to act similarly to humans is known as the Turing test. The test was created by Alan Turing in 1950 and subsequently named after him. To successfully pass the test a computer algorithm or a machine should be capable of engaging a conversation with a human for a minimum of five minutes in such a way that the human interrogator could not be able to identify or distinguish the machine from a human being. Unfortunately, so far, no computer program or machine has satisfactorily passed this test.

A statement by the former US Secretary of Defence, Donald Rumsfeld: **“as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say, we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns - the ones we don’t know we don’t know [...] it is the latter category that tends to be the difficult ones”**, successfully captures the relation between this statement and the development of AI technology (Rumsfeld, 2002). The working paper analyzes these concepts to clarify the ambiguity surrounding AI and decision-making. The author has agreed based on contemporary developments that AI systems can provide decisional assistance from advice-giving positions. However, it is also known that the structure of these decisions determines their effectiveness. We also know that we do not yet know whether an AI system will be capable of supporting active decision-making wherein, it assists continuously and automatically based on a steady description and active loops. Moreover, we do not know that we don’t know if what is happening around us due to the AI revolution **“represents the trunk of an elephant or the tail of a mouse”**.

To explore AI's potential for assisting diplomacy, it is necessary to map the areas of diplomacy where AI could cause a significant difference. This will also involve assessing the nature of AI contribution, its impact, and the risks it presents for diplomatic work. In furtherance of the same objective, the author has distinguished two fronts regarding the impact of AI on diplomacy; (i) AI as a diplomatic tool, and (ii) AI as a diplomatic topic. On one hand, as a tool for diplomacy, AI has a specific and targeted impact by assisting and supporting the day-to-day tasks of diplomats and other consular services. On the other hand, as a topic for diplomacy, AI has a broad impact covering civil rights, security, and the economy of a sovereign state.

The paper advances the TIID Framework to design AI for diplomatic activities and functions. TIID stands for, 'Task', 'Innovation', 'Integration', and 'Deployment' and proposes a specific sequence for designing a model. The flow of design begins with "an examination of the specific profile of the diplomatic task that is expected to be improved, continues with an evaluation of the type of innovation required for restructuring the service, a discussion of the level of integration of the physical and digital dimensions of the service, and concludes with an examination of the availability and suitability of the existing institutional configuration".

AI as a diplomatic tool

As the use and capabilities of artificial intelligences increases and diversifies, its expansion to different spheres and industries can be observed. The EDA Report analyses and suggests the potential of adoption of AI as a diplomatic tool and explicates the benefits, detriments and effects of its employment. The use of Artificial intelligence as a diplomatic tool is inevitable as human resources cannot match the speed and wide-ranged reach of Artificial Intelligence to assist in diplomatic functions. With use of AI technology constantly expanding and global competition increasing, its employment is necessary for a country to be able to compete in the global arena. In this section, the capability of AI as a diplomatic tool and its capabilities will be analysed.

In the EDA report, diplomacy was defined implemented in contrast to foreign policy which deals with the creation of a particular strategy developed in light of national interests as the processes such as representation, communication, negotiation by which a strategy is implemented (Bjola, 2020). To adopt AI in diplomacy, public diplomacy, bilateral and multilateral engagement and gathering and analysis of information are considered integral for successful and effective integration (Bjola, 2020).

If shared or publicly available, AI tools can substantially contribute to levelling of the playing field at international negotiation tables (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). For example, The Cognitive Trade Advisor (CTA), a software designed to support diplomats in preparing for international trade negotiations, was launched at the 2018 World Trade Organization (WTO) Public Forum (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). Bilateral and multilateral engagement with like-minded allies to exchange views on these issues combined with on-the-ground analysis with the goal of better policy decisions (Bjola, 2020) is a beneficial approach for the integration of AI, especially for developing countries who might face challenges in developing AI as a tool on its own.

During the cyber revolution, integration of technology-focused knowledge and skills into previously existing diplomatic practice was a challenging task and has been unevenly implemented to yield mixed results (Scott, Heumann, & Lorenz, 2018). AI, being the new technological change, its effectiveness will hinge on its all-round integration and institutional reform. The use of AI as a diplomatic tool is, therefore, a complex task which should be undertaken through a holistic approach for maximisation of benefits. A pragmatic and incremental reform strategy can be useful for controlled integration with frequent tests allowing for additions and changes along the process.

A diplomatic technique can be adopted to integrate AI in diplomacy by freeing science and technological knowledge from its rigid national and institutional enclosures. (Wagner & Furst, 2018). Varied integration of AI including the adoption of AI as a diplomatic tool will enable faster development of AI even in national spheres as there will be a cumulative effect. Discussion about AI and diplomacy also highlights the need to mediate the interplay between the social and political world of the diplomat and the technical world of the computer scientist and technologist. (Wagner & Furst, 2018)

For effective development of AI software suitable to be a diplomatic tool, determination of needs, and setting goals and key performance indicators should be the first step leading to the creation of a project description with clearly specified objectives (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). This should be followed by research and testing including analysis of the market and technical capabilities online as advantages and shortcomings of the different software solutions can clearly be identified (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020).

AI systems can assist decision-making by serving as an assistant, critic, second opinion or consultant (Bjola, 2020). In the EDA report, it is predicted that AI software is likely to evolve to allow automation of routinized tasks and services, but will likely be kept out of strategic decision-making for technical and ethical reasons (Bjola, 2020). Analysing reports and treaties, for example in preparation for negotiations, can be a time-consuming task for diplomats (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). The use of AI in routinized tasks is a beneficial starting point as a structured software will enable the performance of these tasks and observance of the efficiency in such operations is relatively simple. Using AI for routinized tasks has evident benefits such as speed and efficiency, but can also have additional benefits such as alleviation of human bias and error. The analysis of texts at scale also has the potential to make the work of diplomats more effective and free up time and resources (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). The EDA report suggests the use of Hybrid AI technology which combines minimal training data and programming abilities facilitating easy generalisation by deriving symbolic representation from supervised learning situations (Bjola, 2020). As human qualities are required for more complex diplomatic tasks such as reading and responding to physical and social cues and judgment cannot be performed by simple AI software.

A multi-stakeholder approach including private companies, research institutions or civil society organizations will be effective as the use of AI is bound to have systemic implications that will alter many different areas of foreign policy work, ranging from economics to security and democracy (Scott, Heumann, & Lorenz, 2018).

Diplomats need to be able to adapt to and comfortably deal with shifts in the way existing topics are discussed due to the implications of AI while also dealing with the emergence of new, AI-related topics on the international agenda (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). Development of human resources including hiring and training individuals with the requisite skills has to be undertaken in relation to AI technologies. Familiarisation with AI technology and its implications is necessary in the near future. The AI revolution is considered to be more powerful than the industrial revolution due to the fact that it has inundated the personal lives of the people apart from impacting the industries (Amaresh, 2020). The use of AI in diplomacy seeks to provide a competitive edge in the international sphere to smaller, less competitive nations to enable them to secure preferential trade and investment arrangements, and progress into previously unimagined areas of international trade and diplomacy (Wagner & Furst, 2018). If developed strategically, it could grow to secure a significant advantage and can be utilized to obtain favourable agreements and status. It is said that AI has the potential to reshuffle the winners or leaders in global markets due to its transformational capabilities (Scott, Heumann, & Lorenz, 2018). AI assisted diplomacy should thus be considered an important objective by MFAs.

AI as a topic for diplomacy

The potential of Artificial Intelligence as a topic for diplomacy is vast and complex. The impact of AI as a topic for diplomacy and international relations can be assessed based on three key themes - business and economy, defence and security, and human rights and ethics (Katharina E Hone, 2019).

- **Business and economy:** AI advancement and leadership will enable nations to concentrate economic gains and direct international influence in unprecedented ways as AI has tremendous opportunities in this area. However, unlike any other technological advancement AI has the potential to disrupt domestic and international economies. The service industry will be deeply affected that would create opportunities in research and development for developing nations. However, the labour industry might face challenges due to automation that will negatively impact the labour workforce in developing countries. These changes will invariably affect both domestic and international trade that might work against the nations that do invest into the development of this technology.
- **Defence and security:** the use of AI in warfare and advance weaponry systems has the potential to shift the balance of power between nations. Considering that almost all the countries are actively researching into the military and defence utilities of AI, they will also have to strive for strategic stability in their regions by way of diplomacy. The involvement of AI in advance weapon systems will cause a paradigm shift in diplomatic relations between Russia, China, the US, Israel, India and other technologically advanced nations. Moreover, the emergence of Artificial Intelligence powered technology in terrorism will also impact international relations and diplomacy.
- **Human rights and ethics:** increasing surveillance and other concerns regarding discrimination due to algorithmic bias in decision-making has the potential to effect human rights and other civil rights of citizens. The role of Artificial Intelligence in aiding discrimination is a well-researched topic and is one of the key area in the existing ethics debate (Access Now, 2018). The report was created in partnership with human rights organizations and AI companies wherein the following specific rights were examined to assess the impact of AI:
 - 'Rights to life, liberty and security, equality before the courts, a fair trial'- Article 9 and 14 of the ICCPR; Articles 3,6,7,8 and 10 of the UDHR.
 - 'Rights to privacy and data protection'- Article 17 of ICCPR; Article 12 of the UDHR, and Article 8 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
 - 'Right to freedom of movement'- Article 12 of the ICCPR.
 - 'Rights to freedom of expression, thought, religion, assembly, and association'- Articles 18, 19, 21 and 22 of the ICCPR and Article 18 of the UDHR.

- 'Rights to equality and non-discrimination'- Articles 27 and 27 of the ICCPR.
- 'Rights to political participation and self-determination'- Article 25 of the ICCPR, and Article 21 of the UDHR.
- 'Prohibition on propaganda'- Article 20 of the ICCPR
- 'Rights to work, an adequate standard of living'- Articles 6, 7 and 11 of the ICESCR; and Articles 23 and 25 of the UDHR.
- 'Right to take part in cultural life and enjoy benefits of scientific progress'- Article 15 of the ICESCR, and Article 27 of the UDHR.

Sample plans by China, Russia, Canada and the US

The development and use of Artificial Intelligence as a diplomatic tool has the potential to alter the existing structure of foreign relations and influential power of a country. Failure or reluctance by a nation to develop AI and integrate it in its foreign affairs strategy, specifically as a diplomatic tool, may result in it being placed at a strategic disadvantage in comparison to other countries. In this segment, the plans and strategies adopted by few countries will be explored to analyse the effect of integration of Artificial Intelligence in diplomacy.

Few nations including China, Russia, Canada and the United States of America have started exploring the possibility of AI assisting in diplomatic functions. The Russian government expressed that AI had the potential to determine the future rule of the world. With respect to the role of AI in Chinese foreign policy, the development of AI as an assistant in decision making through inputs, suggestions and recommendations is being considered (Amaresh, 2020). China has introduced an AI foreign policy toolbox which it plans to use to be the world leader in AI by 2030 (Amaresh, 2020). The Chinese Academy of Sciences has also built machine-learning algorithms that are currently being implemented in the MFA (Amaresh, 2020). The integration of AI in various functions of the MFA will enable a smoother implementation of AI as a diplomatic tool. As China has already commenced efforts to integrate AI, they have an advantage over other countries.

Along with China, the USA is also developing its AI infrastructure and capabilities. As per USA's Strategic Plan of Information Technology for 2017-2019, American diplomats are using powerful AI technology to make policy changes, enhance transparency and promote awareness (Amaresh, 2020). Further, President Donald Trump has signed an executive order to establish the "American AI initiative" which includes the use of AI by the MFA (Amaresh, 2020). In fact, its capabilities are so advanced that in some cases they can predict social unrest and social instability three to five days ahead, according to the CIA (Abedi, 2020).

The government of Canada has also laid a foundation for all-round incorporation of AI through various initiatives such as digital inclusion labs associated with governmental units and civil society (Amaresh, 2020). Canada has also invested in the Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy by setting up a research congregation in Montreal, Toronto and Edmonton (Amaresh, 2020).

To effectively implement AI as a diplomatic tool, a holistic approach of integration in other industries and areas is important. In the EDA report, it is expressed how a strong domestic S&T culture is imperative to avoid the necessity of attracting and retaining foreign talent, which is already in short supply (Bjola, 2020). The use of AI in diplomacy could change the stakes and power that a country holds and change the global order as elucidated previously. However, the author of the EDA report warns that the rush to secure the first-mover advantage could lead to the pre-emptive deployment of unsafe AI systems (Bjola, 2020). Governance of AI systems is therefore imperative to ensure the minimization of security and ethics concerns that are likely to emerge with increasing capabilities and expanding adoption of AI technologies.

The AI effect is the trend of people getting accustomed to a particular technology as AI brings a new technology into the common fold until newer technology emerges (Bjola, 2020). When AI use in diplomacy becomes a common phenomenon, it is essential for a country to have integrated it successfully to keep up with the competition. Multi agent diplomacy will soon become the norm and the development of AI is therefore essential to ensure your spot in the game. A nation tends to make a move to which others respond, but ultimately, all nations want to triumph (Amaresh, 2020).

Allocating resources for the development of AI in fields such as diplomacy is evidently important as it is an area where the capabilities of a country or its agents are judged in relation to that of others. This can be effectively done through a pragmatic and holistic approach in coordination with other nations with similar strategies.

Concerns and Challenges

There are various factors and concerns that need to be assessed in relation with the use of Artificial Intelligence technologies in diplomacy. There are also certain inherent dangers connected to the expansion and development of Artificial Intelligence and some specific issues that arise when AI is used by governments. In the EDA report, economic disruption, security and autonomous weapons, and democracy and ethics are outlined as the three areas at the intersection of AI and foreign policy that should be monitored (Bjola, 2020). These factors if not considered and evaluated could result in considerable harm. The costs of monitoring these risks also need to be considered before implementing AI technology.

The exit points of AI have also been laid down in the EDA report. The importance of slowing down or abandoning the use of AI in light of a scenario where AI is being implemented in a particular way or at a pace which has possible negative consequences is expressed (Bjola, 2020).

The decision-making environment places several constraints on the ability of foreign policy makers to compare, assess and pursue preferred courses of action. Time constraints may lead to increased reliance on cognitive shortcuts, and search for satisfactory rather than optimal solutions (Bjola, 2020). The quality of the information processed by the software, attitude toward risk and ambiguity affect the quality of results and effectiveness (Bjola, 2020). Efficient systems need to be set in place prior to the integration of AI technology to ensure that these constraints are factored in and can be monitored.

The EDA reports enumerated an array of views toward AI including optimistic, pessimistic and pragmatic views (Bjola, 2020). The Pragmatists believe that with careful planning and regulation and by considering its negative consequences, the power of the machines and technology can be used to augment our skills (Bjola, 2020). As mentioned earlier in the report, a pragmatic approach is recommended to ensure that sufficient measures can be taken to respond to possible negative impacts of the use of AI.

Caution has been expressed about an AI arms race that could be a self-fulfilling prophecy (Chivot & Höne, 2019). Competition between powers could produce a cascading and accelerating effect on technological development as military capabilities remain a symbol of power (Chivot & Höne, 2019). There is great danger that AI powered military systems and military led decision-making will undermine existing approaches to conflict containment and de-escalation (Wagner & Furst, 2018). Ethical considerations include the level of control diplomats may exert over AI-enabled platforms, the AI capacity to enable high levels of social control at reasonable costs, digital authoritarian state (Hone, Hibbard, & Maciel, 2020). Measures need to be taken by the international community as a whole to prevent such an occurrence. European Commission's Consultation on the Draft AI Ethics Guidelines contain some principles such as fairness, inclusiveness, transparency and predictability, security and privacy, accountability, reliability and safety (Chivot & Höne, 2019). Further discussion along these lines and development of agreements and treaties to govern the use of AI are essential.

Accountability in relation to use of AI technology is another concern. This is twofold- the first is attribution of responsibility to a particular person or group and second, enforceability and governance. In the case of use of AI in diplomacy, the attributability aspect isn't a reigning concern as a country or its MFA are directly responsible for diplomatic decisions and the responsibility can therefore be attributed to them. However, governance and enforcement of penalties in the international sphere is difficult. Firstly, treaties and international regulations governing the use of AI as a diplomatic tool need to be put in place. Further, like in Public International Law, enforcement of penalties is not entirely possible. Countries can opt out of being signatories to treaties and all and can also fail to comply with sanctions imposed.

The most effective method to counteract or minimize the risks arising from the expansion of AI to new spheres such as diplomacy, i.e., from the domestic to international, is to further expand its reach to create international cooperation. International cooperation enables the creation of new treaties or regulations for the controlled development of AI in diplomacy and other international activities as well as the governance of AI development in light of the risks and security concerns. Thus, controlled use of AI technology and monitoring of possible constraints and other factors that affect the effectiveness and consequences of the use of AI needs to be mandated.

Conclusions

The opportunities and challenges that it poses on various fields will have its direct impact over the use of AI as a tool or as a topic for diplomacy. Technologically advanced nations have already begun implementing AI enabled systems to assist foreign diplomats in day-to-day activities as well as to analyze complex international relations among sovereign states. Indeed, the reluctance by a nation in implementing AI tools in diplomatic activities will position it at a strategic disadvantage in the international sphere. The failure to hold a steady ground for AI development in the domestic sphere will also prove to be a subject matter of concern. Artificial Intelligence has advanced into a dimension where governance and regulation on the basis of precedents will seem ambiguous. Therefore, it is necessary for nations to research and implement AI systems for diplomatic purposes with absolute certainty.

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