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From Code to Courtroom: The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Indian Legal System

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Abstract

The Indian legal system, recognized for its intricacy and prodigious backlog of cases, is at a pivotal moment where technological progress provides hopeful answers. This study investigates the increasing significance of Artificial Intelligence (hereinafter referred as AI) in changing and innovating multiple facets of the Indian Justice System. By analyzing the present challenges and opportunities, this research attempts to delve into the implications of AI in various aspects such as case management, legal analysis, decision making, and overall effectiveness and enhancement. This research paper also explores ethical considerations and possible challenges to offer an extensive analysis of AI's influence on the legal framework in India by utilizing empirical data as well as methodological approaches to study.

Keywords

Artificial Intelligence, Indian Legal System, Ethical, Technology, Judicial system

Introduction

The intersection of technology and law has substantively transformed the judicial models across the world, and AI is the new necessity that transforms the process of the law. As per the total number of 5.29 crore filed cases clogging up India,¹ the courts are examining ways in which the bureaucracy and the cumbersome court system can be dismantled with the aid of AI so that people can witness increased judicial efficiency, reduced time lag, and the concept of justice will be reached. The availability of the AI powered technologies in research stands to play an important role in alleviating the labour-intensive nature of the same. Due to this, the associated costs of conducting research activities can be significantly reduced that will lead to higher profitability and a significant acceleration in the number of tasks completed and legal work done.

The potential of AI in the Indian legal system is undergoing new developments every time driven by the multitude of cases and the malleability of Indian laws and their interpretations. The legal issues that are of concern regarding the implementation of AI in the

¹ Indian Courts Burdened with Backlog of 5.29 Crore Cases: Official Data, India Tribune (July 27, 2025).

Indian legal system are- Is it possible to make the AI use compatible with the fundamentals of Indian constitutionalism? And can the integration of this vast tool give justice without potentially violating the principles of natural justice?

What is Artificial Intelligence?

In 1956, John McCarthy founded the term Artificial Intelligence who was an American Computer Scientist. He further defined the term “Artificial Intelligence” as “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines.”²

Some other definitions to consider are :

- Artificial Intelligence is the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages.³
- Artificial Intelligence is a branch of computer science dealing with the simulation of intelligent behaviour in computers.⁴

In brief, the primary goal of AI is to develop such machines or systems which are capable of replicating human intelligence, inclusive of the data analysing ability, make decisions, adapt new information and carry out various autonomous tasks. AI incorporates other subfields like natural language processing, machine learning, computer vision and expert systems.

Research Methodology

This paper follows a qualitative and doctrinal approach to analyze the shifting role of Artificial Intelligence within the Indian legal system. The study is built on examinations rooted in existing principles of law, judicial trends, and thematic developments instead of depending on statistical data and/or field surveys to ascertain its validity.

The approach of the study proceeds logically from understanding the relevance of AI in various professional fields to the necessity of having it in the legal sphere, followed by a critical assessment of its implications, challenges, and way forward.

A study of developments, policies, and judicial approaches is being conducted to trace the gradual inclusion of AI into the legal system, with emphasis laid on interpreting the changes from a legal or policy point of view. The analysis will focus on the recent years to ensure the timeliness and reflection of current transformations in the study. No empirical approach or data collection tools were employed, with all analysis being purely intersected with interpreting authority material that is currently in the public domain.

² Rajaraman V. John McCarthy—Father of artificial intelligence. *Resonance*, 2014; 19:198-207

³ Artificial Intelligence, available at: https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/a_uthority.20110803095426960

⁴ Artificial Intelligence, available at: <https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/artificial%20intelligence>

Need of AI in Legal System

In the age of rapid technological development, AI marked its presence significantly. A wide range of professional domains are already adopting AI, including medicine with virtual nursing assistants and robotic surgeries, as well as finance with algorithmic trading and credit and loan processing.

Administration of justice is crucial in every nation and the condition is appalling in Indian judiciary due to the huge burden of cases and country's large population. Therefore, the use of Artificial Intelligence in legal proceedings is essential to ensure speedy trials and justice delivery, thereby establishing the efficiency of the judiciary.

AI refers to systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. These AI systems are sustained by machine learning that gathers the rules and information in the utilization of data. AI-driven systems and machines can reform civil and criminal court proceedings by assisting judges and advocates with repetitive and routine tasks during trials, thereby saving time.

- **Legal Research :** A legal professional dedicates a significant amount of time to legal research. New lawyers require considerable time to gain knowledge about legal research. It also requires time to identify the appropriate legal authority that could assist them in their case. Thorough research is vital for a lawyer to successfully win a case.
- **Prediction Analysis :** One of the biggest problems faced by the judiciary is the volume of cases that are still pending and the lack of judges to decide on those motions. AI systems are capable of predictive analytics. Thus, to draw the likely outcomes between the parties and aid them in pursuing out-of-court settlements, can prove to be a holistic approach in lowering the volume of the pending cases and saving the court's time.
- **Due Diligence :** The lawyers are expected to carry out an effort to verify the facts on behalf of their clients which is based on the facts that the lawyers inform their clients as to which they are expected to do or with which they can proceed with the case. Due diligence is a time-consuming process which definitely gives a positive pay off in the long run. The same job can be accomplished quicker with the help of Artificial Intelligence system. Artificial Intelligence comes to conclusions as a result of verifications of the facts and analysis of the past decisions that were provided in the similar situation. It assists in offering good counselling to their clients.
- **Legal Drafting :** AI tools can autonomously create standard legal documents like contracts, NDAs, wills, lease agreements, and memos by utilizing predefined templates and provided data. This lowers the time and labour needed for everyday legal activities. (Tools like **LegalZoom** or **DoNotPay** offer AI-powered legal document generation for everyday use.)

AI employs Natural Language Processing (NLP) to understand legal terminology and transform user inputs into formally organized legal documents, enhancing legal drafting accessibility for non-lawyers too.

- **Remote Proceedings and Virtual Courts:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) secure video conferencing, real-time transcription, and language translation, plus other features that ensure virtual courtrooms and remote proceedings run smoothly, are made possible by technologies. This is especially vital in situations where remote hearings are required.
- **Decision Support Systems:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) decision support tools can potentially serve as systems that provide judges with relevant information, precedents, and legal analyses to assist in their decision-making. But AI has to be emphasized as an auxiliary tool; the judge has the final say in all matters.

India is presently at a crucial juncture in the development of data, privacy regulations, which will significantly influence how AI is able to will operate within the country.

Recent developments in AI integration in the Indian Legal System

Supreme Court's nuanced approach

SUVAS (Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software). In 2019, SUVAS was launched by the then CJI S.A Bobde, this machine learning translated the judgement transcripts into other regional languages and scripts. It is an AI-trained machine learning assisted tool.⁵

SCI-Interact, in the year 2020, the Supreme court came up with a AI driven tool to simplify the functionality of the courts, to make all its 17 benches paperless. This software allows the judges to view files, handwritten documents on petitions and make e-notes on computers.⁶

SUPACE (Supreme Court Portal to aid in Court Efficiency):

On April 6th, 2021, the Chief Justice of India, S.A. Bobde, rolled out the SUPACE, a type of artificial intelligence that intends to aid a judge with relevant facts and legal data in accordance with the matter at hand. it has a sole purpose of seemingly improving the Court efficiency and eventually beginning to reduce the backlog of cases.⁷

⁵ Harshul Gupta, "Scope of Artificial Intelligence as a Judge in Judicial Sector", Indian Journal of Law, Polity and Administration.

⁶ <https://www.communicationstoday.co.in/supreme-court-develops-software-to-make-all-its-17-benches-paperless/>

⁷ AI PORTAL SUPACE, available at: <https://www.drishitias.com/daily-news-analysis/aiportal-supace>

Contrary to the senior court of Delhi, the Indian Supreme court has been experiencing steps in adopting AI in the court over time; in a fair, representative and regulated manner. Even the successive Chief Justices, both S.A Bobde and D.Y Chandrachud in commonplace have deemed AI as a fantastic asset but have also highlighted the necessity of striking a killer balance between being vigilantly progressive and executing with fascination. Even the Supreme Court established the Artificial Intelligence Committee chaired by Justice L Nageshwara Rao.⁸

High Courts' skepticism

Artificial intelligence (AI) cannot replace either human intelligence or the humane aspect of an adjudicatory process, the Delhi High Court has held in a verdict, noting that ChatGPT cannot form the basis for the adjudication of legal or factual issues in a court of law, in a trademark infringement case decided in 2023.

In Manipur the bench, headed by Justice A. Guneshwar Sharma, was hearing the case of Md Zakir Hussain v. State of Manipur, wherein the court had quashed the disengagement of the petitioner, and held that that the court was under an obligation to administer justice rather than merely calibrate the vocations of law.

Justice A. Guneshwar Sharma of the Division Bench hearing the case complemented the AI tools for their valuable use in solving the complicated legal problem involved. The ruling is an illustration of how the court's forward-thinking approach has led it to swiftly adopt new technologies in the name of justice.⁹

The Kerala High Court, unlike the Delhi High Court's positivity, held that "Over reliance on AI will kill the profession." as stated by Hon'ble Justice Nagprasana in a judgement earlier in July 2023.¹⁰

In law firms, AI is already showing results through saving time and resources. “**Dragon’s** speech recognition is fantastic as a time saver for lawyers on the go for drafting on the fly and transcribing, and **Kira (by Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas)** is fantastic for reviewing and identifying specific information.

BharatLaw AI, LegitQuest, Kanoon AI, Lawfy. io, and SCC Online are a few AI-enabled legal tools which help in faster document review, judgment analysis, document review, smart summaries and contract analysis

This execution has enabled the law firms to shift attention toward more important elements of the legal proceedings, successfully alleviating the strain of monotonous and repetitive duties that were earlier allocated to paralegals, trainees, and junior staff members.

⁸ <https://www.juscorpus.com/artificial-intelligence-in-indian-judiciary/>

⁹ <https://www.barandbench.com/news/manipur-high-court-uses-chatgpt-for-research-to-pass-order>

¹⁰ <https://www.barandbench.com/news/litigation/dangerous-to-use-ai-to-write-judgments-karnataka-high-court-in-x-challenge-to-sahyog-portal>

The future of AI in the Indian Courtrooms

The integration of AI in Indian courtrooms is expected to transform the legal profession significantly. India's top position in AI talent concentration, as indicated by the Network Readiness Index 2022, demonstrates its significant potential in the field of Artificial Intelligence.¹¹ If this ability is redirected within the legal domain, it will assist in addressing the primary challenge of the Indian Judicial System, namely, the accumulation of Pending cases. Consequently, research is being conducted to create machine learning tools that can forecast the results of current and future cases instances. These tools will be able to perform tasks such as legal research, drafting, and proofreading, as well as assist in determining culpability and gathering and documenting proof. Several renowned companies around the globe are already utilizing AI tools to create contract agreements. For example, **ThoughtRiver, a London-based Legaltech** startup, can produce extensive contract reviews efficiently.

Currently, the primary aim should be to create AI capable of efficiently managing clerical tasks before it can assume control of the judicial process and decision-making capabilities. As a result, creating such algorithms necessitates a dataset rich in features, usually comprising variables that include parties involved traits (caste, gender, geography, nature of offense), attorney attributes, judicial traits, case specifics (submission information and evidence submitted), extra factors (day, month, year, climate, etc.) and results of cases (like approval of bail or case dismissal)

Another aspect where AI can be beneficial is the pre-processing of data from all the courts. The challenge with this information is due to the absence of a national standardized system for this. It creates many challenges in comparing the legal data from various states and examining them. Machine learning tools can transform text data into numeric formats for improved comprehension. Even with this, the large, weighty case files gathered throughout the years can be digitized to conserve paper.

Legal Concerns and Potential Risks in India

In India, while there are no specific laws for AI, the MEITY has initiated efforts to develop a framework for AI policy. The MEITY, which is the nodal agency for decision-making for AI, has set up four committees to work on a framework for an AI policy. The Niti Aayog has outlined seven principles of responsible AI. These encompass privacy and security, equality, inclusivity and non-discrimination, safety and trustworthiness, transparency, accountability, respect of, and respect for, pro-social human values¹². By enhancing trust and adoption, these principles are expected to protect the public and ensure innovation at the same time.

While AI has the potential to transform the judiciary, it simultaneously raises significant issues concerning an individual's privacy and data protection that must not be ignored. AI systems in courts require the gathering of vast amounts of data, including the personal information of the parties, evidence, financial documents, medical records, and various other confidential details.

¹¹<https://www.pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1877303#:~:text=The%20report%20states%20that%20India,exports%E2%80%9D%2C%205th%20rank%20in>

¹² <https://www.niti.gov.in>

While the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 (“DPDPA”) imposes stringent limitations on the collection, usage, and storage of personal data, the complex, automated, and unclear data processing activities associated with AI contradict the core principle of DPDPA, creating a considerable risk in protecting the personal data of anyone participating in the judicial process.¹³

Additionally, accountability is another significant issue. In this situation, the question that emerges is who should be responsible if AI makes a wrong decision? AI models do not serve as legal professionals or academics. They ignore ethical guidelines and legal requirements when giving legal counsel or achieving desired outcomes. A core issue related to accountability is the lack of transparency in AI algorithms, often referred to as ‘Black Boxes’. As our dependence on AI for decision-making increases, particularly in sensitive areas such as the judiciary, the issue of trust emerges as a significant concern. This is due to the ongoing uncertainty regarding how AI achieves its intended results. The use of sophisticated algorithmic deep neural networks in AI models inherently stays unclear and mostly concealed from human understanding. This absence of clarity is frequently seen as the ‘black box’ issue in AI. These issues present considerable obstacles to the use of AI bots by Judges, which mustn't be overlooked.

In terms of training, it is necessary to prepare legal experts with the expertise and abilities to efficiently utilize AI technologies in their legal practice. Programs for training and ongoing education initiatives can assist in closing the divide between legal knowledge and technical skill.

Execution of AI technologies within the legal system demands considerable monetary investment and technological framework. Resource limitations might obstruct the implementation of AI instruments, especially for smaller legal practices and community organizations.

Tackling these obstacles will necessitate a cooperative will necessitate a cooperative endeavour engaging policymakers, legal professionals, technologists, along with civil society, to create suitable rules, moral principles, and skill development initiatives that promote the fair and accountable inclusion of AI within the Indian legal framework.

Conclusion

The sheer quantity of cases pending in the Judiciary that has put a strain on it is another harsh reality of the Indian Legal system. Providing Justice at a faster rate with no room or space to introduce inequalities is where it is needed and hence the introduction of the AI assisted reduction in time is an impressive one. This is, however, the final responsibility of the judges who will consider wide implications, morality and human consciousness.

Besides, in a democratic nation such as India where to a significant extent the Judicial independence is sought, the application of Ai in legal proceedings must be questioned prior to

¹³ DPDP Act, 2023, No. 22 of 2023, (India)

its integration. Presently, India lacks appropriate guidelines or regulatory framework to govern the regulation of AI within the legal fraternity.

AI in the Indian justice system is still a long way, currently no technology is available that would completely add the humans in the courts. The credibility and accountability are in question. Therefore, AI can be an assistance tool to improve decision-making rather than human assessments. Nevertheless, with the consideration of the prevalent situation with the digital divide, it is presented that there still exist areas in which mobile networks penetration is not easily available. In these situations, AI will only widen the gap as they are not provided with justice. A regulatory framework has to be put in place in order to ensure that this technology is used in a suitable and responsible way. There are ethical and societal implications of AI to think about. This will enable India to make use of the optimum effects and advantages of AI and reduce any conceivable liabilities.

Conclusively, the complete introduction of AI into courtrooms is, therefore, both something to feel concerned and curious about two sides of the same coin, it has the possibility to change our system of law but it is, at this point, indescribably unreliable. After all, the future that is driven by justice and that is heading towards progress requires the use of a combination of artificial intelligence (AI) and human wisdom.