

Towards Ethical AI Governance: The Need for a Strong Digital Policy Framework

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Abstract: This paper examines India's need for a unified and enforceable framework for ethical artificial intelligence governance. It compares regulatory approaches in the European Union, United States, China, and India; reviews the technical sources of algorithmic bias; and analyses prominent failures involving recruitment, criminal justice, image classification, conversational systems, and facial recognition. The paper then evaluates gaps in India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, institutional fragmentation, limited explainability rights, and the absence of a comprehensive risk-based regime. It argues that data protection alone cannot address harms created by automated inference and decision-making. A National AI Board, mandatory algorithm passports, a legally enforceable right to explanation, digital watermarking, independent bias audits, and clearer liability rules are proposed. Together, these measures would support innovation while improving transparency, accountability, fairness, and public trust in India's expanding AI ecosystem.

Keywords: AI Governance, Algorithmic Bias, Digital Policy, Explainable AI, India

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