

What Indian Parliamentarians Think of AI ?



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	3
Background and Scope	5
Data and Methods	7
Results and Findings	9
Conclusion	35
References	39

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Table of Figures

S.No	Figures	Page No.
1.	What is Artificial Intelligence?	10
2.	Examples of technology	11
3.	Foundational working of AI systems	12
4.	The role of data in AI systems	12
5.	Societal impact of AI	14
6.	Threats posed by AI	16
7.	Narratives around AI	18
8.	Opportunity emanating from AI	22
9.	AI's potential	24
10.	AI needs to be regulated?	28
11.	Form of regulation in India	29
12.	Existing regulatory architecture: is it enough?	30
13.	Challenges while attempting to regulate AI	32
14.	India's approach to AI governance	34
15.	Want to know more about AI?	35

Key Takeaways

1. The study found that most of the parliamentarians (97%) understand AI as a technology enabling machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence.

2. Most parliamentarians are familiar with AI's basic applications in daily life, such as voice assistants, social media content recommendations, and facial recognition technology.

3. An overwhelming majority of parliamentarians have limited awareness of how AI systems operate and the role of data in their development.

4. The majority of parliamentarians are apprehensive of the impact of AI on society and consider deep-fake as one of the most critical threats to address in governing AI systems.

5. They are concerned that AI systems know a great deal about individuals- an aspect that requires deep scrutiny to ensure its responsible use.

6. Parliamentarians foresee innovation as the most significant opportunity while job losses as the biggest economic threat of AI. This creates twin challenges for policy- (a) rate of job growth should be higher than the rate of job disruption and (b) skilling for the future should be a paramount policy priority.

7. The study shows a strong demand for robust regulation of AI, with parliamentarians preferring complete regulation under the jurisdiction of the Central Government.

Executive Summary

The study aims to investigate the depth of awareness, perception, expectations, and regulatory preferences among Indian parliamentarians regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI). Employing a mixed-methods approach encompassing quantitative surveys, focused group discussions, and in-depth interviews, the study delves into parliamentarians' understanding of AI as a technology and their attitudes toward its societal implications.

Findings reveal that while parliamentarians exhibit a basic awareness of AI, including its definition and examples of its usage in daily lives, their comprehension of AI systems and the role of data within them remains limited. Interestingly, parliamentarians were also apprehensive of AI's potential negative impact on society, anticipating job displacement and the eventual surpassing of human intelligence by AI systems. This creates twin challenges for policymaking- (a) the rate of job growth should be higher than the rate of job disruption and (b) skilling for the future should be a paramount policy priority. Concurrently, they acknowledge the vast opportunities for economic growth and innovation that AI presents.

Central to parliamentarians' perspectives is the desire for robust regulation of AI by the central government, reflecting a need for clarity and oversight in navigating AI's evolving landscape. Furthermore, parliamentarians express a keen interest in enhancing their understanding of AI across various dimensions, indicating a readiness to engage with the technology more comprehensively.

In a nutshell, this study sheds light on the nuanced perception and regulatory preferences of Indian parliamentarians regarding AI. The findings underscore the importance of informed policymaking and capacity-building initiatives to effectively harness the transformative potential of AI while mitigating associated risks. This study contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on AI governance, informing evidence-based policy frameworks that foster responsible AI development and promote equitable societal outcomes.

Keywords- Artificial Intelligence, Policymaking, Parliamentarians, Governance, Regulation, Innovation

Introduction

The rapid evolution of AI marks a significant milestone in technological advancement. Its transformative influence spans diverse sectors including healthcare, education, finance, transportation, and agriculture, among others. As AI continues to progress at an unprecedented rate, it has garnered considerable attention as a focal point of policy discourse globally, including India. Governments worldwide are confronted with the task of regulating AI technologies, struggling with the imperative to harness its potential for societal benefit while simultaneously addressing potential risks and harms. Amidst this global dialogue, jurisdictions such as the European Union (EU), China, Australia, and Japan have already embarked on the path of implementing legislation to manage the implications of AI effectively. Consequently, the imperative for AI governance in India has become increasingly profound.

Recognising the importance of fostering a comprehensive understanding of AI among Indian parliamentarians, the Institute for Governance, Policies, and Politics, in collaboration with the AI Knowledge Consortium, undertook a survey to gauge parliamentarians' perception and expectations of AI. Furthermore, the Institute organised a workshop aimed at enhancing parliamentarians' awareness of AI fundamentals, its potential impacts, both constructive and destructive, and the diverse global perspectives on AI governance. This report presents the findings of the survey conducted to elucidate parliamentarians' viewpoints on AI.

Through a comprehensive examination, this report delves into parliamentarians' awareness, perception, expectations, and approaches towards governing AI.

As India endeavours to position itself as the third-largest economy globally in the coming decade, understanding parliamentarians' perspectives on AI governance assumes paramount importance as AI will be a useful tool to accelerate the nation's economic growth by way of fostering innovation and safeguarding societal interests at the same time.

Objectives of the Study

To understand the level of awareness about AI amongst India's parliamentarians.

To understand the perception and expectations that India's parliamentarians hold regarding AI.

To identify barriers to understanding the AI ecosystem and challenges hindering effective policymaking.

To investigate the regulatory approach as perceived and desired by India's parliamentarians for governing AI.

Background and Scope

AI has become a pressing issue worldwide, stirring discussions on its far-reaching implications across various sectors. While promising substantial benefits, AI also poses profound ethical concerns, potential risks, and intricate regulatory challenges. Effective AI regulation has thus become a critical aspect of tech policy.

In India, the discourse on AI governance is active, with stakeholders striving to establish robust regulatory frameworks while fostering innovation and economic growth. The government aims to position India as a global AI leader by 2030, emphasising on ethical application, and establishing regulatory safeguards against its misuse. From 2016 to 2020, jurisdictions like the USA, UK, EU, and China have initiated AI roadmaps and institutional frameworks, reaping AI's benefits. India, too, has launched various initiatives to leverage AI for national development, for instance, the National AI Strategy, National AI Mission, National AI Platform, and the formulation of the National AI Ethics Guidelines, which underscores the government's commitment to responsible AI and development and deployment. [2]

However, challenges persist in the regulatory landscape, including public awareness gaps and the rapid evolution of technology, itself. Parliamentarians face obstacles in grasping AI opportunities and challenges due to its intricate and versatile nature, leading to uncertainty in policy formulation. [3]

This study aims to address these challenges by providing insights into AI regulation in India. By bridging the gap between foundational AI understanding and policymaking, it aims to put in place evidence-based governance mechanisms that promotes innovation while prioritising ethics, advancing India's AI leadership goals and ensuring societal welfare and inclusive growth.

Data and Methods

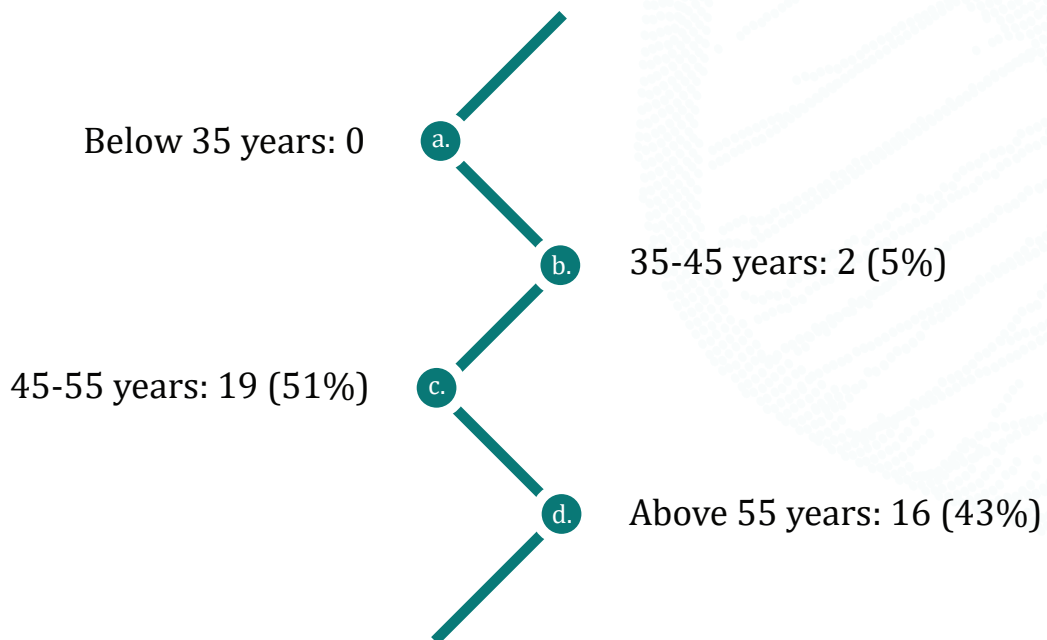
The study utilised a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies to comprehensively explore the level of awareness, perception, expectations and views on regulatory framework among Indian parliamentarians regarding AI.

Quantitative Analysis

Sample Population: The sample initially consisted of 39 respondents. However, after data cleaning, there were 37 respondents, representing approximately 4.6% of the total Indian Parliament population (788 members).

Demographic Characteristics:

1. **Age:** Participants ranged from 35 to above 55 years, mirroring the typical age distribution of Members of Parliament (MPs). The breakdown by age group is as follows:



2. **Gender:** The sample aimed for gender diversity, with 5 female respondents (14%) and 32 male respondents (86%), reflecting the gender distribution in the Indian Parliament.

3. **Educational Level:** 28 respondents (76%) held post-graduate qualifications, while 8 (22%) had graduate-level education. One respondent (3%) had a high school education.

Survey Design: The survey questionnaire was developed to gather insights on various aspects of AI, including awareness, perception, expectations, and regulation.

Sampling Method: Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure representation across different demographic groups.

Data Collection Procedure: The survey was administered online, in both English and Hindi, through email distribution. Participants were assured of confidentiality to promote honest responses.

Qualitative Analysis

Data Collection: One-to-one in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted using a semi-structured format, which helped us understand their perception about AI, what do they expect from it and their views on its regulation. Additionally, secondary data from various sources enriched the analysis.

Data Analysis

The analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of survey responses, alongside thematic analysis of qualitative data to identify common themes and patterns.

Results and Findings

This survey sought to explore 37 parliamentarians' viewpoints on AI, for this survey was structured in for main sections: awareness, perception, expectations, and views on regulatory framework. The findings are presented systematically, incorporating visual representation of statistical data to enhance reader comprehension.

The findings of the survey have been divided into the following sections:-

AWARENESS

PERCEPTION

EXPECTATION

REGULATION



AWARENESS



AWARENESS

As parliamentarians proceed to put guardrails on technology, it is crucial for them to understand whether they have a basic understanding of AI technologies. The deficiency of understanding of AI is not a uniquely Indian problem as the US Congress Representative Jay Obernolte, the only member of the US Congress with a master's degree in artificial intelligence, acknowledged that "the problem is that most lawmakers do not even know what AI is". [4] However, the need of the hour is to regulate AI and mitigate its harms as companies are being criticised for their laxity in addressing ethical concerns arising out of AI. Many governments worldwide are trying to understand the technology so that they can better assess its potential and harms.

Indian parliamentarians are facing similar challenges as they endeavour to regulate this intricate and versatile technology. With looming risks posed by AI, including deepfakes, the proliferation of misinformation, threats to the younger generation, and security concerns, there has been an increasing demand for AI regulation. Even industry leaders such as Sundar Pichai, in 2020, called for "sensible regulation" that would not hold back technology's potential benefits.[5] Amidst this haste to regulate AI, it is pertinent to ask one question- Do parliamentarians have the necessary understanding of AI to regulate it, as misinformed or ill-informed regulation could stifle innovation and could do more harm than good?

To gauge the extent of awareness, fundamental understanding of AI technology, and its foundational working, parliamentarians were posed with a series of questions during the study.

When respondents were asked the question “what do they understand by AI?” 86 percent of parliamentarians were aware of the basic definition of AI, which is that, “AI is a technology that allows machines to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence”. However, 14 percent believe it to be a computer program used for storing data.

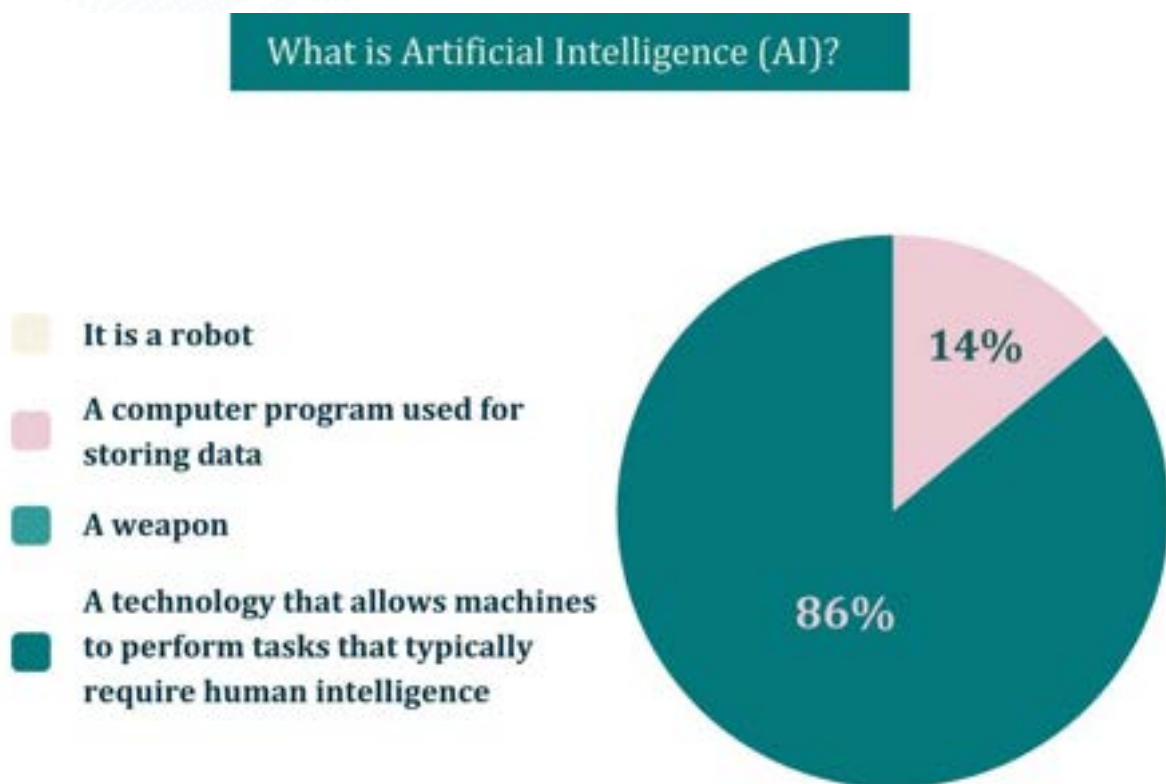


Fig. 1

This suggests that most of the respondents have a basic understanding of AI. Still, there is a significant number that needs to be informed about AI.

Similarly, when posed with the question on examples of AI technology, 95 percent of respondents recognised “all of the options” mentioned, that are, content recommendation on social media platforms; voice assistants like Siri and Alexa.

Examples of AI technology

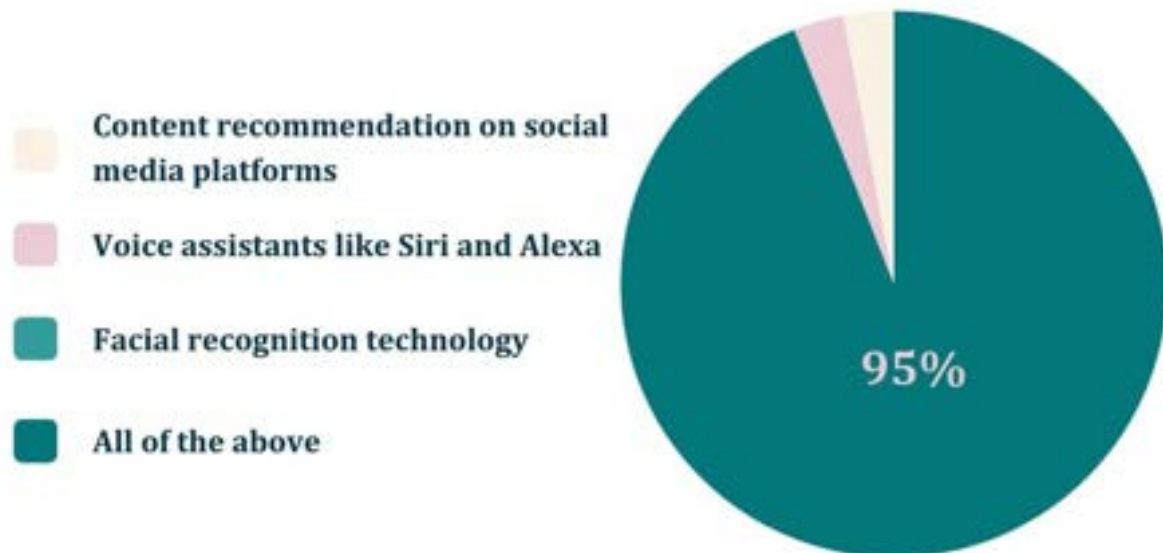


Fig. 2

Both the answers suggest that parliamentarians have a fairly good understanding of what is AI and how it has become part of their daily lives, as well.

However, when asked “whether they know how AI systems work?”

A whopping majority of 89 percent were not aware of the foundational workings of AI systems. This suggests a significant gap in their understanding of AI functionality, which could potentially hinder their ability to legislate effectively on AI-related matters.

Foundational working of AI systems

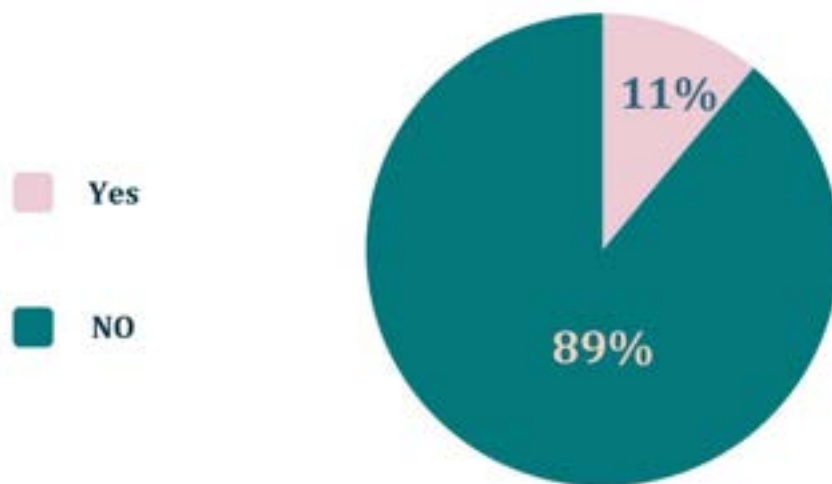


Fig. 3

In another question on whether they understand the role of data in AI systems, 38 percent of the respondents said that they are aware of the role of data in AI systems. Interestingly, a significant portion of 62 percent admitted their lack of awareness of the role of data in AI systems.

The Role of data in AI systems

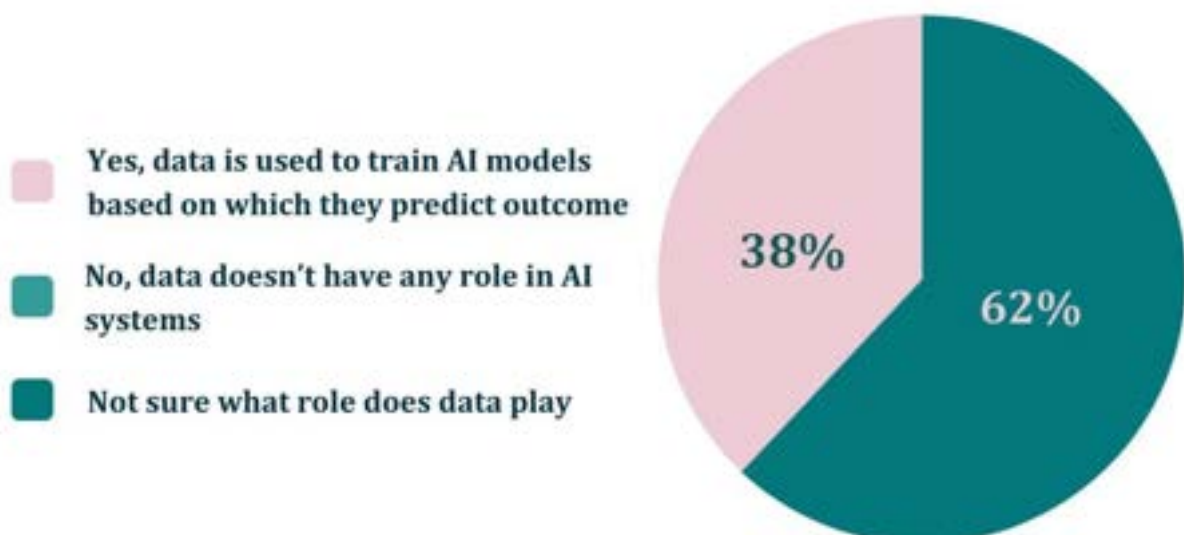


Fig. 4

This is crucial at a time when data is an essential part of the technological transformation and fuels the entire AI ecosystem. Despite the recently passed Personal Digital Data Protection Act, it is surprising to know that only 1 out of 3 parliamentarians are aware about the lifeline of these models. This suggests that only a small group of parliamentarians are in a position to deliberate on AI's potential and the harms that they want to mitigate. However, expanding this awareness level is desirable, given the impact of AI on the economy is likely to be across sectors and industries.

The majority seems to have a superficial understanding of AI, which may be due to the dominant discourse surrounding AI, driven by mass media and AI's impact on their daily lives but scratch just a little beneath the surface, the sad reality emerges that despite the passing of recent regulations on data governance, two-thirds of parliamentarians are not aware of the multi-faceted need of regulating data collection and usage for effective AI systems.



PERCEPTION



PERCEPTION

The parliamentarians are currently traversing the dynamic landscape of AI, which stands as a burgeoning technology. Their perception of AI will essentially chart the course for its implementation and regulation.

A survey conducted among the parliamentarians of the UK suggests that the most significant narrative regarding AI that they believe has been influencing society is that AI will lead to the substitution of humans and eventually lead to job losses. Interestingly, the results of this survey suggest a similar pattern among the Indian parliamentarians with 59 percent of the parliamentarians thinking that AI as a technology will impact society negatively, for instance, job loss. [6] Only 24 percent are optimistic that AI will have positive impacts on society.

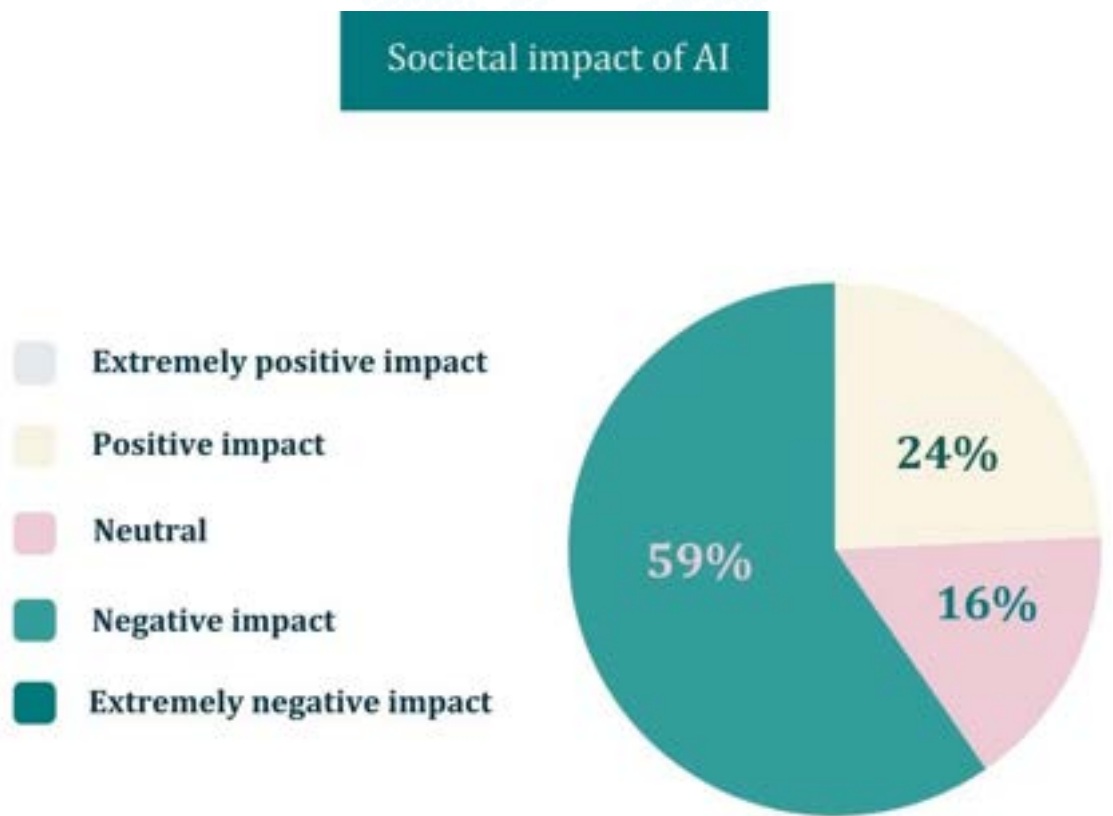


Fig. 5

Significant threats posed by AI

While AI as a technology promises great opportunities, it poses greater threats. Deepfakes, misinformation and disinformation, threats to the younger generation, threats to data privacy, and other security threats are some of them. This study has helped us to understand which threats the parliamentarians think are the greatest and which are of lesser concern.

Deepfakes

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a public meeting in 2023, highlighted the profound influence of evolving technology on current systems, notably citing deepfake technology as a significant concern. He highlighted the challenge posed by the lack of resources for authentication in India, warning of the serious consequences of individuals unwittingly accepting falsified content. [7]

Similar concerns were highlighted by the Cabinet Minister for Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Ashwini Vaishnaw and MoS for MeitY, Rajeev Chandrashekar. Raising of concern by foremost members of the ruling government provides an insight as to why the issue of deepfake is by large considered the most significant threat emanating from AI by the parliamentarians.

A large majority of 62 percent of the respondents chose deepfakes as the most significant threat emanating from AI.

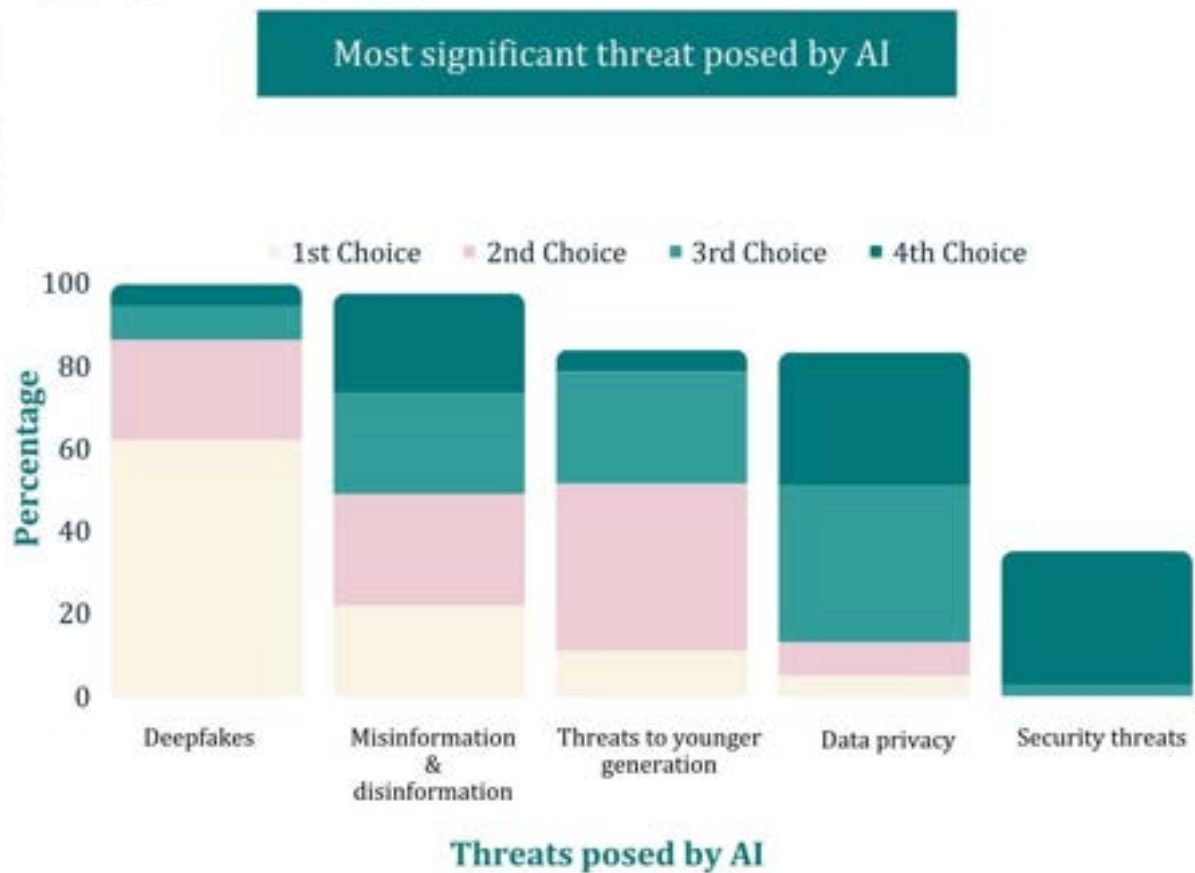


Fig. 6

Misinformation and Disinformation



With 68 countries going to election this year, the menace of misinformation and disinformation demands global attention and is being recognized by countries worldwide. 1 out of 5 respondents have chosen misinformation and disinformation as the biggest threat, while nearly 28 percent respondents rank the issues second among the provided list of threats.

The Indian government, Mr. Rajiv Kumar, Chief Election Commissioner of India, and tech companies acknowledged the threat of deceptive AI-generated content during elections. Leading tech companies such as Google, OpenAI, formed a "Tech Accord to Combat Deceptive Use of AI in 2024 Elections," a set of commitments to counter harmful AI-generated content meant to deceive voters. [8]

Additionally, in India Meta established a fact-checking helpline with the Misinformation Combat Alliance on WhatsApp to counter AI-generated misinformation. [9]

Threats to the Younger Generation



A 2018 UNICEF review of 20 national AI strategies found insufficient focus on protecting children's rights amidst AI advancements. [10] In the current survey, while only 11 percent of respondents viewed threats to the younger generation as the most significant AI-related concern, a considerable 43 percent of the respondents stated this as the second leading concern.

Security Threats



Only 3 percent of respondents identified security threats stemming from AI as the most significant concern, while for another 50 percent of respondents, it ranked second or third as an important concern. This indicates some concern about the deep-seated nature of security threats and their impact on public data systems and sensitive data.

Most concerning narratives around AI

Various narratives surrounding AI are currently being discussed and debated. To gauge parliamentarians' responses and beliefs regarding these narratives, they were questioned on different AI-related narratives.

According to the survey results, 62 percent of respondents believe that “AI systems know everything about us, even more than we know about ourselves.”

This perception is fuelled by the availability of devices, freely and easily available AI-powered tools and application, increasing compute power and generation of vast of amount of data, which extend beyond current usage boundaries to predict user behavior. [11]

Additionally, 27 percent of respondents anticipate AI systems would evolve into super-intelligent entities, echoing concerns raised by researchers from institutions like the Max Planck Institute for Human Development. [12] Meanwhile, concerns about AI's inherent bias and potential emotional intelligence were expressed by 8 percent and 3 percent of respondents, respectively, as the primary vectors. Those who rank these issues as second, range between 20 and 45 percent.

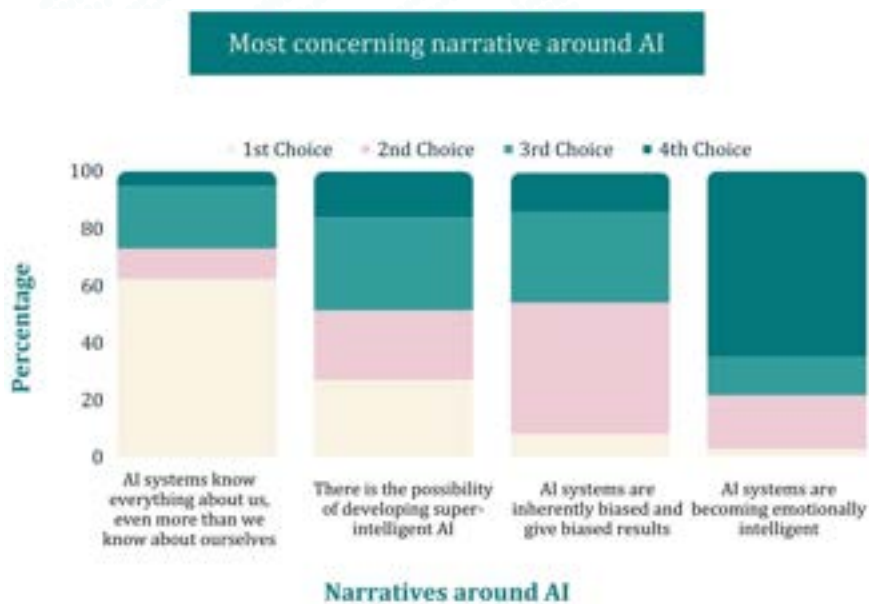


Fig. 7

The survey results seem to suggest that parliamentarians give a higher weight to those aspects of AI that impact them directly. These include misinformation during election season or deep-fakes, threats of which have been highlighted by the government itself. Their rankings for negative impacts of AI on the youth or children- the most vulnerable sections of society are lower.

Therefore, it is desirable to have more extensive debates on the latter aspects alongside its impact on long term welfare growth in the country.

There also exists a misconception regarding AI's capabilities as parliamentarians seem to think that AI knows more about us than ourselves but experts have reiterated time and again that AI knows only as much data as we have fed them, though their predictive abilities may be superior because of millions of data sets it has been fed. Part of the reason of a lack of clear priorities and misconceptions regarding AI may be due to parliamentarians' shallow understanding of how AI works, the role of data and fear-mongering by industry leaders themselves.

For example, A consortium of industry leaders issued a cautionary statement in May 2023, highlighting the potential existential threat posed by the technologies they are developing. They argue that AI should be recognized as a societal risk comparable to pandemics and nuclear warfare. The Center for AI Safety, a nonprofit organisation, released a concise statement emphasising the importance of global prioritisation in mitigating the risks associated with AI. Over 350 executives, researchers, and engineers in the AI field endorsed this sentiment including executives from leading AI companies such as Sam Altman of OpenAI, Demis Hassabis of Google DeepMind, and Dario Amodei of Anthropic. Sam Altman, CEO of Open AI also said that "if the technology goes wrong, it can go quite wrong" and therefore, they need to work with the government to ensure that this doesn't happen. [13]

EXPECTATION

AI as a technology is evolving by the day, giving more room for innovation, growth, and development. This paves a brighter path for the growth of India as a nation and its vision to become a global leader in AI by 2030. Initiatives like the National AI Strategy, Startup India, and Digital India have been launched to foster AI innovation, provide funding and resources to startups, and promote collaborations between industry, academia, and government institutions.

The survey results provide insights into the perspectives of Indian parliamentarians regarding the opportunities presented by AI. In line with India's significant advancements in technology and investment in AI, 75-80 percent of respondents rank AI's contribution to economic growth and/or innovations as the first or second. This aligns with the projections that AI could add 1 trillion to India's economy by 2035 through intelligent automation and increased productivity. [14] According to The Brookings Institution, India ranks in the top 10 globally for technological advancement and investment in artificial intelligence. This highlights the country's notable progress in leveraging AI for economic growth and innovation. [15]

Furthermore, while healthcare and education sectors are experiencing exponential growth due to AI integration, with the Indian healthcare AI market expected to reach USD 1.6 billion by 2025. [16] In the education sector, 47 percent of learning management tools will be AI-enabled by 2024, [17] and only 11 percent of respondents recognize this as a significant opportunity ahead of economic growth and innovations.

Most significant opportunity emanating from AI



Fig. 8

Similarly, the potential for AI to enhance public services by improving operational efficiency, transparency, and access to information is acknowledged by only 3% of respondents as the leading contribution, despite its importance in fostering inclusive AI development and targeted delivery of public goods.

These insights suggest a discrepancy between the perceived opportunities and the awareness of AI's potential impact across different sectors. While there is recognition of its impact on sectors such as healthcare, education and public services is lagging transformative power of AI in driving innovation and economic growth, closing this gap through education and awareness initiatives could unlock the full potential of AI to benefit society and the economy.

AI's potential to amplify human abilities rather than substituting them

The survey responses reflect a lack of a sophisticated understanding among parliamentarians regarding the multifaceted impacts of AI. While there is acknowledgment of the potential benefits of AI in increasing efficiency and effectiveness in tasks with limited human resources, concerns persist regarding job displacement and the possibility of AI surpassing human intelligence.

Concerns over job loss due to AI implementation are prevalent, with 54 percent of respondents expressing apprehension about its potential impact on employment. This underscores the need for parliamentarians to address the socio-economic implications of AI-driven automation and consider strategies to mitigate job displacement in the AI era.

Moreover, the prospect of AI surpassing human intelligence raises profound questions about the future of humanity and the role of parliamentarians in guiding AI development responsibly. A significant 35 percent of respondents recognize this as a concern, highlighting the importance of ethical considerations and regulatory frameworks in AI development.

However, there is also recognition of the benefits that AI can offer, particularly in increasing efficiency and effectiveness in tasks with limited human resources. 11% of respondents believe that AI could be instrumental in enhancing process efficiency, while 16 percent see its potential by automating repetitive or time-consuming tasks, AI allows individuals to focus their cognitive resources on higher-level problem-solving and strategic decision-making, thereby maximising their effectiveness in their respective roles. [18]

AI's potential to amplify human abilities rather than substituting them

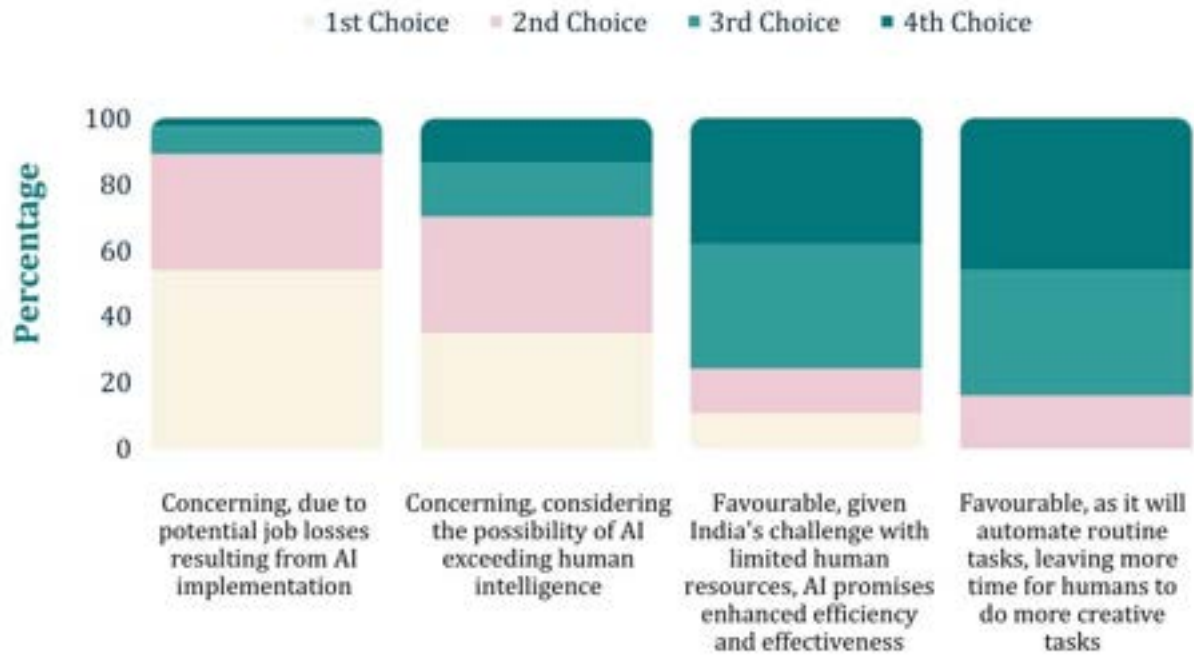


Fig. 9 AI's potential

The survey results seem to suggest that while parliamentarians do think that AI can accelerate the nation's economic growth, they understand that the lead has to be taken by private enterprises through leading innovation in the sector. There is a lack of civic imagination on the part of parliamentarians as they do not envision AI being deployed by the government for the public good, as has been done by digitalization recently. Similarly, the fear of job loss stems from the fact that parliamentarians possess only a rudimentary understanding of AI technologies and are led to be fearful because of fear-mongering by tech experts. We stand on the brink of a technological revolution with the potential to drive productivity, spur global economic growth, and elevate incomes worldwide.

However, this revolution also carries the risk of job displacement and widening inequality. In emerging markets and low-income countries, the impact of AI is expected to be less pronounced, affecting 40 percent and 26 percent of jobs. However, many of these regions lack the necessary infrastructure and skilled workforce to capitalise on the benefits of AI fully. Consequently, there's a risk that AI could exacerbate inequality among nations over time, as countries with greater technological capabilities reap greater rewards, leaving others behind.

Parliamentarians' understanding seems to be shaped by eye-catching, sensational statements made by global tech leaders, without a critical assessment of why they are saying so and a lack of positive headlines about how AI can help the most vulnerable sections of society.



REGULATION

REGULATION

Governments worldwide are grappling with the challenge of regulating AI to balance innovation with safety. In 2023, the EU introduced a pioneering AI legal framework aimed at promoting trustworthy AI development. [19] This framework adopts a human-centric and risk-based approach, categorising AI technologies into different risk levels. In contrast, Japan has taken a more innovation-oriented stance, opting for a "soft law" approach. Rather than rushing into regulation, Japan aims to observe AI's evolution to avoid stifling innovation.

Tech companies consistently stress the importance of careful and balanced regulation. Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google, highlighted the nuanced nature of regulation's impact on tech companies, stating that it can sometimes miss the mark. [20] Similarly, during testimony before Congress, Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, echoed the necessity of government oversight in managing risks. [21]

In India, the Indian Ministry of Electronics and IT published a strong statement in April 2023, opting against AI regulation and stating that India "is implementing necessary policies and infrastructure measures to cultivate a robust AI sector, but does not intend to introduce legislation to regulate its growth." [22] However, soon India took a U-turn, changing its approach towards AI regulation. The Indian government announced that it will come out with a draft regulatory framework for AI by June or July this year.

Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Mr. Rajeev Chandrasekhar said that, “The intention is to harness AI for economic growth and address potential risks and harms”, and further added that, “we are all for deploying AI across use cases, from farm to factories and we want to use AI for economic growth, healthcare, agriculture and farmer productivity”. [23]

The latest declaration from G20 leaders signed in New Delhi, champions a “pro-innovation governance approach” towards AI. Following this Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence Summit hosted by India, the idea of “collaborative AI” has taken roots in mind of parliamentarians. [24]

Given the diverse demands from various stakeholders and varied approaches to AI regulation, it's crucial to examine the perspective of Indian parliamentarians. This section of the study seeks to explore respondents' views on the regulation of AI and the approach India should take. It also aims to uncover the challenges encountered in the process of regulating AI.

All respondents unanimously supported the regulation of AI, with 97 percent expressing agreement.

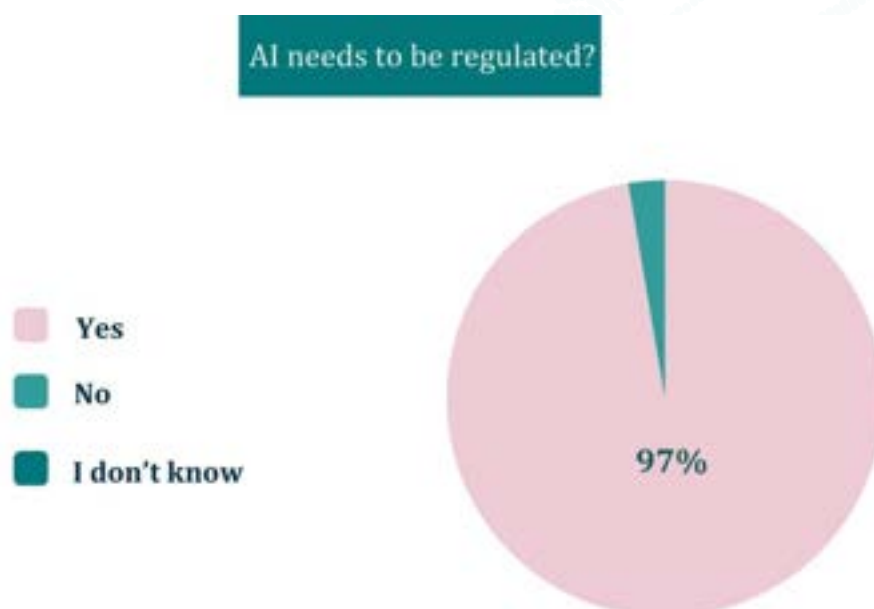


Fig. 10

This indicates a strong consensus among respondents regarding the necessity of AI regulation.

A thorough analysis of respondents’ perspective indicates a contested view regarding AI regulation. While 49 percent advocate for centralised government control, suggesting a desire for robust governmental oversight, 38 percent favour a collaborative co-regulatory approach involving both government and industry. This demonstrates a recognition of the need for a balanced regulatory framework that leverages both governmental authority and industry expertise. Additionally, 11 percent of respondents express confidence in industry self-regulation, underscoring a belief in the ability of companies to regulate their own AI activities responsibly.

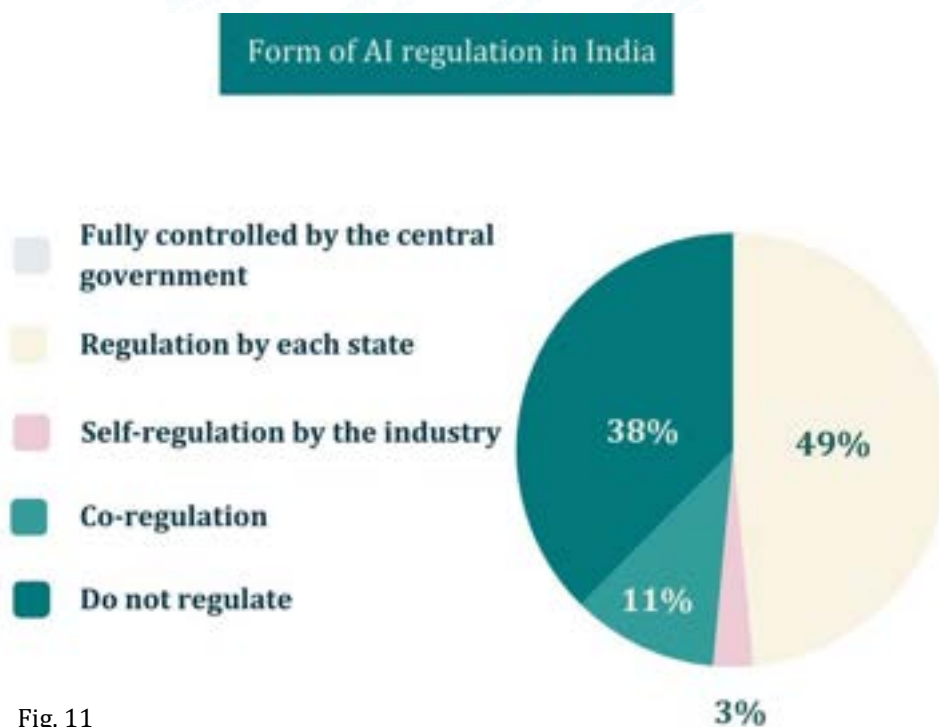


Fig. 11

These insights shed light on the complexity of regulatory preferences among stakeholders, highlighting the importance of considering diverse perspectives in crafting effective AI governance strategies. An overarching observation from the responses is the significant emphasis on the role of government.

In the context of India, parliamentarians tend to favour government-led regulation, contrasting with the approach taken in the United States. The Biden-Harris administration in the US has adopted an industry-led approach, securing voluntary commitments from leading AI companies to promote the safe, secure, and transparent development of AI technology. [25]

Existing Regulatory Architecture: Is it Enough?

When assessing the effectiveness of the current regulatory framework, which includes the IT Act of 2000 and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) of 2003, respondents were questioned about their views on whether these statutes are sufficient for regulating AI effectively.

It reveals a divided perspective among respondents regarding the adequacy of the current regulatory framework for AI. While a slight majority of 56 percent acknowledge the framework as sufficient or somewhat sufficient, a significant proportion of 46 percent express dissent, indicating concerns about its effectiveness.

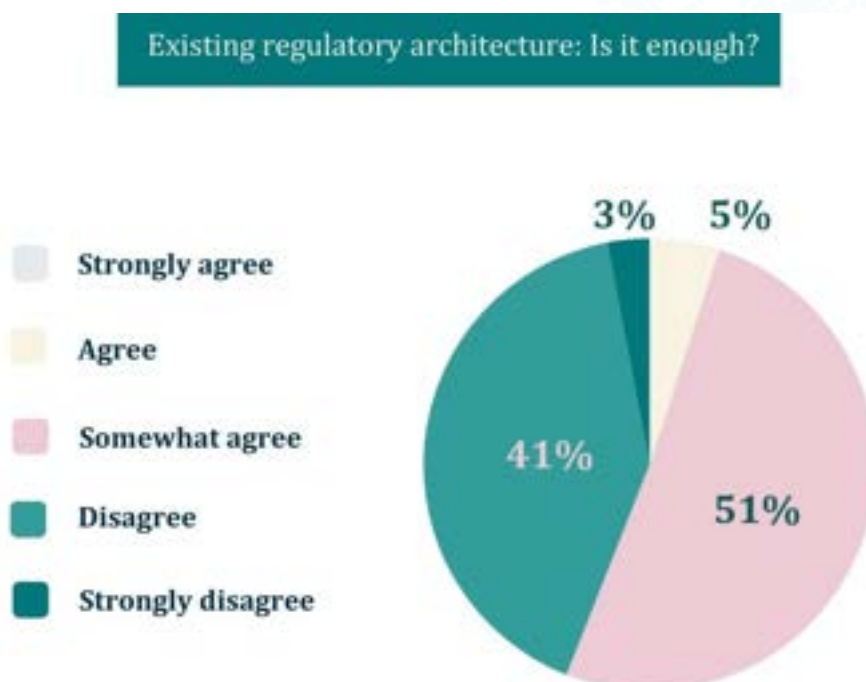


Fig. 12

This suggests a need for further examination and potential enhancements to existing regulations to address emerging challenges and ensure robust oversight of AI technologies. Additionally, the diversity of opinions underscores the complexity of regulatory issues surrounding AI and highlights the importance of stakeholder collaboration in refining regulatory frameworks. This recognition of the limitation of the existing regulatory architecture underscores an understanding that regulatory frameworks must adapt to evolving technological landscapes. Parliamentarians appear to grasp the dynamic nature of AI technologies, emphasising the importance of adaptive regulation to effectively mitigate emerging challenges and risks.

Challenges in regulating AI

The overwhelming preference of 68 percent respondents for the challenge related to AI being a nascent technology underscores parliamentarians' perennial struggle to keep up with the rapid pace of technological innovation. This highlights that parliamentarians recognise the dynamic nature of AI development and the difficulty in regulating a field characterised by constant evolution and advancements.

A significant portion (19 percent of respondents stating as first choice and 61 stating as second choice), admitted to having little awareness of AI and its potential risks and opportunities. This highlights a critical gap in parliamentarians' understanding of AI technologies, which can hinder their ability to develop effective regulatory frameworks. Without a comprehensive understanding of AI's capabilities, implications, and risks, parliamentarians may struggle to address emerging challenges and ensure appropriate regulation.

The acknowledgment of limited awareness among parliamentarians points to the importance of education and awareness initiatives to bridge the knowledge gap. Parliamentarians may benefit from training programs, workshops, and informational resources aimed at enhancing their understanding of AI technologies and their regulatory implications. Increased awareness can empower parliamentarians to make informed decisions and develop regulations that effectively address the complexities of AI.

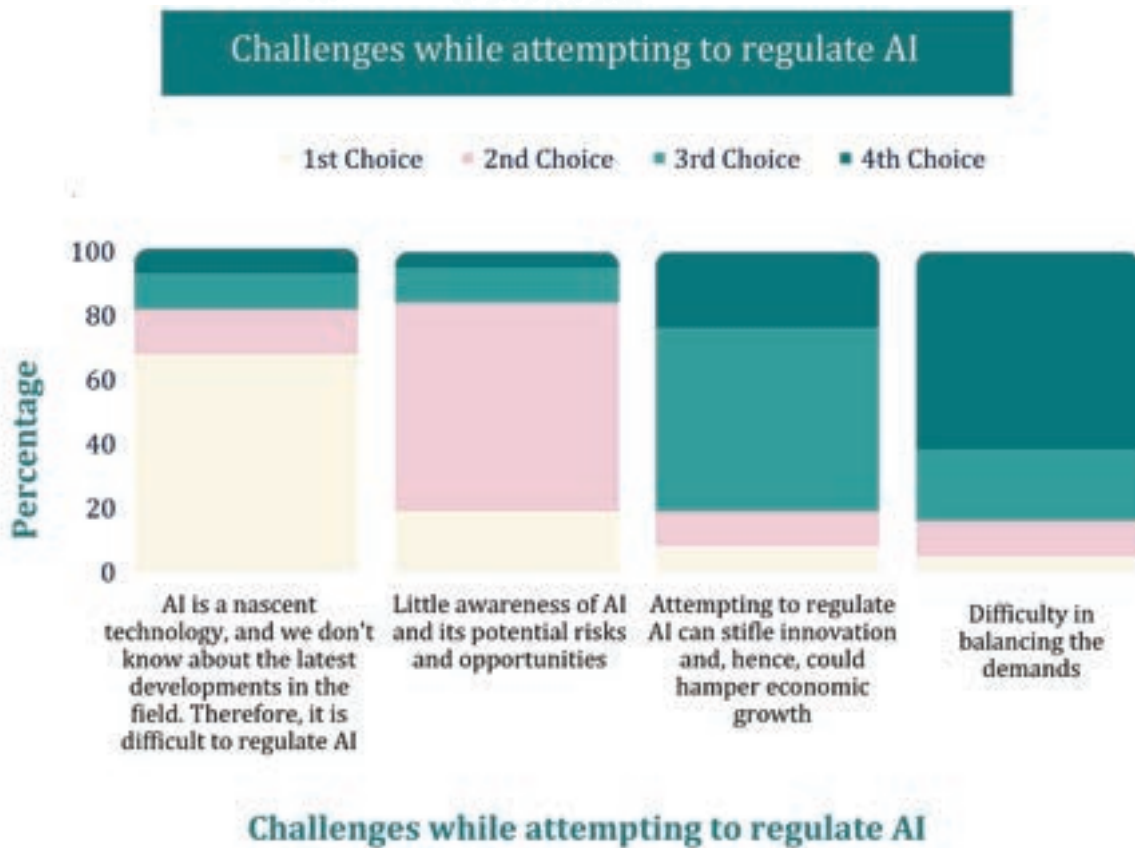


Fig. 13

India's approach to AI governance

As nations worldwide grapple with the complexities of regulating AI, India is also navigating various approaches while evaluating their applicability within its own context. An overwhelming majority of Indian parliamentarians have voiced support for a human-centric approach, aligning with the strategy adopted by the EU. Nearly every respondent emphasized the importance of prioritising human concerns in AI regulation within India.

However, 82 percent of respondents also identified an innovation-oriented approach as the second most favourable option, indicating a desire to harness the economic benefits of AI while maintaining regulatory oversight. This sentiment resonates with recent approaches taken by Japan and the UK, which prioritise fostering innovation in AI regulation. [26] In contrast, the EU has opted for a risk-based, human-centric approach, reflecting its status as a fragmented market dominated by US tech companies supplying AI technologies. China, a significant player in the AI landscape, has chosen a “state-controlled approach”. [27]

In light of these considerations, India must carefully weigh the advantages and disadvantages of different AI regulatory approaches to strike a balance between fostering innovation and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens.

The survey results on regulation indicate that parliamentarian’s approach to AI regulation is based on India's historic experiences and precedents, of mixed economy architecture, where no sector has been allowed self-regulation. Even in mass media or social media, where self-regulation, to an extent, was order of the day till recently, the government is now actively intervening.

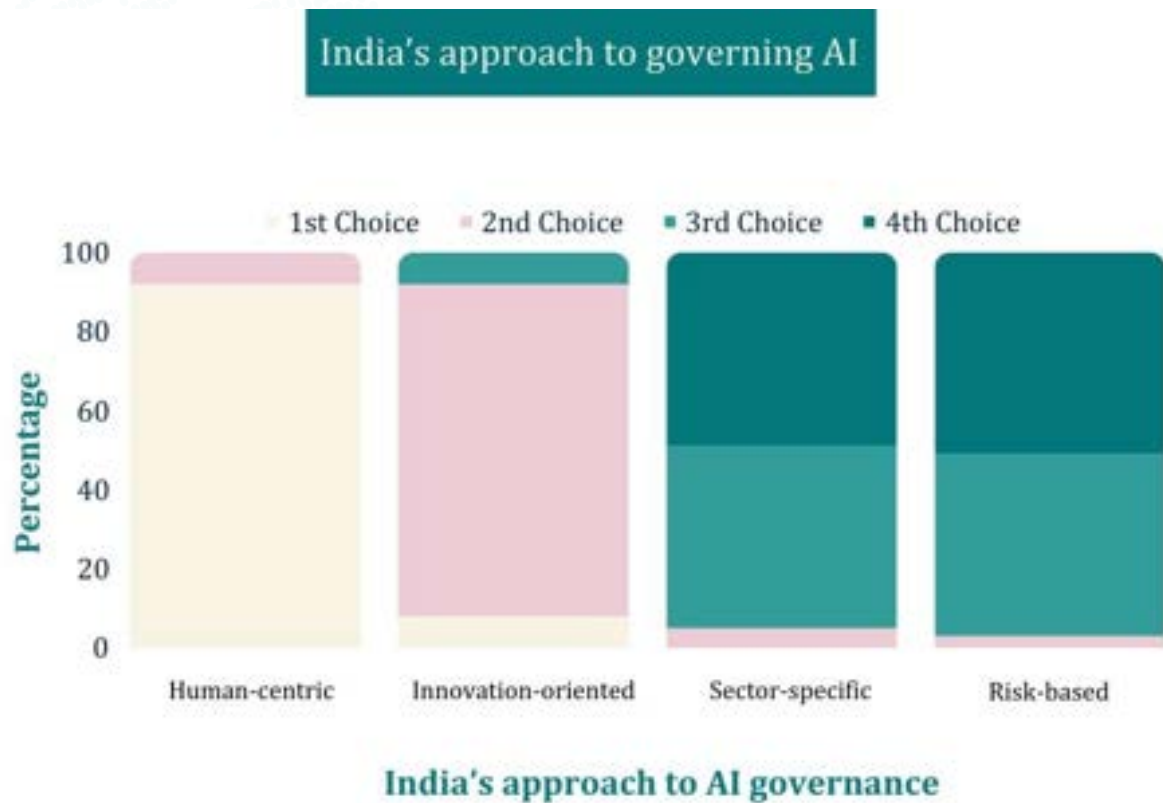


Fig. 14

As parliamentarians are aware that AI is a nascent technology and advocate human-centric approach, it seems that regulation should be based on certain principles. However, this is in contradiction with their earlier approach that AI will accelerate economic growth through innovation, which is to be industry-led. Also, if there has to be co-regulation by industry and government, then both interests of innovation and welfare have to be balanced. It seems that due to lack of in-depth understanding of AI and its constant evolution, there is a vagueness in parliamentarians' regulatory approach.

When questioned about their interest in furthering their knowledge of AI, all respondents indicated a positive affirmation.

Want to know more about AI?

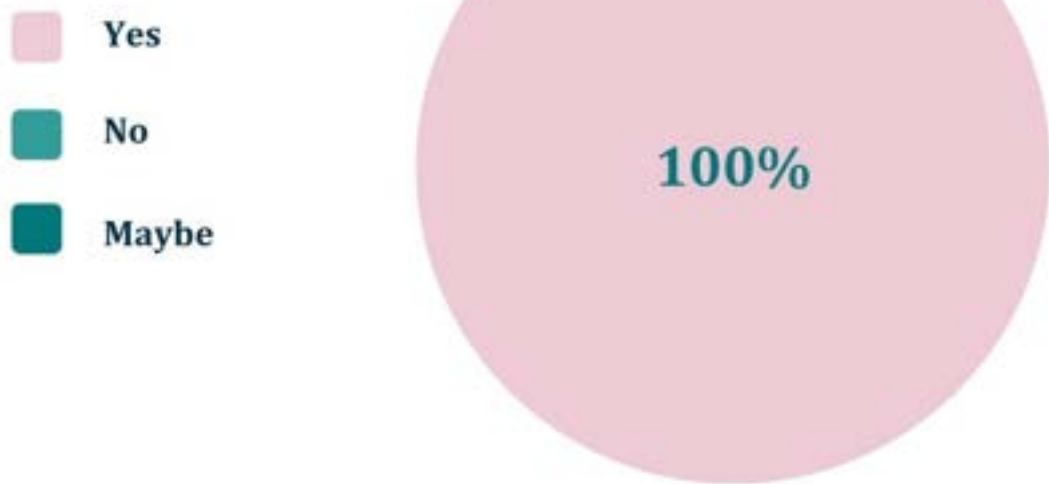


Fig. 15

Conclusion

This study was performed to obtain outputs on how the parliamentarians feel about AI as a technology divided into awareness, perception, expectation and approach to regulation. Below is an amalgamation of the findings from the research: -

AWARENESS

The results of the study shed light on the critical need for parliamentarians to possess a foundational understanding of AI technologies as they endeavour to regulate this rapidly evolving field. Despite the global push for AI regulation and the recognition of its potential risks, including deepfakes and misinformation, there is a widespread lack of deep understanding among parliamentarians, both in India and internationally. The knowledge gap raises concerns about the effectiveness of regulatory efforts, as misinformed or ill-informed regulation could potentially hinder innovation and exacerbate harms. These findings underscore the urgent need for parliamentarians to enhance their understanding of AI to effectively legislate on related matters. Without a comprehensive grasp of AI's workings and implications, parliamentarians may struggle to navigate the complexities of AI regulation and adequately address its potential benefits and harms. As AI continues to shape society and technology, bridging this knowledge gap among parliamentarians remains imperative for informed and effective governance in the AI age.

PERCEPTION

In terms of their perception of technology, parliamentarians hold a predominantly negative view of AI's societal impacts, indicating a pessimistic outlook towards technological advancements. This perspective can significantly influence their decisions regarding the adoption of AI across various sectors and the formulation of regulatory measures. While they identify deepfakes as the primary threat arising from AI, they seem to overlook the significance of security threats, suggesting a narrow focus on potential risks rather than a comprehensive understanding. Their concern that AI may possess more knowledge about individuals than they do about themselves underscores the necessity for a deeper comprehension of the technology. Parliamentarians must recognise that AI systems rely heavily on the data provided to them for training, thus emphasising the pivotal role of data in shaping AI capabilities. The study's awareness segment highlights that parliamentarians mostly don't understand what role data has in AI systems which in turn influences their perceptions of the most pressing issues surrounding AI.

EXPECTATION

Based on the survey results, parliamentarians perceive innovation as the primary opportunity arising from AI, suggesting a trajectory led by industry towards a promising future for India's growth and development. However, they express concerns about the potential surpassing of human intelligence by AI, possibly influenced by sensationalist assertions from tech experts.

While the timeline and likelihood of AI surpassing human intelligence remain uncertain, it is noteworthy that AI systems currently require human intervention for operation and continue to evolve within human-defined boundaries.

Industry leaders acknowledge the ongoing enhancement of AI systems, yet the probability of them surpassing human intelligence appears minimal. This understanding is crucial for parliamentarians to grasp.

REGULATION

The global landscape of AI regulation presents a complex interplay of approaches and priorities as governments strive to balance innovation with safety and security. The EU's pioneering human-centric and risk-based approach sets a precedent for comprehensive AI governance, contrasting with the more industry-led strategies seen in the United States and innovation-oriented approaches in Japan. As India navigates its own regulatory path, recent shifts in policy underscore a growing recognition of the need for effective AI governance to harness economic benefits while mitigating potential risks.

The study reveals a nuanced perspective among Indian parliamentarians, with a strong consensus on the importance of regulating AI, predominantly favouring a human-centric approach. However, there is also significant support for innovation-oriented strategies, reflecting a desire to leverage AI's economic potential. The survey highlights the complexities and challenges inherent in AI regulation, particularly in balancing innovation with safety and security.

Crucially, the findings reveal the importance of parliamentarians possessing a fundamental understanding of AI technologies to develop informed and effective regulatory frameworks. There is widespread interest among parliamentarians in furthering their knowledge of AI. Moving forward, it is imperative for parliamentarians to address these knowledge gaps through education and awareness initiatives to ensure informed decision-making and effective regulation of AI.

By bridging the divide between innovation and regulation, parliamentarians can navigate the complexities of AI governance to promote responsible AI development and safeguard the interests of society as a whole.

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