Chapter 1
Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence:
Issues and Challenges

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ABSTRACT

Artificial intelligence (AI) is developing every day with a new vision and mission in this competitive world. It is an area of computer science that creates intelligent machines that are programmed to work and act like humans. It involves them solving problems and improving themselves. It is expected that they will eventually be able to mimic and perform the same tasks as a human would. As artificial intelligence continues to find its way into our daily lives, its propensity to interfere with human rights only gets more severe. With this in mind and noting that the technology is still in its infant stages, Access Now conducts this preliminary study to scope the potential range of human rights issues that may be raised today or in the near future.

INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is developing every day with a new vision and mission in this competitive world. It is an area of computer science that creates intelligent machines that are programmed to work and act like humans. It involves them solving problems and improving themselves. It is expected that they will eventually be able to mimic and perform the same tasks as a human would.[1]

As artificial intelligence continues to find its way into our daily lives, its propensity to interfere with human rights only gets more severe. With this in mind and noting that the technology is still in its infant stages, Access Now conducts this preliminary study to scope the potential range of human rights issues that may be raised today or in the near future.

Many of the issues that arise in examinations of this area are not new, but they are greatly exacerbated by the scale, proliferation, and real-life impact that artificial intelligence facilitates. Because of this, the potential of artificial intelligence to both help and harm people is much greater than from technologies that came before. While we have already seen some of these consequences, the impacts will only continue to grow in severity and scope. However, by starting now to examine what safeguards and structures are necessary to address problems and abuses, the worst harms—including those that disproportionately impact marginalized people—may be prevented and mitigated. There are several lenses through which experts examine artificial intelligence. The use of international human rights law and its well-developed standards and institutions to examine artificial intelligence systems can contribute to the conversations already happening, and provide a universal vocabulary and forums established to address power differentials. Additionally, human rights laws contribute a framework for solutions, which we provide here in the form of recommendations. Our recommendations fall within four broad categories: data protection rules to protect rights in the data sets used to develop and feed artificial intelligence systems; special safeguards for government uses of artificial intelligence; safeguards for private sector use of artificial intelligence systems, and investment in more research to continue to examine the future of artificial intelligence and its potential interferences with human rights (Buttazzo, 2001).

Humans and machines are destined to live in an ever-closer relationship. Artificial intelligence, and in particular its subfields of machine learning and deep learning, may only be neutral in appearance, if at all. Underneath the surface, it can become extremely personal.

The benefits of grounding decisions on mathematical calculations can be enormous in many sectors of life. However, relying too heavily on AI inherently involves determining patterns beyond these calculations and can therefore turn against users, perpetrate injustices, and restrict people's rights. ("In the era of artificial intelligence: safeguarding human rights") AI in fact can negatively affect a wide range of our human rights.

AI in fact can negatively affect a wide range of our human rights. The problem is compounded by the fact that decisions are taken on the basis of these systems, while there is no transparency, accountability, and safeguards on how they are designed, how they work, and how they may change over time.

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